

What HIA Looks Like from Outside the Health Sector

The Planning Perspective – an HIA of Baltimore City's Zoning Code Rewrite

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ZONING IN BALTIMORE

- 300-year old city that was largely “built out” by the time the first zoning code was enacted in 1923
- Zoning regulations were legally upheld as a means of protecting health and human welfare
- Purpose of zoning in Baltimore was to prevent overcrowding/tenementization of housing, diffusion of communicable diseases, separation from industrial land uses
- Latest update of the code was in 1971; has been amended through PUDs, over 900 BMZA hearings per year in the early 2000s.
- Since the 1950’s, Baltimore had experienced rapid depopulation; by 2000, vacant and abandoned housing, violent crime, drug addiction and obesity had become major public health issues
- What could the zoning code do for these 21st century issues?

PLANNING AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Growing literature in Planning about Urban Form and quality of life (walkable neighborhoods, designing for crime prevention) and how to create zoning regulations that help achieve these desirable “forms”

- New Urbanism
- Form-based Zoning Codes

Integrating Planning and Public Health

Marya Morris, Richard Duncan, Katharine Hannaford,

Chris Kochitzky, Valerie Rogers, Karen Roof, Jessica Solomon

Published by APA Planning Advisory Service, 2006



Growing connection between Baltimore’s Health and Planning Departments as a means of implementing the City’s Comprehensive Master Plan, Adopted in 2006

THE BALTIMORE ZONING CODE HIA



Goals

1. Inform stakeholders and decision-makers about the new zoning code's potential to create healthy communities...emphasis on preventing **obesity** and **crime**
2. Provide recommendations about how to increase the **health-promoting potential** of the new code and mitigate any **unanticipated negative health** consequences

Recommendations

- List of 36 concrete items, 14 (40%) of which were already in the first draft of Transform Baltimore
- Other 60% fell into the following categories:
 - Liquor Store Density
 - Healthy Food Access
 - Processes and Procedures

HIA FROM THE PLANNER'S PERSPECTIVE

What we didn't know

- Focus on the Purpose Statement
- Raised awareness of a constituency/advocacy group that we likely would not have been aware
- HIA of a zoning code unique

What would be useful

- Zoning Code is a highly political ordinance
- Zoning Enforcement is a public administrative function
- What's the role of public health officials?