

SUBTITLE 15

**DESIGN
ADVISORY
PANEL**

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**SUBTITLE 15
DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL**

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Section 16.1500. Short Title; Purpose.

- (a) **Short Title.** This Subtitle shall be known as the Design Advisory Panel Act.
- (b) **Purpose.** There shall be a Howard County Design Advisory Panel (“Panel”) in order to:
 - (1) Provide expert advice to the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning regarding plans for new development and redevelopment in designated areas where there is a Design Manual that is adopted by the County Council including, without limitation, the U.S. Route 1 corridor or in age-restricted adult housing permitted by conditional use;
 - (2) Provide expert advice to the Zoning Board and the Planning Board regarding plans for New Town Village Center redevelopments in which Village Center boundaries have been proposed by a property owner or established by the Zoning Board or by the County Council; and
 - (3) Encourage excellence in architecture and site design, to improve design compatibility with surrounding development, to promote revitalization, and to enhance property values.

Section 16.1501. Applicability.

The Design Advisory Panel shall review and provide design advice for new development and redevelopment projects:

- (a) On parcels located in the U.S. Route 1 corridor that are zoned CE, CAC, or TOD, or that adjoin the Route 1 right-of-way and that are subject to the Route 1 Design Manual;
- (b) On parcels on which age-restricted adult housing is to be constructed pursuant to a conditional use; and
- (c) On redevelopment parcels located in New Town Village Centers with boundaries proposed by a property owner or established by the Zoning Board or County Council.

Section 16.1502. Membership; Staff; Records; Meetings.

- (a) **General Provisions.** General provisions applicable to the Panel are set forth in Subtitle 3, “Boards and Commissions” of Title 6, “County Executive and the Executive Branch” of this Code.
- (b) **Number of Members; Method of Appointment.** The Panel shall consist of seven members who shall be appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.
- (c) **Qualifications.**

- (1) Each member must be a professional in architecture, civil engineering, landscape architecture, urban planning, or a related field;
 - (2) At least two members shall be architects who are licensed in Maryland;
 - (3) At least one member shall be a civil engineer who is licensed in Maryland;
 - (4) At least one member shall be a landscape architect who is licensed in Maryland; and
 - (5) At least one member shall be an urban planner.
- (d) **Reappointment.** A Panel member shall be eligible for re-appointment to one additional term.
 - (e) **Executive Secretary.** The Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning, or the Director's Designee, shall serve as the Executive Secretary to the Panel.
 - (f) **Maintenance of Records.** The records of all proceedings and the basis for all findings shall be maintained in the normal course of business.
 - (g) **Meetings.** The Panel shall meet at least twice a month and, if necessary, more frequently. Meeting notice shall include posting notice on the Howard County web site.

Section 16.1503. Guidelines and Principles.

The Panel is to apply architectural, landscape architecture, and urban design principles in order to achieve the following objectives in a proposed plan:

- (a) **Site Planning** which creates attractive visual and functional relationships of the on-site design elements and between the site and the surrounding area;
- (b) **Buildings** and other structures which are spatially and visually integrated into and suitable for the site and surrounding area;
- (c) **Architectural features** which articulate the structures, create an identity for the development while being in harmony with the adjacent and surrounding built environment, and are consistent with the:
 - (1) Design requirements of the Route 1 Manual;
 - (2) Criteria of a conditional use, as applicable; or
 - (3) New Town Village Center design guidelines, as applicable;
- (d) **Open space** which provides visual functional integration of the streetscape, public spaces, and pedestrian connections and transportation connections;
- (e) **Landscaping** which enhances the architectural and site design, works with the natural features of the site, provides adequate screening, and defines spaces on the site; and

- (f) ***Design objectives*** in the Route 1 Manual, compatibility criteria for age-restricted adult housing set forth in Section 131.N.1 of the Howard County Zoning Regulations, or the Design Guidelines for the appropriate New Town Village Center.

Section 16.1504. Review Required; Recommendations; Condition of Decision.

- (a) ***Recommendations***. The Panel shall make recommendations consistent with the Route 1 Manual, compatibility criteria for age-restricted adult housing, or New Town Village Center design guidelines regarding:
 - (1) The design for buildings, vehicular circulation and access, pedestrian access and linkages, parking, loading dumpsters, exterior mechanical units, existing trees, landscaping, and walls and fences;
 - (2) Building scale and massing in relation to and compatible with the surrounding area;
 - (3) Building architectural style, materials, entrances, windows, roof design and colors;
 - (4) Open space on the site including pathways, public spaces, amenity areas, and similar features;
 - (5) The design of exterior lighting devices and potential disturbance to the public and adjacent properties, and
 - (6) The location, size, and design of the exterior signs.
- (b) ***Director may consider recommendations***. The Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning may consider the Panel’s recommendations in making a final decision on a plan or as a condition of plan approval in connection with those matters included in Subsection (a) of this Section based on design requirements contained in the Route 1 Manual.
- (c) ***Hearing authority may consider recommendations***. The Hearing Authority may consider the Panel’s recommendations in making a final decision on a conditional use or as a condition of conditional use approval for age-restricted adult housing in connection with those matters included in Subsection (a) of this Section based on the guidelines and principles set forth in Section 16.1503 of this Subtitle.
- (d) ***Zoning Board and Planning Board may consider recommendations***. The Zoning Board and Planning Board may consider the panel’s recommendations in making a final decision on a Village Center redevelopment plan or as a condition of plan approval in connection with those matters included in Subsection (a) of this Section based on the appropriate New Town Village Center design guidelines.

Section 16.1505. Timing of Recommendations; Subsequent Submittals; Further Review; Appeal.

- (a) **Recommendations prior to initial submission.** The Panel shall consult with and make recommendations to the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning prior to the initial submission for a conditional use or of a development plan as set forth in the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.
- (b) **Recommendations within 45 days.** Unless a delay was caused by the failure of an applicant to submit information requested by the Panel, the Panel shall make a recommendation within 45 days of acceptance of a plan. If a delay was not caused by the applicant and the Panel fails to make a recommendation within 45 days of acceptance of the plan, further Panel review is not required. A development plan may then be submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning in accordance with the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.
- (d) **Subsequent submittals.** The Panel may require the applicant to provide up to one subsequent submittal for review and advice. Subsequent review shall be completed and a recommendation shall be made within 30 days of the Panel's receipt of the subsequent submittal.
- (d) **Phased review requested by applicant.** At the time of plan submittal and depending on the scale and phasing of the proposed development, an applicant may request that the Panel review a plan in a series of two or more steps.
- (e) **Appeal.** The decision of the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning is final and can be appealed in accordance with Section 16.105 of the Howard County Code.

Section 16.1506. Rules of Procedure.

The Design Advisory Panel shall adopt Rules of Procedure necessary for the discharge of its duties that shall include provisions for notice to the public of the Panel's meetings, a procedure for the public to provide written comments to the Panel, and a procedure for the distribution of meeting minutes to those who have provided written comments.

Section 16.1507. Fees.

The Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning may recommend fees for review by the Design Advisory Panel that shall be adopted by Resolution of the County Council.