

YALE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, INC. * BEFORE THE
PETITIONER * PLANNING BOARD OF
ZRA-214 * HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND

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MOTION: Recommend approval of ZRA-214.

ACTION: *Approved with Amendments; Vote 5-0.*

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RECOMMENDATION

On November 20, 2025, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, considered the petition of Yale Presbyterian Church, Inc., the Petitioner, to amend Section 131.0.N.1 of the Zoning Regulations to create a new Age-Restricted Adult Housing (ARAH) Conditional Use subcategory, *Age-Restricted Adult Housing Apartments, Commercial Transition*, for parcels within the R-ED, PGCC, R-20, R-12, R-SC, R-SA-8 and R-H-ED districts provided that the property adjoins a B-1 zoned parcel and is also within 1,000 feet of an intersection of two arterial roads¹.

The Planning Board considered the petition and the Department of Planning and Zoning’s (DPZ) Technical Staff Report (TSR).

Testimony

Mr. Justin Tyler, Department of Planning and Zoning staff member, presented the proposed Zoning Regulation Amendment (ZRA). Mr. Tyler explained the history of ARAH and how the use has evolved since it was created in 1993. He listed the current zones that permit ARAH by right and by conditional use. Ms. Tyler discussed the review criteria and explained that the proposed changes are not expected to produce adverse impacts on the uses of the surrounding area. He discussed the properties to which the ZRA could apply and shared a map of potentially impacted parcels. Mr. Tyler explained how this ZRA conditional use subcategory criteria differs from the general ARAH conditional use subcategory criteria. Mr. Tyler discussed the compatibility of the proposed ZRA with the policies of the General Plan, specifically the policies that support affordable, accessible and adaptable housing options for older adults.

¹ The Petitioner’s text amendment states 1,000 feet of an intersection of two collector roads. At the Planning Board meeting, the Petitioner noted a typographical error and confirmed that the Petitioner’s request is for 1,000 feet of an intersection of two arterial roads.

1 Mr. Tom Coale, the Petitioner's representative, presented the proposed ZRA on behalf of the Petitioner,
2 Yale Presbyterian Church, Inc. He stated that the purpose of the ZRA is to utilize the site for future ARAH
3 apartment housing. Mr. Coale explained that this ZRA will assist in providing affordable housing for seniors
4 who do not have housing options for multi-family living that would include smaller units. He asserted that the
5 current housing options for seniors are expensive villas that are for purchase and that this ZRA would address
6 the current shortage of available affordable housing options and include a rental aspect as well. Mr. Coale
7 explained the reasons why this ZRA conditional use subcategory criteria differs from the general ARAH
8 conditional use subcategory criteria. He stated that this ZRA criteria focuses on integrated design features that
9 provide pedestrian connectivity between commercial space and the ARAH units. Mr. Coale explained this ZRA
10 does not include certain setback distances because variances cannot be granted to conditional use standards. He
11 stated that the Design Advisory Panel (DAP) provides feedback on design guidelines, including building layout
12 and architecture and urged the Board not to impose additional technical requirements. He stated that the
13 proposed text was modelled after the Planned Office Research (POR) district in which ARAH developments
14 are permitted with no maximum density and development is form based. He further explained that any future
15 development would follow 20 units per acre and would be required to have a minimum lot size of 8 acres. Mr.
16 Coale specified that there were no objections to changing the density calculations from using gross acres to net
17 acres to be more in line with current County density calculations for ARAH Conditional Uses. He also indicated
18 there was no objection to removing the R-ED zoning district from this ZRA. Mr. Coale explained the conditional
19 use process and what is needed to get a conditional use approved.

20 Following Mr. Coales' testimony of the proposed amendment, Planning Board member Ms. Barbara
21 Mosier asked to clarify if the eligibility requirement was to be within 1,000 feet of the intersection of two
22 arterial or collector roads. Mr. Coale explained that the requirement was arterial roads and apologized for the
23 typographical error in the proposed text that indicated collector roads. Mr. Coale explained the intent of using
24 arterial roads is because these intersections typically include commercial and retail uses. Ms. Mosier also
25 inquired about how this proposed subsection would be different from the ARAH General Conditional Use
26 category. Mr. Coale asserted that the larger the unit is constructed, the more the prices can fluctuate and that
27 this ZRA was specifically designed to create apartments with smaller units. Planning Board member, Mr.
28 William Tilburg, inquired if the R-H-ED district could be removed from the proposal. Mr. Coale stated that
29 yes, it could be stricken out of the proposed text and that his client is interested in an R-20 zoned parcel that
30 would be appropriate for the proposed apartment development. Mr. Tilburg also asked if there were any parcels
31 included in this proposal that were zoned R-ED or R-H-ED. DPZ staff indicated that there would have to be an
32 in-depth review to verify if there were any impacted parcels within those districts. Mr. Coale explained that
33 there was a parcel in the northern area of the County, in the vicinity of MD Route 29 that was zoned R-ED that
34 would be impacted by the proposed text amendment. Planning Board member, Ms. Lynn Moore, asked about

1 clarifying any potential conflicts with the current Regulations. Mr. Coale explained that these potential conflicts
2 were not deficiencies and that the ARAH projects are reviewed numerous times by the DAP. Planning Board
3 Executive Secretary and Planning Director, Ms. Lynda Eisenberg, AICP, clarified that any design concerns or
4 issues would be addressed during the DAP review and further explained that density calculations for ARAH
5 developments utilize net acres instead of gross acres. Mr. Cecil asked if a 20% MIHU requirement could be
6 imposed instead of the proposed 15%. Mr. Coale asserted that the 15% MIHU requirement is in line with the
7 other ARAH Conditional Use categories and that the 15% MIHU requirement can help promote and build future
8 developments.

9 Ms. Mary Beth Soverns, a neighboring property owner, testified only to ask for clarification on the
10 potential design/configuration of the proposed development. Ms. Eisenberg explained that this hearing is only
11 to amend the regulations and that there aren't any proposed plans under review currently. She also explained
12 the Petitioner would present any plans for the development to the public at a Pre-submission Community
13 Meeting prior to submitting them to DPZ.

14 Board Discussion and Recommendation

15 Ms. Mosier asked about the connectivity of the proposed development with the surrounding community
16 and how that would be provided. Mr. Coale indicated that the petitioner would be responsible for providing
17 pedestrian connectivity between the ARAH uses, adjoining commercial uses and the surrounding residential
18 developments. Planning Board Vice-Chair, Mr. Mason Godsey, inquired if the Turf Valley development was
19 the only PGCC zoned parcels within the County. DPZ staff concurred and Ms. Eisenberg stated that Turf Valley
20 still has development potential. Mr. Cecil discussed changing the density calculation from gross to net acres,
21 striking out the minimum 8 acre parcel size and ensuring that the DAP addresses the minimum distances
22 between structures and the maximum length of structures. Mr. Coale stated that he was in agreement with the
23 DAP review requirement and that the proposed text mentioned in criterion #9 could be amended to include that
24 DAP shall evaluate and consider the distances between structures and the maximum length of apartment
25 buildings. Mr. Cecil recommended removing the R-ED and R-H-ED districts from the list of proposed impacted
26 zoning districts. Ms. Mosier also stated that there should be better clarification on whether the parcel needed to
27 be within 1,000 feet of the intersection of two arterial roads and not two collector roads as mentioned in the
28 proposed text.

29 Ms. Mosier motioned to recommend approval of ZRA-214 with amendments. Mr. Godsey seconded
30 the motion. The motion passed 5-0. The amendments are

- 31 1. To strike the R-ED and R-H-ED districts from the proposed text.
- 32 2. To clarify that the parcel eligibility must be within 1,000 feet of the intersection of two arterial
33 roads.
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3. Ensure that the density calculations follow the current use of net acreage and not gross acreage.
4. To ensure that DAP will evaluate the distances between structures and maximum building length as part of their review.

For the foregoing reasons, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, on this 9th day of December 2025, recommends that ZRA-214, as described above, be APPROVED WITH AMENDMENTS.

HOWARD COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Signed by:

James Cecil

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James Cecil, Chair

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Mason Godsey

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Mason Godsey, Vice-Chair

Signed by:

Lynn Parlett Moore

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Lynn Moore (Virtual)

Signed by:

Barbara Mosier

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Barbara Mosier

Signed by:

William Tilburg

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William Tilburg

ATTEST:

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Lynda Eisenberg

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Lynda Eisenberg, AICP, Executive Secretary