

Response to Baltimore Sun editorial of September 29, 2017 "The cost of demagoguery in Harford"

By Delegate Rick Impallaria, R, 7th Legislative District

Once again the Baltimore Sun's editorial page has descended to fake news, name calling, and twisting of the facts, which is exactly what you would expect when someone does not have a single legal argument to stand on. Nor do the editors have the sympathies of the community affected.

So let's go straight to the facts. In 1968 the Fair Housing Act was signed into law by Lyndon B. Johnson, because communities discriminated against African-Americans, Jews, and Catholics. As a way to keep communities "separate by equal," there were what is known as black enclaves, where deeds clearly stated that only negroes were allowed to hold title to these properties. That was all abolished by the Fair Housing Act.

Now let's move forward to 2017, where now a group of people have conspired to violate that federal law. Clearly their lawsuit shows that they have already sold 22 of 40 properties exclusively to a single religious sect. In a diverse community like Joppatowne, the chances of 22 homes being sold with none of the purchasers being women or persons outside this sect are ludicrously close to non-existent. This group, regardless of their religious make-up, has already violated the federal Fair Housing Act. Obviously those 22 homes were never publicly offered. Changing their story now does not change the fact that they conspired to violate the Fair Housing Act and have successfully carried out that conspiracy to this point.

These are individually deeded lots which sit on a public road with public utilities in an existing community that already has members of a community association. Obviously this is not what these existing homeowners bought into. This is an attempt by this group, regardless of what their affiliation is, to do an end run around the federal Fair Housing Act and all state and local county codes. For the first time ever they are attempting to create a closed, cult-like community on privately deeded lots with public roads and public services. Nowhere has this been allowed since the Fair Housing Act went into effect.

So, for myself and Delegate Pat McDonough, this is not anti-Muslim, racist, xenophobic, or any other cutsey name the Sun may call us. Our position on this is clearly that of fair housing; no group should be allowed to reverse 40 years of hard-fought history.

The Sun editorial board should be embarrassed not only for the name calling but also for being complicit in an attempt to overturn the Fair Housing Act. We have no

problem with our neighbors because of race or religion. I have never discriminated against either in my business or my political life.

The only demagoguery is on the part of the Baltimore Sun.