



Government Update



ADVOCACY

advocacy@coastalrealtors.org



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Wicomico County Legislative Issues

Salisbury Planning

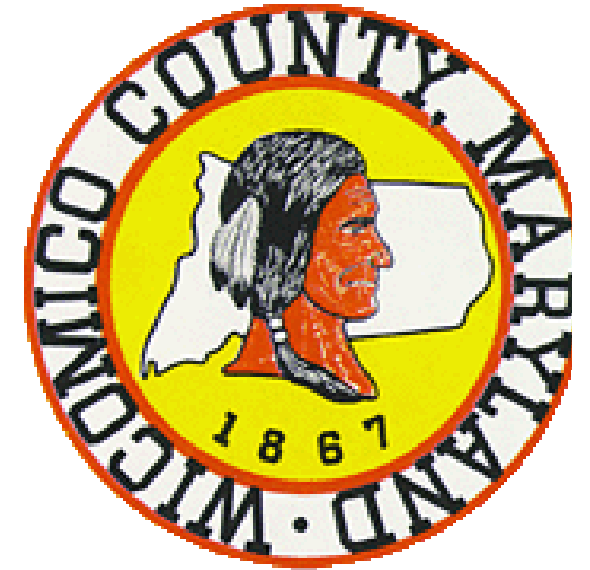
- Three members shall reside in the city limits; the remaining four members may live in the greater Salisbury area (21804 or 21801).
- Working in these zip codes are not qualifiers; one must live in these areas.
- [Applications are now being taken to fill this board. If you have interest in this position, please apply here.](#)
- The City is also beginning some broad housing discussions, and I have some meetings scheduled in the coming weeks so that we are present for these discussions. ADUs, Missing Middle Housing, and a few other big housing related topics have come up during City Council discussions. These initiatives will come through the new Planning Board



Wicomico County Legislative Issues

Septic Task Force:

- I wanted to get some more information regarding the Master Plan – the plan is generally to expand on existing sewer systems first, bringing connections into the expanded sewer. “low hanging fruit” first. But because some systems are in need of upgrades, and expansion cannot happen until these upgrades happen, projects like Parsonsburg will take nearly eight years to begin.
- I had also expressed my concern with holding tanks, the devaluing of property due to them, and that impact on the tax base. Mr. Corry explained to me that under a County’s Master plan, there exists different zoning. MDE cannot issue a holding tank in many of these water/sewer zones and that permission must be granted from the steward of the County’s Master plan to issue a holding tank in these zones. I’ve requested more information on this, but it seems to be an added protection for homeowners.
- They had also stressed the importance of an updated Master Plan as funding for upgrades and infrastructure will not be given without an on-time and updated plan.
- Also, onsite sewage systems are not recorded by the health department, and there is no way to know the percentages of system types in Wicomico without looking at permits individually.



Wicomico County Legislative Issues

- **Wicomico Planning and Zoning**

- The County Council passed the adoption of a County P&Z Commission, which will take effect Aug, 19th. Details are as follows:
 - Start date of Sept 1, 2025.
 - Meets once per month unless there is no pending business. Special sessions can be called by the Chair.
 - Members can enter land to make examinations.
 - Members shall be confirmed by the County Council.
 - Members serve five-year terms.
 - The first board will consist of three members which serve three years and four members which serve five years (to stagger members and not have seven vacancies at once).
 - Members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.
 - Members must be 21 years of age, live in the county, and complete the necessary education within 6 months of appointment.
- Submit a letter of intent and a resume to ltaylor@wicomicocounty.org to apply for the County P&Z board.
- Salisbury had their first introduction of their own P&Z board. This began in work session and is still several weeks from adoption, but it models the Wicomico legislation closely.



Wicomico County Legislative Issues

Upcoming Meetings & Agendas:

- Wicomico County Council: 08/05/2025. Government Office Building, Salisbury, MD. [Agenda and Briefing Book](#).
- Delmar Mayor and Commission: 08/04/2025. 100 S. Pennsylvania AVE, Delmar MD. 6PM. [Agenda](#).





Somerset County Legislative Issues

Tawes

- We are looking for event sponsors, please direct those interested in attending, volunteering, or sponsoring the event to this link:
<https://members.coastalrealtors.org/event-calendar/Details/2025-j-millard-tawes-crab-and-clam-bake-1398323?sourceType=Hub>



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Worcester County Legislative Issues



Permit Scam in Worcester County

- Worcester County Government (WCG) in Snow Hill, Maryland, is warning residents and business owners about a scam targeting individuals involved in the permitting and plan review process. Scammers are impersonating Development Review and Permitting (DRP) staff, sending emails that falsely demand immediate wire transfers for project-related fees. These emails often appear convincing, using real county documents and agendas, but contain red flags such as suspicious email addresses (e.g., ending in @usa.com), requests for wire transfers (which WCG does not accept), and claims that communication must be conducted solely via email.
- DRP Director Jennifer Keener emphasized that the community's close-knit nature has helped prevent losses, as recipients have been proactive in verifying suspicious messages. WCG urges anyone receiving unexpected payment requests to avoid replying, clicking links, or sharing personal information. Instead, they should contact DRP directly at 410-632-1200 to confirm the legitimacy of any communication. The county reiterates that official payments can only be made in person, by mail, or through a secure online portal.



Worcester County Legislative Issues



Upcoming Meetings & Agendas

Snow Hill: 08/05/25. Worcester Government Building, room 1102, Snow Hill.

Ocean Pines: 08/09/25. Clubhouse Meeting Room. 9AM. Annual Meeting.

Worcester County: 08/05/2025. Worcester Government Building. 10AM. [Agenda](#).

Ocean Pines BOD Elections close August 6th.
Ballot boxes are open 24/7 until the sixth.





NAR Newsroom Update

June Housing Index

- In June 2025, pending home sales in the U.S. declined by 0.8% compared to the previous month and 2.8% compared to the same time last year, according to the NAR. The drop was seen across most regions, with the Midwest, South, and West all experiencing decreases. The Northeast was the only region to show a month-over-month increase of 2.1%, though it remained flat year-over-year. These figures are based on the Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator that tracks contract signings for existing homes.





NAR Newsroom Update

NAR Index CON'T

- Despite the overall decline, there are signs of optimism in the housing market. The REALTORS® Confidence Index reported increases in both homebuyer and seller traffic, suggesting potential for future growth. Chief Economist Lawrence Yun noted that while contract signings have dipped slightly, rising mortgage applications and increased market inventory could lead to a rebound in activity. The Northeast's performance, in particular, stood out given its strong home price growth.
- Regionally, the West saw the steepest declines, with a 3.9% drop month-over-month and a 7.3% drop year-over-year. The South (which Maryland is classified as) and Midwest also posted modest declines in both timeframes. The PHSI, which uses 2001 as a baseline year (index value of 100), serves as a key tool for forecasting housing trends. While pending contracts are not finalized sales, they are a strong indicator of future closings, typically occurring within one to two months.





NAR Newsroom Update

NAR New President of Legal Affairs and Brand Protection

- NAR has appointed Leslie Nettleford-Freeman as its new Associate General Counsel and Vice President of Legal Affairs and Brand Protection. This newly created role reflects NAR's commitment to safeguarding the REALTOR® trademark and enhancing its legal strategy. Nettleford-Freeman brings over 20 years of experience in intellectual property and brand enforcement, most recently serving at AARP, where she led successful campaigns against trademark misuse and built a cross-functional brand protection team.
- NAR leaders praised her innovative approach and legal expertise, emphasizing her role in elevating trademark defense and education. In addition to her corporate work, she teaches at Georgetown University Law Center and has received multiple awards for her legal leadership. She expressed enthusiasm for her new role, highlighting the importance of protecting the REALTOR® brand as a symbol of trust and professionalism. She officially begins her position on August 4.





NAR Newsroom Update

Highlights of the One Big Beautiful Bill ([H.R. 1](#))

- The “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” introduces sweeping and permanent tax reforms. Key among these is the permanent extension and enhancement of the 20% Qualified Business Income Deduction (Section 199A), which was set to expire in 2025. This change prevents a major tax hike for independent contractors, including most REALTORS®. Additionally, the Act extends and improves other provisions from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), such as reduced tax rates, a higher standard deduction, and an increased child tax credit. The state and local tax (SALT) deduction cap is temporarily raised to \$40,000 through 2029, offering substantial relief to taxpayers in high-tax states, though it phases down for high-income earners.
- The Act also makes permanent and expands several real estate-related incentives. Opportunity Zones are strengthened and extended indefinitely, with new rules to encourage long-term investment and rural development. The estate and gift tax exemption is permanently set at \$15 million per person, protecting family-owned real estate businesses from heavy taxation. Affordable housing receives a boost through increased low-income housing tax credits and relaxed financing requirements, potentially adding over a million new units nationwide. Other provisions include expanded 529 Education Savings Accounts for professional licensing, reinstated 100% expensing for property improvements, and favorable changes for developers and commercial real estate investors. Notably, the Act excludes several proposed tax increases that could have negatively impacted the real estate sector, thanks to strong advocacy efforts by NAR.
- H.R. 1 has been signed and is law as of July 4, 2025.





Upcoming Advocacy Meeting

I am putting together the agenda and packet for our next Advocacy meeting. Please reach out to me with items or issues you'd like to see addressed.

Have a good weekend everyone!!

-Hunter

