

**Board of County  
Commissioners**

Susan Krebs  
District 5



**Carroll County Government**

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**Economic Matters Committee**

**March 12, 2026, 1pm**

**House Bill 1503 Carroll County – District Planning Commission – Authorized**

**Sponsor: Carroll County Delegation**

**Presented by:** Susan Krebs, Carroll County Commissioner, District 5

**Background:** Carroll County is a commissioner form of Government and gets its authority from the State Legislature, in deference to our local Carroll County Delegation. The Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland delegates planning and zoning regulatory powers to several counties and municipalities. Among several of the delegated powers is the authority to create a planning commission to prepare comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations and to guide development within this framework.

**What is the Problem we are trying to solve?**

Our current planning system in Carroll County has faced some challenges that have caused unnecessary disruptions to our ability to adequately plan and implement our Master Plans over many years. Almost 1/3 of our county is in Ag Preservation and the balance contains eight incorporated Municipal Growth Areas (MGAs), each with local Planning authority. The unincorporated areas are controlled by the County Commissioners.

A seven-member PZC oversees the largest Designated Growth Area (DGA) in the county, as well as the unique needs of the rural and agricultural areas. It is difficult for a volunteer board, meeting two days a month, to be attentive to the diverse needs of each area and sufficiently provide the depth of expertise and focus necessary to properly plan and ensure implementation of our Master Plans. It would also speed up the plan approval process.

**What would this bill do?**

This local bill would **authorize** the Carroll County Commissioners to have flexibility to deploy one or more Planning Commissions to balance the planning needs of the entire county. With the focus on finding opportunities to provide new housing and adequate plans for growth in our communities, we would be able to provide a better focus on proper planning, implementation and oversight, and less time constantly putting out fires. The BOCC would be responsible for setting policy and ensuring coordination in planning and implementation of our Master Plans. All requirements of the Land Use Article would apply. This bill would mirror the way all the other growth areas in our county are handled.

**This is a local bill requested by our County Commissioners and supported by our Carroll County Delegation.** There should be a letter of support in the file.