

## Questions from the ZRA-224 Webinar

**With square footage larger than 900, would that mean stairs would be added? How is that conducive to aging in place?** The legislation requires the development to incorporate Universal Design Standards from the Planning and Zoning guidelines. The 900 square footprint could allow for a basement or second floor. However, the Universal Design Standards require complete living area including master bedroom and bath on first level floor.

**Where is there a 10-acre site in Howard County?** The Zoning Regulation Amendment (ZRA) is not site specific, but 10 acres is the maximum lot size a cottage cluster Agree Restricted Adult Housing (ARAH) development under the Optional Design Plan (ODP) could be utilized.

**How do courtyards work on a 10-acre site? Or even a smaller acreage for courtyard?** The legislation requires a courtyard size of 250 square feet per dwelling unit. The design of the cottage cluster development is guided by the bulk requirements, including setbacks and minimum and maximum development sizes, and the common courtyard size. More than one courtyard would be allowed in a community.

**The proposed text for this ZRA only shows adding the ARAH Cottage Cluster as a permitted use in Planned Golf Course Community zoning district (PGCC), but wouldn't you need to also amend the Uses as a Matter of Right in the other zoning districts (R-ED, R-20, etc) where this is proposed to be added as permitted use?** The permitted uses for a PGCC district are controlled by a Final Development Plan (FDP). Before a property in the PGCC district can be developed using the ARAH Cottage Clusters Optional Design Project by right, the FDP must be amended.

**Why are these units all age restricted? It would seem a small family could live in one of these, or a single parent and child/children.** DPZ encourages public comment at Planning Board or County Council meetings for this idea to expand outside of ARAH.

**Are there any Cottage Clusters currently proposed for development?** No, there is not. Cottage clusters are currently not permitted anywhere in the County. ZRA-224 will be introducing the use to the zoning regulations and the County.

**Given that HoCo is an old – not just aging – community, how do existing houses with HC-subsidized aging-in-place modifications fit into the ARAH model? Can a 3-story townhouse with an elevator be absorbed in a future amendment to the definition of clusters?** Cottage clusters are intended as smaller homes to support affordability. Amendments to the ZRA can occur during the legislative process, future zoning regulations amendments, or through the comprehensive rezoning process.

**Could the Cottage Clusters be connected to an existing HOA, or is this only new development with a new HOA?** The cottage cluster would need to meet the definition and design requirements of the regulations to qualify for this process. If the cottage cluster is not a rental community under single ownership, an entity such as a HOA must be established to maintain and enforce age restrictions. The legislation does not specify the HOA organization.

**Is there an overall plan covering housing affordability and the unhoused and the first-time buyers as well as the aging residents?** These topics and more are discussed in the Howard County *Housing Opportunities Master Plan* and the County's General Plan, *Hoco By Design*. Both plans are available on our Department of Planning and Zoning webpage.

**Is a porch structure included in the 900 square footprint?** Yes, it would be factored into the 900 square foot limitation. We calculate lot coverage from a top-down view of structures on the lot.

**Will cottage clusters be a part of the Gateway project?** It is yet to be determined as Gateway's zoning is still being determined under the Gateway Master Plan implementation.

**Would the age restriction have some sort of upper bound ensuring that they would need to be self-sufficient and able to contribute to participate?** This would be up to the particular person who chooses to live there.

**Is there a timeframe in mind?** The legislation was presented to the Planning Board on 4/9 for their recommendation with the hopes of pre-filing the legislation for the May legislative session. June consideration by the County Council would be the final action.

**Will laundry facilities be included in each unit?** The provided floorplans are for example purposes only, the layout of the structures would be determined by the developer.

**What is the ownership structure? Is it condo, co-op, rental only?** Ownership structure would be determined by the developer or community association.

**Is it strictly an affordable housing option or will high end options also be encouraged (or discouraged)?** The legislation is aimed to provide missing middle affordable housing options.

**Will it require a new zoning classification? Would its use be an overlay zone?** No new zoning classifications are required. These developments would be permitted through an Optional Design Project within these zones: R-ED, PGCC, R-20, R-12, R-SC, R-SA-8, R-H-ED, R-A-15, R-APT, B-1, B-2.

**Are there plans to widen its use to families, single-parents, etc? Would that option create a beneficial co-habitation choice for residents?** This legislation is for Age-Restricted Adult Housing developments for people 55 years or older. Children younger than 18 may not reside in the units for more than 90 days per calendar year.

**Why do we only have an acreage maximum and no minimum?** There is a minimum development size of 20,000 square feet.

**How does this fit into recommendations of HoCo by Design?** The General Plan's Dynamic Neighborhood Chapter is supportive of providing attainable and diverse housing options. It emphasizes creating more diverse housing options through the County, increasing housing affordability, and ensuring there are housing options for older adults, disabled populations, and those with special needs. DN-1, DN-12, DN-13, QBD-4.

**With one parking space per unit, how will this affect neighborhood street parking when a cluster of homes might have car ownership beyond one vehicle per home?** The calculation for parking is based on 1.3 cars per unit. If there are 4 units, 6 off-street spaces would be required. In comparison single-family detached only requires 2.5 off-street spaces per unit and ARAH apartments and multi-plexes require 1.3 spaces per dwelling unit.

**What area within the county is being considered for these?** These developments would be permitted through an Optional Design Project within these zones: R-ED, PGCC, R-20, R-12, R-SC, R-SA-8, R-H-ED, R-A-15, R-APT, B-1, B-2.

**Can there be any units with garages?** This will vary how the development is constructed, but garages would be counted towards the overall 900 square feet footprint.

**Would this be an HO-6 insurance policy situation and treated like a condo where all exterior maintenance is covered?** This would be determined by each individual development.

**Will a focus group be invited, concerns of the group be acknowledged, and will the builder pay attention or build whatever they had in mind from the get-go?** With any plans a pre-submission meeting with DPZ would be required, as outlined in the County Code.

**Will this be quality construction or a glorified shed design?** The optional design plan and the architectural design of the building(s) shall have been reviewed by the Design Advisory Panel, in accordance with title 16, subtitle 15 of the Howard County code, prior to the submission of the Site Development Plan to the department of planning and zoning. The petitioner shall provide documentation with the petition to show compliance with this criterion.

**If these are at ground level, what steps will be taken to protect from cold, dampness and insect infestation? Will there be supplemental heated flooring?** This would be dependent on the Developer, these would be subject to current building codes maintained by DILP.

**Will kitchens be designed for practicality and safety? i.e. no placement of microwaves above stove surfaces?** The development shall incorporate universal design features from the Department of Planning and Zoning guidelines that identify required, recommended and optional features. The Petition shall include descriptions of the design features of proposed dwellings to demonstrate their appropriateness for the age-restricted population. The material submitted shall indicate how universal design features will be used to make individual dwellings adaptable to persons with mobility or functional limitations and how the design will provide accessible routes between parking areas, sidewalks, dwelling units and common areas.

**Will utilities be placed toward the interior so that outdoor temps do not affect piping?** This would be dependent on the Developer, these would be subject to current building codes maintained by DILP.

**Will there be proper storage? If 900 sq. ft. is the max, reconsider and increase to 1000 sq. ft.** The overall size of the unit may be expanded; community structures may also be provided within the development.

**On what land will these be constructed; next to a highway, over a landfill, the usual places elders are pigeonholed? Distant from immediate needs such as a grocery and post office?** This depends on where the developer chooses to build cottage cluster communities. These developments would be permitted through an Optional Design Project within these zones: R-ED, PGCC, R-20, R-12, R-SC, R-SA-8, R-H-ED, R-A-15, R-APT, B-1, B-2.

**Would the 10,000 sq.ft. septic reserve area size still be required for a home under 900 sq.ft.?** At this time, these communities will be limited to the Planned Service Area.

**Would it be more of a shared septic reserve area for 1-4 homes?** At this time, these communities will be limited to the Planned Service Area.

**Do you have examples of cottage clusters that use private systems?** This would be the first of its kind for Howard County, we have no examples at this time.

**What advantages or disadvantages do you see the county permitting office or the environmental health department have in allowing cottage clusters to be developed on a private system?** At this time, these communities will be limited to the Planned Service Area.

**How do we uphold the age requirements to ensure families with younger children don't move in and cause hidden density for school overcrowding?** Current ARAH Regulations already indicate how age requirements will be upheld. The cottage cluster dwellings are limited to age-restricted adult housing. The petition must include copies of proposed deed restrictions or covenants that establish how the age restrictions required under the definition of age-restricted adult housing will be implemented and maintained.

**Will an existing structure still have to remain? Or can an investor come and buy a property, tear down the existing home, and build one of these communities at will?** No, an existing structure does not have to remain on the site and can be torn down should an investor or developer choose to do so. The legislation defines cottage clusters as a grouping, including a common courtyard, of at least four detached dwelling units that have a footprint of less than 900 square feet.

**Is the APFO test for schools and infrastructure required?** Age-restricted adult housing does not require APFO schools testing, as no students will be generated from these developments. These developments would be subject to APFO roads and housing allocation testing.

**How does the homeowner's association requirement work for a cluster community inside of a neighborhood that does not have an HOA?** The petition shall establish how the age restrictions required under the definition of this use will be implemented and maintained over time. If the development is not a rental community under single ownership, an entity such as a condominium association or homeowners association shall be established to maintain and enforce the age restrictions in addition to county enforcement of zoning regulations.

**How does this affect existing properties that have agreements not to build upon or expand due to environmental protection agreements signed when part of said existing property was previously sold for development?** You would not be able to construct upon environmentally protected land, these covenants will still be in place.

**Can there be a stipulation for self-sufficiency and ability to contribute to the common good?** More clarity would be needed to address this question.

**Would the county be responsible for the maintenance of the system (or the cottage clusters HOA)?** At this time, these communities will be limited to the Planned Service Area.