



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Monroe County Apartment Association Announces Concerns Regarding the Proposed Monroe County Comprehensive Plan

Bloomington, IN – February 25, 2011 – The Monroe County Apartment Association’s Board of Directors approved a statement signaling concerns about the proposed draft of the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan, the 20-year visioning document that provides guidelines for the County’s land use policies.

“Members of our Board of Directors have participated in public meetings and task force meetings associated with this plan. We believe this proposed plan will drive up the cost of housing and thus have negative implications on affordable housing in Monroe County,” stated Brad Gillenwater, president of the Board of Directors. “The presentations during the town hall meeting this week provided further evidence that we also need to express our concern to the Monroe County Commissioners.”

Position Statement: Proposed Monroe County Comprehensive Plan

The Monroe County Apartment Association (MCAA) recognizes the need for an updated comprehensive county plan; however, we believe the proposed plan provides extreme restrictions on private property. MCAA members are concerned about their ability to continue to provide affordable housing to tenants and also are concerned about the impact of private homeowners in Monroe County. In particular, we believe the prohibition of construction on land with a 15% slope or greater and the soil specification restrictions are overreaching and will negatively impact many homeowners and property owners in our county.

The MCAA understands the need for a balanced approach between economic development and environmental preservation, but we believe this plan is too extreme. We also believe that local appraisers will find it more difficult to value land and that lenders will have uncertainty about the ability to develop or alter properties in our county.

We encourage the Monroe County Commissioners to listen to constituents and organizations expressing strong reservations about this plan. Ideally, the existing Comprehensive Plan should be used as the basis for developing the updated plan and the MCAA is more than willing to assist with any future work sessions to revise the existing plan. At minimum, the Monroe County Commissioners should take time to listen and amend the Plan to ensure that the final document provides more balance and enables job creation and minimizes the specific language seen throughout the plan that is more appropriate for an ordinance, not a visioning document. Specific items such as the complicated density-based formula that restricts subdivisions is narrow language that is better suited for an ordinance than a visioning document. Further, additional study is needed to determine whether the density approach is appropriate for Monroe County. The Commissioners will set the vision of how our land is zoned for the next 20 years by passing this proposed Comprehensive Land Use Plan. We hope the Commissioners will have the foresight to incorporate more balance and less specificity into this plan.

About the Monroe County Apartment Association

The MCAA's 40 year mission is to serve the interests of and maintain a high level of professionalism within the single and multi-family housing industry (its owners, developers, managers, staff and suppliers of products and services) to better serve the rental housing needs of the public. To this end, the MCAA's objectives are:

- To assist the industry in providing and maintaining quality, affordable rental housing to the public.
- To provide communications, information, and support network for the industry in Monroe County.
- To provide effective legislative, regulatory and advocacy representation for the industry.
- To work to maintain and enhance the economic reward for participation in the industry.
- To seek out and provide additional services to members.

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