







Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, Work Session #5

-  Leslye Howerton, Planner Coordinator, Area 1, leslye.howerton@montgomeryplanning.org, 301.495.4551
-  DeOcampo, Marc, Master Planning Supervisor, Area 1, marc.deocampo@montgomeryplanning.org, 301.495.4556
-  Robert Kronenberg, Chief, Area 1, robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org, 301.495.2187
-  Laura Shipman, Senior Planner, Urban Design, Area 1, 301.495.4558
- Matt Folden, Planner Coordinator, Transportation, Area 1, 301.495.4539
- Tina Schneider, Senior Planner, Environment, Area 1, 301.495.4506
- Brooke Farquhar, Master Planner/Supervisor, Parks Department, 301.650.4388
- Rachel Newhouse, Park Planner, Parks Department, 301.650.4368
- Susanne Paul, Senior Planner, Parks Department, 301.650.4392
- Rick Liu, Senior Planner, Research Department, 301.495.5641
- David Anspacher, Planner Coordinator, Transportation, Functional Planning & Policy, 301.495.2191
- Scott Whipple, Supervisor, Historic Preservation, 301.563.3402
- Patrick Reed, Planning Intern, Area 1, 301.494.4583

Completed: 12.09.15

Description

Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan: Work Session #5

Summary

Work session #5 will be a continuation from work session #4 with a detailed discussion of the zoning and building height recommendations as outlined in the Public Hearing Draft, along with the zoning and building height changes requested by property owners. The discussion will be on a district-by-district basis beginning with the Eastern Greenway, Arlington North and Arlington South Districts. The Planning Board will also review proposed recommendations for the Battery Lane and South Bethesda Districts, if time permits.

Prior to the zoning discussion mentioned above staff will provide an outline for the remaining work sessions topics to be discussed, a summary of the density that has been added to the Plan to-date through previous work sessions with the Planning Board as well as provide a detailed view of the building heights as recommended by the Plan along with example projects that have been proposed.

DISCUSSION

Remaining Work Session Schedule and Topics

Work session #5 – December 15, 2015

Topic: Land Use and Zoning

- Density Tally and Building Heights Discussion
- Eastern Greenway District
- Arlington North District
- Arlington South District
- (Battery Lane and South Bethesda as time permits)

Work session #6 – January 7, 2015

Topic: Analysis of Final Zoning and Building Height Decisions

- Final Density Tally
- Building Heights Analysis
- Density Transfer Implementation and Additional Incentives
- Plan Economics
- Affordable Housing Recommendations

Work Session #7 – January 21, 2015

Topic: Specific Plan Elements

- Parks and Open Space Recommendations
- Ecology and High Performance Area Recommendations

Work session #8 – February 4, 2016

Topic: Outstanding items, Review Plan language edits with Board, etc.

Work session #9 – February 25, 2016

Vote-out

Land Use and Zoning Approach

The work session on July 20, 2015 provided a brief recap of the zoning strategy (as outlined in Work Session #1) as it relates to the recommended density and height increases across the Sector Plan area. Transportation analysis and school capacity was a factor in determining how much density may be increased without over-burdening the infrastructure in the Downtown. A comparative analysis was prepared with other similar urban downtown areas (White Flint, Silver Spring, Wheaton and Friendship Heights) in terms of acreage of planning area; Sector Plan vision build-out and vision build-out square feet per acre. Strategy objectives included:

- Accommodate projected growth over the next 20 years.
- Incentivize redevelopment in the expanded centers of activity and emerging centers (priority areas in the Plan) by increasing density and maximum allowable heights in the expanded centers of activity around proposed civic gathering spaces, such as the areas immediately around the Farm Women's Market, the Bethesda Metro Station, and Veteran's Park (the major civic gathering spaces).
- Balance opportunities for redevelopment and compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.

Density Analysis: Density Added to Plan (as of October 29, 2015 decisions)

Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan		
Work Session Density Results as Recommended by the Board as of October 29, 2015		
DISTRICT	Square Feet (SF) Reduced	Square Feet (SF) ADDED TO PLAN
Wisconsin Ave	-35,069	489,370
Bethesda Row		4,196
Woodmont Triangle	-56,119	84,542
Pearl District		242,997
Arlington North		
Arlington South		
Battery Lane		
Eastern Greenway		
South Bethesda		
TOTAL	91,188	821,105
NET ADDED DENSITY		729,917

When increasing density recommendations in the Downtown Plan, the following impacts should be considered:

- Approved transportation recommendations in the Plan (operational scenarios), such as the two-way street conversions, road diets including recommended bicycle lanes may not be feasible with increased vehicular traffic demand from increased density.
- From a regulatory perspective, adding more land use density than the transportation network can accommodate will leave development potential “on the table” for potential developments unable to mitigate intersection congestion to the applicable CLV. This scenario creates a situation where the demand for new development is restricted by the available transportation capacity rather than the market.
- If the revised land use density exceeds the anticipated transportation capacity, we will determine that the plan is “out of balance” and may need to identify intersection improvements to improve vehicular travel (there are currently no vehicular intersection improvements recommended in the Plan).
- We may need to reevaluate our intersection congestion analysis if the revised land use density is too far off from the land use density evaluated in the Staff Draft.

Building Heights Discussion

With the increases to allowable building heights and density recommended for Bethesda, tall building guidelines become critically important to ensure that Downtown Bethesda will be a walkable environment where buildings frame a vibrant public realm and relate to the pedestrian scale. The following guidelines are intended to guide development and avoid many of the problems with design of tall buildings that we see in Downtown Bethesda today such as: large blank walls, lack of relationship between the building and the street, overbearing building massing, and monotonous facades.

- Create active ground floors and midblock connections
- Design a low to mid-rise base and step back upper floors to relate to pedestrian scale
- Limit tower floor plate size to reduce building bulk
- Provide tower separation to ensure access to light and air and reduced shadows on streets and open spaces and improve the interior building quality
- Create innovative building forms and facades
- Retrofit existing buildings with liner retail and new facades
- Promote sustainable design systems and materials to improve building performance
- Ensure context sensitivity and transitions to lower scale districts and neighborhoods

Vision and Goals

Over the past 20 years, the focus of Downtown Bethesda changed from a single center of activity focused around the Metrorail station to a series of activity centers with multiple downtowns. Each of the nine districts as identified by the community is distinct with its own unique character. One of the primary goals of updating the 1994 Sector Plan is to recognize this shift and build on the successes and lessons learned from the previous plan and to ensure that the distinct character of these districts remains. The Concept Framework Plan was developed through a collaborative effort among the community, County agencies and staff. The Concept Framework Plan identifies the basic components of the present-day urban fabric in Downtown Bethesda with respect to the following:

- Existing commercial activity centers.
- Emerging commercial activity centers over the next 20 years.
- Residential neighborhoods.
- Primary pedestrian corridors connecting activity centers and residential neighborhoods.
- Parks and open space network that complements the pedestrian corridors and anchors the community.

The Concept Framework Plan provides the basic elements and organization of Downtown Bethesda. All other Sector Plan details are built upon this structure to form a cohesive urban fabric that will evolve over the next 20 years.

District Character

Eastern Greenway

The Eastern Greenway forms a transitional area between the single-family homes of East Bethesda, the Town of Chevy Chase and commercial structures of the Central Business District. It is characterized by low-density, primarily residential development, green open spaces and paved parking lots screened with landscaping.

The Eastern Greenway Districts in the North and South are intended as both transitional areas and amenities between the Wisconsin Avenue corridor and adjacent single-family neighborhoods. The aim is

to make the best use of land near the Bethesda Metrorail Station and reduce the impervious surfaces of existing parking lots with the balance of new low to midrise development and a connected network of parks and open spaces.

Arlington North District

The Arlington North district is a transitional zone between the urban core and single-family neighborhoods to the west of the Sector Plan area. Houses used as offices are located along both Montgomery Lane and Arlington Road. The district is located between Woodmont Avenue and Arlington Road and extends from Hampden Lane to Moorland Lane. The form of new development has been mid- to high-rise apartments.

There are opportunities for both open space and connectivity improvements to enhance this area for residents. West of Arlington Road, the institutional buildings and park spaces provide a buffer to the single-family homes. East of Arlington Road, heights should continue to step up as the buildings approach Woodmont Avenue.

The Plan envisions the Arlington North District to retain its mainly residential focus with a mix of low, mid, and high-rise residential development and to continue as a transitional zone between the more commercial urban core and residential neighborhoods west of Arlington Road.

Arlington South District

Arlington South is an emerging center of activity with potential for commercial and residential redevelopment. As an automobile-oriented retail district, convenience and abundance of parking will be critical for this district as redevelopment occurs. By urbanizing the development pattern, building to the sidewalk with parking in the rear or underneath the buildings, the site can support the depth required for junior anchors while balancing the Sector Plan goals for creating a pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment.

Battery Lane District

The Battery Lane District consists primarily of garden and mid-rise apartments on either side of Battery Lane between Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Road, directly south of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) campus. The Battery Lane district has the well-used Battery Lane Urban Park and North Bethesda Trail at its center, and a range of housing types, including single family homes and low- to high-rise buildings. Planted setbacks provide an inviting green streetscape along Battery Lane.

The Plan envisions the Battery Lane District to retain its residential character with a mix of low, mid, and high-rise residential development, to have improved access and connectivity for pedestrians to enhance neighborhood livability and to expand and enhance the existing Battery Lane Urban Park.

South Bethesda District

South Bethesda is an established residential neighborhood situated north of Norwood Local Park, a major area amenity. The district has a garden character with tree-lined streetscapes and planted setbacks, and offers several opportunities to create better connections for pedestrians and bikes within the district and to surrounding destinations.

The Plan envisions the South Bethesda District to retain much of its residential character with a mix of low to mid-rise residential development, to have improved access and connectivity for pedestrians to

enhance neighborhood livability and to provide opportunities for small neighborhood-oriented open spaces.

Property Owner Zoning Requests and Staff Recommendations

As outlined above, this work session will discuss in detail the zoning and building heights as outlined in the Public Hearing Draft, along with the zoning and building height changes requested by property owners.

Property owner zoning requests from written testimony during the Public Hearing process have been documented in the attached spreadsheet and organized by District. In addition, the spreadsheet includes the current zone for the property, the Public Hearing Sector Plan recommended zoning and staff's recommendations based on the property owner's requests. Staff's recommendations weighed the impacts of the requests from property owners to the planning methodology used to achieve the concept framework plan and public benefit initiatives. A map corresponding to the properties and owner's requests will be provided during the hearing.

CONCLUSION

Following the December 15, 2015 work session, staff will summarize the zoning and building heights recommended by the Planning Board. A spreadsheet with the Planning Board's decisions will be posted prior to the next work session (work session #6) in January.

Attachments

- Staff Recommendations for Property Owner Zoning Change Requests Spreadsheet
- October 29, 2015 work session #4– Planning Board recommended zoning and building heights for the Wisconsin Avenue District and revised building heights map
- Correspondence

	A	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
1	DISTRICT	MAP LOCATOR	PROPERTY OWNER/DEVELOPER/ATTORNEY	PROPERTY LOCATION/ADDRESS	CURRENT ZONING	SECTOR PLAN ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS	PROPERTY OWNER REQUESTED ZONING	STAFF RECOMMENDATION	PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION	
143	Arlington North	A	ZOM Mid-Atlantic ATTY: Heather Dhopolsky	4816, 4820, 4905, 4910 Moorland Lane, Bethesda MD 20814 7505, 7507, 7509, 7511 Arlington Rd. Bethesda MD 20814	CR-2.25, C-0.5, R-2.0, H-35T	CR 2.75, C-0.75, R-2.5, H-40 CR 1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-50	CR 4.0, H-75	2.75 FAR for all and max height of 50 feet		
144		B	Edgemont at Bethesda Apartments	4903 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814	CR-2.5, C-0.25, R-2.5, H-75T	CR 3.0, C-0.5, R-3.0, H-90	CR 3.5, H-120	C 2.5, C-0.5, R-2.5, H-90. Property not likely to redevelop on its own		
145		C	Abraham Morrison Memorial LLC ATTY: Emily Vaias	4885 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814	R-60	CR 2.5, C-0.5, R-2.5, H-120	CR 4.0, C-0.5, R-4.0, H-175	CR-2.75, C-0.5, R-2.75 (No Change in Height)		
146		D	The Bethesda Library - Greg Ossant	7400 Arlington Road	R-60	R-60	CR 2.0, C-0.25, R-2.0, H-50	CR 2.0, C-0.25, R-2.0, H-40		
147										
148	Arlington South	A	Bradley Boulevard Shopping Center ATTY: Jody Kline	6900 Arlington Rd. Bethesda, MD 20815	CRT-0.5, C-0.5, R-0.25, H-45	CRT 0.75, C-0.75, R-0.5, H-70	CRT 1.25, C-1.0, R-1.0, H-70	CRT 1.25, C-1.0, R-1.0, H-70		
149		B	Harvey Companies ATTY: Stacy Silber	6933 Arlington Rd. Bethesda MD, 20814	CRT-2.25, C-1.5, R-0.75, H-45/60	CRT 2.75, C-1.75, R-1.0, H-70	CRT 3.5, C-3.25, R-3.25, H-120/70	FAR 3.0, Equalize C and R - 120H along Arlington Blvd only, 70' Height on back of property next to CCT		
150										
151	Battery Lane	A	Aldon Management Company	4949, 4998, 5015 Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814	R-10	R-10	CR 4.0, H-150	NC		
152		B	Battery Lane Apartments ATTY: Robert Harris	4887 Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814	PD-100	CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120	CR 4.0, H-150	CR - 2.75, C-0.5, R-2.75, H-120		
153		C	Aldon Management Company	4890, 4858, 4857 Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814	PD-100	CR 3.5, C-0.5, R-3.5, H-120	CR 4.0, H-150	NC		
154		D	Aldon Management Company	4900 Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120	CR 4.0, H-150	CR - 2.75, C-0.5, R-2.75, H-120		
155		E	4918-4938 Battery Lane LLC ATTY: Heather Dhopolsky	4918 Battery Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120	CR 3.5, C-0.5, R-3.5, H-120	CR - 2.75, C-0.5, R-2.75, H-120		
156		F	Shelter Development (GNRW Properties, LLC) ATTY: Pat Harris / Francoise Carrier (owner rep)	4907 Rugby Ave. Bethesda, MD 20814	CR-3.0, C-1.0, R-2.75, H-90T	CR 3.5, C-1.25, R-3.0, H-120	Plan revision to park edge designation - cuts through brightview site	Recommend revision to Park edge designation in Plan Graphic		
157		G	The Maven Group (GNRW Properties, LLC) Francoise Carrier	8101 Glenbrook Rd. Bethesda, MD 20814	CR-3.0, C-1.0, R-2.75, H-90T	CR 3.5, C-1.25, R-3.0, H-35	H-110	CR 3.0, C-1.0, R-2.75, H-90 (Keep existing including split zone)		
158										
159										
160										
161	South Bethesda	A	Aldon Management Company	4800,4804,4808 Wellington Dr. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-130 or H-150	NC		
162		B	Aldon Management Company	4701-4705, 4709 Bradley Blvd. Bethesda, MD 20815 6900-6904, 6908 Strathmore St. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-130 or H-150	NC		
163		C	Aldon Management Company	4740 Bradley Blvd. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-130 or H-150	NC		
164		D	Aldon Management Company	4730 Bradley Blvd. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-130 or H-150	NC		
165		E	HOC Barclay Co	4716 Bradley Blvd. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 3.0, C-0.25, R-3.0, H-70	CR 4.0, H-100	NC		
166		F	Aldon Management Company	4757 Chevy Chase Dr. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-130 or H-150	NC		
167		G	Aldon Management Company	4750 Chevy Chase Dr. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-130 or H-150	NC		
168		H	John Cokinos	4740 Chevy Chase Dr. Bethesda MD, 20815	R-10	CR 3.5, C-1.0, R-3.5, H-70	H-85	NC		
169		I	Bethesda Fire Department	6600 Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-70	CR 2.5, H-80	NC		
170		J	Strathmore Apartments (Kossow MGNT) ATTY: Robert Harris	7025-7036 Strathmore St. Bethesda, MD 20815	R-10	CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70	CR 4.0, H-150	NC		
171		K	Offutt Dynasty Trust Properties - Dalrymple ATTY: Robert	6903 Strathmore Street, 6930 and 6932 Wisconsin Ave	R-10, CR 3.0, C-2.0, R-2.75, H-75T	Strathmore Street = CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70. Wisconsin Ave: CR 3.5, C-2.5, R-3.25, H-90	CR-5.0, H-120	NC		
172		Eastern Greenway	A (FF)	Wisconsin LLC (B.F. Saul) ATTY: Bob Dalrymple	8001 Block of Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20814	CR-3.0, C-2.0, R-2.75, H-60T	CR 3.5, C-2.5, R-3.25, H-70	Would like 145 feet height along Wisconsin Ave, Proposes that the CR Zoning be extended one row of lots further east with a H-90/ CRT 1.0, H-90	H-145 along Wisconsin Avenue, 35-70 feet from back of Wisconsin to Tilbury Street	
173			B	Hadjin Associates LLC ATTY: Emily Vaias	4503/4507 Stanford St. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	CRN-0.5, C-0.5, R-0.25, H-35 R-60 CRT-1.5, C-1.5, R-0.5, H-35	CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 CRT 1.75, C-1.75, R-0.75, H-70	CR 3.5, C-3.5, R-3.25, H-70	No Change - Retain CRT zoning	
174	C		The Lebling Companies ATTY: Barbara Sears	4504 Walsh St.	CRT-1.5, C-1.5, R-0.5, H-35	CRT 1.75, C-1.75, R-0.75, H-70	CR 3.0	No Change - Retain CRT Zoning		
175	D (W)		Bernstein Management Company	7121 Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20814	CR-3.0, C-2.0, R-2.75, H-75T	CR 6.0, C-4.75, R-5.75, H-200	CR 7.0, Request County Parking Lots be zoned for a FAR of 1.5	No Change		
176	E		MCDOT: Parking Lot District - LOT 24, LOT 10, LOT 25	4601 Leland Street/4707 Highland Avenue	R-60	CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70	CR 3.5, C-3.5, R-3.5, H-70	CR 2.5, C-2.5, R-2.5, H-70		
177	F		The Writer's Center - Greg Ossant	4508 Walsh Street	R-60	R-60	CR 3.5, C-2.5, R-3.25, H-90	CR 2.5, C-2.5, R-2.5, H-70		

Howerton, Leslye

From: cokinosaol.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 3:12 PM
To: Kronenberg, Robert; Howerton, Leslye; DeOcampo, Marc
Subject: 4740 Chevy Chase Dr. redevelopment (Pls reply, "I have it")

December 8, 2015

Robert Kronenberg, Leslye Howerton, and Marc DeOcampo
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: 4740 Chevy Chase Drive

Dear Robert, Leslye, and Marc,

Thank you for serving our community, and thank you for our past conversations as well as your interest and assistance with our proposed redevelopment project. As we have expressed, we are very interested in redeveloping our current site with a mixed use project of office/residential and upgrading the aesthetics of Chevy Chase Drive and the South Bethesda District.

Upon reviewing the Bethesda Downtown Plan Draft of May 2015 with my consultant team, there are some items to share that we would like to see amended relative to the future development plans for this site. We very much would like to get your support.

1. The proposed zoning is CR 3.5, C1.0, R 3.5. While our intention and preliminary design that we have presented to you is to develop a project that includes one or two levels of office along with four or five levels of residential use, we are well aware that market and economic conditions are constantly changing as well as future market needs and considerations. Therefore, we are asking that the proposed zoning be amended to CR 3.5, C 3.5, R 3.5. This would allow us the flexibility to adapt to changing market and economic conditions for appropriate office/residential mixes as needed.
2. The proposed zoning indicates a building height of 70 feet. Due to the small footprint of our site, it has been a struggle to come up with an economic design solution that yields the appropriate building size coupled with minimizing the number of below grade parking levels. The design that we have shared with you works by being able to provide some surface parking in order to meet the requisite parking spaces. With the "drive thru" design however, this does raise the overall building height to approximately 72-73 feet. In addition, our design incorporates a roof terrace with stair and elevator access, so there is a small penthouse component that is approximately 82-83 feet. Due to these constraints, we are asking that the building height for the main roof be changed to 75 feet, and a small penthouse area height of 85 feet.
3. The draft plan references a pedestrian pathway with access to Norwood Park. As you know, as property owners, we have been allowing our neighbors informal access thru our property for years, and we have indicated that we are happy to dedicate a more formal pedestrian promenade

path as we have shown to you on our preliminary building design plans. We would like for the language in the draft to be modified as such to represent “a pedestrian pathway no wider than 8-10 feet and to be situated within the side yard setback area as to not inhibit the proposed building design, parking structure, and building structure.

Thank you in advance for your considerations of these amendments. Please contact me should you have any questions or wish to discuss any of the items, and our team looks forward to working with you and your staff on our redevelopment project.

Sincerely,

John Cokinos

From: Cecily Baskir <cebaskir@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 10:03 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: 'John Freedman'; Wright, Gwen; Councilmember.Berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Leventhal@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Town Office;
al.lang@townofchevy Chase.org; fcecere@townofchevy Chase.org
Subject: Bethesda Sector Plan- Southern Gateway Proposal
Attachments: Letter to Planning Commission about Southern Gateway 12-8-15.pdf

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

December 8, 2015

VIA EMAIL (MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org) AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair
and Members of the County Planning Board
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Bethesda Sector Plan: Eastern Greenway/Wisconsin Avenue Corridor "Southern Gateway" Proposal

Chairman Anderson and Members of the County Planning Board:

We are writing to let you know of our opposition to the so-called "Southern Gateway" component of the Eastern Greenway/Wisconsin Avenue Corridor in the May 2015 Staff Draft of the Bethesda Sector Plan. Specifically, the Staff Draft includes a proposal (i) to increase the zoning for building height for the St. John's Parish, the St. John's parking lot, and the Bray & Scarff building (6801 Wisconsin) to 120 feet, (ii) to increase the height limit for the Shops of Wisconsin Avenue to 90 feet, and (iii) to increase the zoning for the portion bordering West Avenue between Bradley Lane and Stanford Street to 70 feet. We have also learned that since the Staff Draft, the proposed height limit for the Shops of Wisconsin Avenue has been increased an additional 30 feet, to a total of 120 feet.

These changes would allow development of buildings of significantly greater height and density than are currently allowed in South Bethesda. Indeed, the proposed rezoning of 6801 Wisconsin and Shops at Wisconsin Avenue would tower over any other building south of the areas directly adjacent to the Bethesda Metro Station. Development on this scale is inconsistent with the predominantly single-home residential character of the Town of Chevy Chase adjacent to the proposed zoning changes.

Moreover, development on this scale is inconsistent with numerous other goals articulated in the Staff's Plan. If these properties are redeveloped to the full heights allowed, these are some of the significant problems they would pose:

1. These zoning changes contemplate multi-story development on West Avenue directly adjacent to existing single family residential areas on West Avenue, Ridge and Stanford Streets and Bradley Lane with no buffer.

This seems inconsistent with the articulated goal in the Staff Plan of providing a "green connector and buffer along the eastern edge of the Sector Plan area." Staff Plan at 122. We strongly support the idea of a buffer between the development of Bethesda and the residential neighborhoods in the Town of Chevy Chase, and it is hard to see how there can be any real buffer or transition area between West Avenue and one or more 120 foot buildings located on Wisconsin between Bradley and Stanford. Buildings up to 70 feet directly on West Avenue would leave no buffer at all.

We note that although the Staff Plan elsewhere suggests that 70 feet buildings should have a "Tier III" neighborhood public green with at least a 75 feet foot setback for a public green (*see* Staff Plan at 127), the Plan for the area adjacent to West Avenue appears to propose a far narrower setback.

2. The proposed developments would exacerbate bad traffic, parking, and noise in the residential areas adjacent to St. John's and the Shops of Wisconsin Avenue.

Both Ridge and Stanford Streets lack contiguous sidewalks, and we already have significant safety concerns about cut-through traffic driving very fast down neighborhood streets, creating hazards for the many young children walking and playing in the area. Again, it is hard to see how allowing multi-story development directly adjacent to West Avenue is consistent with the articulated goal in the Staff Plan of "prevent[ing] overflow parking and cut-through traffic from having an undesirable impact on the . . . Town of Chevy Chase." Staff Plan at 122.

3. It is difficult to see how development of the size proposed under the Sector Plan would not have a significant, negative impact on residents of West Avenue, Ridge and Stanford Streets, and Bradley Lane. There is simply no place that a construction project of this size could be staged without fundamentally disrupting residents of these areas.

4. Moreover, it is difficult to see how neighborhood roads could absorb traffic related to a building of this size.

Of the adjacent roads, West Avenue and Ridge and Stanford Streets have only one lane for through traffic, and the relevant section of Bradley Lane has one traffic lane in each direction. This stands in contrast to many of the areas in the Sector Plan where the Staff has proposed significant increases in building height, which are adjacent to four or six lane roads.

5. We note that while there has been significant publicity and public debate about proposed changes to the area adjacent to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market (three blocks to the north of the proposed Southern Gateway), to our knowledge, there have not been comparable efforts to publicize the Southern Gateway changes, nor do we think there has been sufficient effort to ascertain the views of residents in the adjacent neighborhoods.

We also note that, to the best of our knowledge, no public comments appear to have been filed on behalf of the proposed changes, and accordingly, we believe that the proposed zoning changes should be stricken from the draft plan.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

John Freedman, 4408 Ridge Street
Cecily Baskir, 4408 Ridge Street
Larry Samelson, 6707 East Avenue
Elizabeth Trosman, 6707 East Avenue

Jane Bruno, 6909 East Avenue
Len Bruno, 6909 East Avenue
Sally Kelly, 7300 Oak Lane
Jeffrey Marqusee, 4402 Ridge Street
Deborah Zarin, 4402 Ridge Street
Ann C. Ashbery, 4404 Ridge Street
Russ C. Powell, 4404 Ridge Street
Ted Dean, 4405 Ridge Street
Yuehong Wang, 4405 Ridge Street
Alicia Bazán-Jiménez, 4407 Ridge Street
Lauren Boccardi, 4411 Ridge Street
Paul Pavlica, 4411 Ridge Street
Elizabeth Johnson, 4413 Ridge Street
Adam Hensel, 4414 Ridge Street
Rachel Waters, 4414 Ridge Street
Shana Jacobus, 4416 Ridge Street
Jane Axelrad, 4417 Ridge Street
Martin Malsch, 4417 Ridge Street

Helen Price, 4419 Ridge Street
Michael Pearse, 4419 Ridge Street
Jenny Brilliant, 4422 Ridge Street
Myron Brilliant, 4422 Ridge Street
Evalyn Jack, 4423 Ridge Street
David Aiken, 4423 Ridge Street
Brad Haughey, 4424 Ridge Street
Laurie Haughey, 4424 Ridge Street
Marce Webster, 4425 Ridge Street
Andrea D. Harris, 4428 Ridge Street
Clara Monsma, 4428 Ridge Street
Linna Barnes, 7112 Ridgewood Avenue
(Town of Chevy Chase Councilmember, 2003-2013)
Chris Mixer, 7112 Ridgewood Avenue
Bridget Hartman, 7214 Ridgewood Avenue
Georgia Guhin, 4006 Rosemary Street
Michael Guhin, 4006 Rosemary Street
Stephen Seidel, 4426 Stanford Street
Annette Simon, 6803 West Avenue
Rob Portman, 6803 West Avenue
Kathryn Vita, 6917 Woodside Place

Cc: Gwen Wright (email only) (gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org)
Roger Berliner (email only) (Councilmember.Berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Mark Elrich (email only) (Councilmember.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Nancy Floreen (email only) (Councilmember.Floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov)
George Leventhal (email only) (Councilmember.Leventhal@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Hans Riemer (email only) (Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Town of Chevy Chase Town Council (email only) (townoffice@townofchevychase.org)
Al Lang (email only) (al.lang@townofchevychase.org)
Fred Cecere (email only) (fcecere@townofchevychase.org)

December 8, 2015

VIA EMAIL (MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org) AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair
and Members of the County Planning Board
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Bethesda Sector Plan: Eastern Greenway/Wisconsin Avenue Corridor "Southern Gateway" Proposal

Chairman Anderson and Members of the County Planning Board:

We are writing to let you know of our opposition to the so-called "Southern Gateway" component of the Eastern Greenway/Wisconsin Avenue Corridor in the May 2015 Staff Draft of the Bethesda Sector Plan. Specifically, the Staff Draft includes a proposal (i) to increase the zoning for building height for the St. John's Parish, the St. John's parking lot, and the Bray & Scarff building (6801 Wisconsin) to 120 feet, (ii) to increase the height limit for the Shops of Wisconsin Avenue to 90 feet, and (iii) to increase the zoning for the portion bordering West Avenue between Bradley Lane and Stanford Street to 70 feet. We have also learned that since the Staff Draft, the proposed height limit for the Shops of Wisconsin Avenue has been increased an additional 30 feet, to a total of 120 feet.

These changes would allow development of buildings of significantly greater height and density than are currently allowed in South Bethesda. Indeed, the proposed rezoning of 6801 Wisconsin and Shops at Wisconsin Avenue would tower over any other building south of the areas directly adjacent to the Bethesda Metro Station. Development on this scale is inconsistent with the predominantly single-home residential character of the Town of Chevy Chase adjacent to the proposed zoning changes.

Moreover, development on this scale is inconsistent with numerous other goals articulated in the Staff's Plan. If these properties are redeveloped to the full heights allowed, these are some of the significant problems they would pose:

1. These zoning changes contemplate multi-story development on West Avenue directly adjacent to existing single family residential areas on West Avenue, Ridge and Stanford Streets and Bradley Lane with no buffer.

This seems inconsistent with the articulated goal in the Staff Plan of providing a "green connector and buffer along the eastern edge of the Sector Plan area." Staff Plan at 122. We

strongly support the idea of a buffer between the development of Bethesda and the residential neighborhoods in the Town of Chevy Chase, and it is hard to see how there can be any real buffer or transition area between West Avenue and one or more 120 foot buildings located on Wisconsin between Bradley and Stanford. Buildings up to 70 feet directly on West Avenue would leave no buffer at all.

We note that although the Staff Plan elsewhere suggests that 70 feet buildings should have a "Tier III" neighborhood public green with at least a 75 foot setback for a public green (see Staff Plan at 127), the Plan for the area adjacent to West Avenue appears to propose a far narrower setback.

2. The proposed developments would exacerbate bad traffic, parking, and noise in the residential areas adjacent to St. John's and the Shops of Wisconsin Avenue.

Both Ridge and Stanford Streets lack contiguous sidewalks, and we already have significant safety concerns about cut-through traffic driving very fast down neighborhood streets, creating hazards for the many young children walking and playing in the area. Again, it is hard to see how allowing multi-story development directly adjacent to West Avenue is consistent with the articulated goal in the Staff Plan of "prevent[ing] overflow parking and cut-through traffic from having an undesirable impact on the . . . Town of Chevy Chase." Staff Plan at 122.

3. It is difficult to see how development of the size proposed under the Sector Plan would not have a significant, negative impact on residents of West Avenue, Ridge and Stanford Streets, and Bradley Lane. There is simply no place that a construction project of this size could be staged without fundamentally disrupting residents of these areas.

4. Moreover, it is difficult to see how neighborhood roads could absorb traffic related to a building of this size.

Of the adjacent roads, West Avenue and Ridge and Stanford Streets have only one lane for through traffic, and the relevant section of Bradley Lane has one traffic lane in each direction. This stands in contrast to many of the areas in the Sector Plan where the Staff has proposed significant increases in building height, which are adjacent to four or six lane roads.

5. We note that while there has been significant publicity and public debate about proposed changes to the area adjacent to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market (three blocks to the north of the proposed Southern Gateway), to our knowledge, there have not been comparable efforts to publicize the Southern Gateway changes, nor do we think there has been sufficient effort to ascertain the views of residents in the adjacent neighborhoods.

We also note that, to the best of our knowledge, no public comments appear to have been filed on behalf of the proposed changes, and accordingly, we believe that the proposed zoning changes should be stricken from the draft plan.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

John Freedman, 4408 Ridge Street
Cecily Baskir, 4408 Ridge Street
Larry Samelson, 6707 East Avenue
Elizabeth Trosman, 6707 East Avenue
Jane Bruno, 6909 East Avenue
Len Bruno, 6909 East Avenue
Sally Kelly, 7300 Oak Lane
Jeffrey Marqusee, 4402 Ridge Street
Deborah Zarin, 4402 Ridge Street
Ann C. Ashbery, 4404 Ridge Street
Russ C. Powell, 4404 Ridge Street
Helen Price, 4419 Ridge Street
Michael Pearse, 4419 Ridge Street
Jenny Brilliant, 4422 Ridge Street
Myron Brilliant, 4422 Ridge Street
Evalyn Jack, 4423 Ridge Street
David Aiken, 4423 Ridge Street
Brad Haughey, 4424 Ridge Street
Laurie Haughey, 4424 Ridge Street
Maree Webster, 4425 Ridge Street
Andrea D. Harris, 4428 Ridge Street
Clara Monsma, 4428 Ridge Street

Ted Dean, 4405 Ridge Street
Yuehong Wang, 4405 Ridge Street
Alicia Bazán-Jiménez, 4407 Ridge Street
Lauren Boccardi, 4411 Ridge Street
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Annette Simon, 6803 West Avenue
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Kathryn Vita, 6917 Woodside Place

Cc: Gwen Wright (email only) (gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org)
Roger Berliner (email only) (Councilmember.Berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Mark Elrich (email only) (Councilmember.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Nancy Floreen (email only) (Councilmember.Floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov)
George Leventhal (email only) (Councilmember.Leventhal@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Hans Riemer (email only) (Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Town of Chevy Chase Town Council (email only) (townoffice@townofchevyCHASE.org)
Al Lang (email only) (al.lang@townofchevyCHASE.org)
Fred Cecere (email only) (fcecere@townofchevyCHASE.org)

BREGMAN, BERBERT, SCHWARTZ & GILDAY, LLC

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
7315 WISCONSIN AVENUE
SUITE 800 WEST

BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20814-3244

TELEPHONE: (301) 656-2707

FACSIMILE: (301) 981-6525

www.bregmanlaw.com

VIRGINIA OFFICE
5529 LEE HIGHWAY
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22207

KAY B. SCHWARTZ (1956-2011)

EDWARD WEISS (DC)
OF COUNSEL

SUSAN ELEFF (MD, PA, NJ, IL)
OF COUNSEL

RICHARD E. SCHIMEL (MD, DC)
OF COUNSEL

MARK L. ROSENBERG (MD, DC)
OF COUNSEL

FRANÇOISE M. CARRIER (MD, DC, CA)
OF COUNSEL

fcARRIER@bregmanlaw.com

DOUGLAS M. BREGMAN (MD, DC)
LAURENCE H. BERBERT (MD, DC)
TIMOTHY P. SCHWARTZ (MD, DC, VA)
MARK A. GILDAY (MD, DC)
GEOFFREY T. HERVEY (MD, DC, VA)
KEVIN B. McPARLAND (MD, DC)
DANIEL P. RIGTERINK (MD, DC)
HEATHER LIBMAN KAFETZ (MD, DC)
DANIELLE T. ERKMANN (VA ONLY)
WENDY D. PULLANO (MD, DC)
CATHERINE B. HARRINGTON (MD, DC)
CHRISTOPHER B. BOWMAN (DC, VA)
GRACE BURNSIDE (MD, DC, VA)
CHRISTINE S. PUGH (MD, DC)
KEVIN G. BARKER (MD, DC, NY)
BELLA HELFORD (MD, NY, NJ)

December 9, 2015

By electronic mail

Hon. Casey Anderson
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Bethesda Downtown Plan Public Hearing Draft
4815 Bradley Boulevard and 4809 Bradley Boulevard

Dear Mr. Anderson and Planning Board Members:

I am writing on behalf of my client, Adam Thomas, to transmit comments on the Public Hearing Draft of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan and a request to recommend a different zone for two properties Mr. Thomas owns at 4815 and 4809 Bradley Boulevard. Mr. Thomas is a scientist at the National Institute of Health and resides at 4815 Bradley Boulevard, located on the corner of Bradley Boulevard and Leland Street. He utilizes the adjacent home at 4809 Bradley Boulevard as a rental property. Both of these properties are located in the South Bethesda District of the draft plan, and are part of the Sacks residential subdivision. They are currently in the R-60 zone, and each is developed with a detached single-family home. As you can see on the attached annotated copy of page 129 of the Bethesda draft plan, Mr. Thomas's properties are located one long block east of the busy intersection of Arlington Road and Bradley Boulevard, and two long blocks west of Wisconsin Avenue. Mr. Thomas would like to request that his properties be recommended in the Bethesda Downtown Plan for the THD (Townhouse High Density) zone, as discussed below.

The Bethesda draft plan recommends retaining the R-60 zone for all lots in the Sacks subdivision. It also recommends retaining the existing R-30 zoning designation for properties directly across Bradley Boulevard from Mr. Thomas's properties. A few houses east of Mr. Thomas's properties, the draft plan recommends rezoning properties abutting the Sacks

subdivision that are currently in the R-10 zone to the CR zone, with densities of 1.5 FAR and height limits of 70 feet. These recommendations are described on pages 128 - 130 of the draft plan.

Mr. Thomas has lived on this stretch of Bradley Boulevard for eleven years. In that time period, he has observed that while homes in most of the Sacks subdivision sell quickly, lots on Bradley Boulevard take much longer to sell when they go on the market. This is likely due to the pressures these "edge" properties face: Bradley Boulevard at this location is a wide thoroughfare with fast-moving traffic, not pedestrian-friendly, and not the type of quiet location in which single-family detached homes are most desirable. Of the nine remaining single family homes on the north side of Bradley Blvd, one has been converted to a dentists' office (4773 Bradley) while another has sat vacant for 11 years (4765 Bradley). Meanwhile the multi-family buildings directly across the street as well as to the east (Bradley View Apartments) and west (The Fields) are thriving. Clearly these lots are no longer well suited for single-family homes.

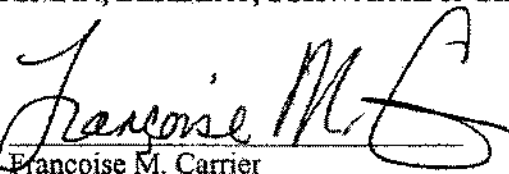
Mr. Thomas would like to request that his properties be recommended in the Bethesda Downtown Plan for rezoning to the THD (Townhouse High Density) zone. This would allow his properties, which together comprise slightly less than 16,000 square feet of land, to potentially be developed with up to five townhouses at some point in the future. We would argue that a small row of townhouses at this location would be more compatible than single-family detached homes with the character of Bradley Boulevard, as well as with the multi-family developments on both sides of Bradley Boulevard, and the more intense commercial development fronting Bradley Boulevard just west of Leland Street. Moreover, a row of attached homes would buffer the single-family detached homes directly behind Mr. Thomas's properties from the effects of noise, activity and traffic on Bradley Boulevard.

Mr. Thomas respectfully requests your favorable consideration of his request. I will be available at the work session where you address the South Bethesda District, and hope for the opportunity to address you with regard to this request.

Sincerely yours,

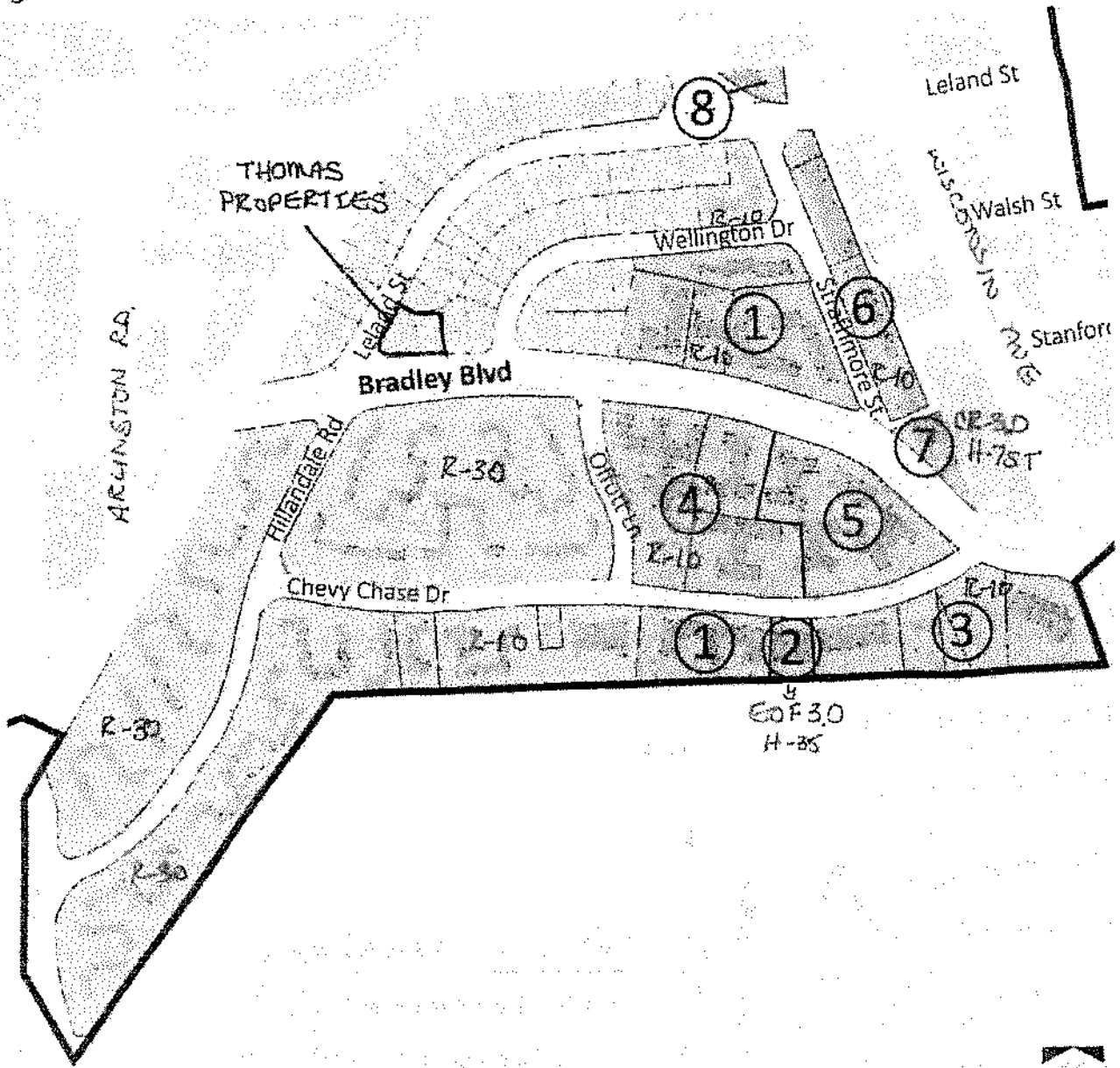
BREGMAN, BERBERT, SCHWARTZ & GILDAY, LLC

By:


Françoise M. Carrier

cc: Members of the Planning Board
Leslye Howerton
Robert Kronenberg

Figure 3.17: South Bethesda District Recommended Zoning



▭ Sector Plan Boundary

▨ P-6C, THD

▨ R-10, R-30

① CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-70

② CR 3.5, C-1.0, R-3.5, H-70

③ CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-70

④ CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70

⑤ CR 3.0, C-0.25, R-3.0, H-70

⑥ CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70

⑦ CR 3.5, C-2.5, R-3.25, H-120

⑧ CR 3.5, C-1.25, R-3.5, H-90



From: Michael Fetchko <mfetchko@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 6:29 PM
To: MCP-Chair; Kronenberg, Robert; Howerton, Leslye; DeOcampo, Marc; McManus, Patricia
Subject: Bethesda Downtown Plan: Battery Lane Park

Mr Casey, Mr Kronenberg, Ms Howerton, Mr DeOcampo, Ms McManus:

It has come to my attention that Planning Board meetings on 10 December and 14 December may discuss the Battery Lane area and acquisition of land for Bethesda parks, two items that are of significant concern to me and to my neighbors around Battery Lane Park.

While I applaud your desire to acquire additional space for Bethesda parks, I am disheartened by the Bethesda Plan's proposal to use newly acquired space next to Battery Lane Park for a road through the park. This is a misguided proposal and is dangerous to the people who enjoy the park.

From the draft plan (page 120):

Connect Norfolk Avenue to Battery Lane with a new shared park street that serves as a flexible public space for events, and expand Battery Lane Urban Park to the south. This proposed street is contingent on the acquisition of additional parkland for Battery Land Urban Park with the goal of no net loss of parkland with construction of this road.

(page 32):

This proposed street would improve connectivity between the residential area along Battery Lane and the Woodmont Triangle commercial district by extending the existing Woodmont Triangle street grid to the northern portion of the Sector Plan area. Additionally, this street would improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation within the Downtown Bethesda area and may help to activate the eastern edge of Battery Lane Urban Park. This connection may be implemented as a private street and should accommodate two-way vehicular travel. This would provide an opportunity for a mix of future retail and residential uses to have frontage on Battery Lane Urban Park. Public/Private ownership and specific horizontal alignment should be determined at the time adjacent properties are reviewed for regulatory approval. This proposed street is contingent on the acquisition of additional parkland for Battery Land Urban Park with the goal of no net loss of parkland with construction of this road.

It is not at all clear who is to 'share' this road through Battery Lane Park. When cars are allowed to drive on a road, it cannot be 'shared' by anyone else. You cannot walk, ride a bike, push a stroller, roller-blade, run, kick a soccer ball, throw a frisbee or a football, play bocce, walk a dog, or dozens of other activities on a street when cars are driving on it. All of these activities, however, can be done in Battery Lane Park as it now exists: a safe, car-free greenspace with paths, tennis and basketball courts, a playground, grass, and mature trees.

It is also not at all clear who thinks putting a road through Battery Lane Park is a good idea. You have heard testimony last summer, received dozens of letters, and received petitions from Battery Lane area residents overwhelmingly against putting a road through Battery Lane Park. Ms Howerton and Mr DeOcampo also heard directly from Whitehall Condominium, Sussex House, and Battery Gardens residents at a meeting on 17 November at Whitehall Condominium who again were overwhelmingly against the idea of a road intruding on Battery Lane Park. (We again thank them for the time they spent talking to and listening to us that day).

But no one has been able to explain to us who is in favor of a road through Battery Lane Park. In addition, no one has been able to explain why a road through a park makes the park better.

We welcome improvements to the lighting, seating, maintenance, and plantings in Battery Lane Park. And if possible, we welcome increasing the space of the park. But we do not welcome any intrusion of a dangerous and unnecessary road through Battery Lane Park. If you want to improve the pedestrian and bicycle circulation through the park, please improve the lighting and widen one of the paths currently in the park. A road through Battery Lane Park will not improve pedestrian or bicycle circulation; it will actually do the exact opposite.

If a goal of the Bethesda Downtown Plan is to increase the use and enjoyment of its existing greenspaces, keep and improve Battery Lane Park as it now is: a park that can be freely enjoyed and used without the danger of cars driving on a road through it. Please pay attention to the people who use Battery Lane Park every day for its intended purpose and do not disrupt it with a road.

Thank you.

Michael Fetchko
4977 Battery Lane
Bethesda MD 20814

RECEIVED
1297

DEC 08 2015

From: Alan <alandieringer@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, December 07, 2015 11:23 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Bethesda Downtown Plan: Proposed Road Through Battery Lane Park Would Be a Child Safety and Health Hazard

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Anderson,

A road through Battery Lane Park would seriously degrade one of the only recreational opportunities for children within the Woodmont Triangle area, where many new condo and apartment buildings are being erected; Battery Lane Park is a block away. Where does the Planning Board propose these children play, if not at a car-free Battery Lane Park? We are adding children with hundreds of new multi-family units, and yet the Planning Board proposes making an attractive park with three car-free borders into one with a busy road running directly adjacent to it. Has any assessment been made of the interactions between playing children and traffic without any buffer zone? Has any assesment been made of the effects of the air pollution that would be introduced into a children's playground by this road? In some European cities the CBD's are restricted to electric only vehicles. Is Montgomery County ignoring the health effects of a road through a children's playground? The argument that the park will be made larger is specious as you will be replacing non-park adjacent green space with a road and a major portion of the land designated as "enlarging" the park is cut off from the main play area by the proposed roadway. The proposed roadway seriously degrades the park's aesthetics and the health and safety of childrent playing there and should be deleted from the Bethesda Downtown plan.

Sincerely yours,
Alan Dieringer
5104 Battery Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814

From: Susan Spring <sbspring@att.net>
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2015 11:50 AM
To: Howerton, Leslye
Subject: Comments for December 15 Hearing on Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan

Comments for December 15 Hearing on Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan

Ms. Leslye Howerton, Planner Coordinator, Area One

These comments are meant for the December 15, 2015 of the Montgomery County Planning Board on the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, particularly with respect to the Battery Lane Urban Park. I have looked at the plan, attended the June 24, 2015 hearing on the Bethesda Sector plan and heard a presentation on November 17, 2015 at my condominium (Whitehall Condominium, 4977 Battery Lane, Bethesda) by Ms. Leslye Howerton, Planner Coordinator, Area One about the proposed plans for Battery Lane Urban Park.

As I have stated in prior communications, I remain surprised and distressed to hear about the plan to extend Norfolk Ave through the Battery Lane Park at 4960 Battery Lane. This small park is a refuge for the many residents living in the immediate area, many in the high rise buildings that the County has continued to encourage. These citizens often have little or no quiet green space to enjoy. The current park is used by a range of residents of all age groups from teenage to family tennis players, from young people playing pick-up basketball, to seniors and joggers exercising, friends of all ages conversing, people enjoying a book and to young families playing with their children. Ruining the park by putting a shared roadway, seems to be against all of the County's environmental principles from healthy air, exercise, green space and green plantings, fewer cars, people walking and riding bicycles. This proposed shared roadway seems to be contrary to the public good and sound reasoning. The statements made by Ms. Howerton that this new version of the park will be better and safer don't seem to reflect actual knowledge and experience about the park. People have gone through the park which is well lit at all hours of the day. There does not seem to be any documentation that there has been crime or other safety issues. The park itself is about ¼ of a block wide and ¼ of a block deep. One can stand at either entrance (on Battery or on Norfolk) and look down the paths and seem through the whole park. There are no real "hiding" places from which desperado's can leap out. The plan to "improve" the park by "adding extra acreage" does not make sense either. This "new" configuration would have a "new piece of park" across Battery Lane and a "new piece of park" across Rugby Avenue. Adding the road, would create a patch work of 4 pieces of unconnected land involving crossing of roads. It is hard to imagine what kind of facilities could be places on these "extra" pieces other than some benches. The new plan does not take into account that now children and pets would have to cross multiple roads—that would make the park "less safe" for sure. Balls hit out of the tennis court or basketball court could now fall on automobiles.

This proposed shared roadway also seems to be contrary to the public good and sound reasoning. Importantly the plan to split the park in half with acquired land does not make sense given that the new police station will be located on Rugby Avenue; so there will be police cars racing to emergencies while pedestrians, children and bicyclists are trying to cross. Additionally, Battery Lane has become more congested as it was narrowed to 2 lanes, one in each direction, from 4 lanes to accommodate a rarely used bicycle lane. In addition to the Bethesda Rescue Squad and multiple bus lines, 34, 70, J2, J3, J9, and school buses the "vision" is to dump more traffic onto it from Norfolk Avenue by the so-called connection. Moreover, right now Norfolk Ave does have a

number of community events such as movie night, Taste of Bethesda, Art Sale. It is almost like the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

The whole thing seems to be an exercise in "showing that something is being done," even if it is not needed. What the park does need is better drainage on the path near the Battery Gardens apartments and replacement of the many trees that have been lost over the years. Some kind of fencing around the children's play area (like that found in the Arlington Road Park) or moving and enlarging the children's play area to the plot of land adjacent to the Battery Garden's apartments. Those would be improvements.

As someone who goes through the park virtually every day, and as a voter and taxpayer, I find this an embarrassment. I hope that sanity will prevail.

Sincerely yours,

Susan B. Spring (sbspring@att.net)
4977 Battery Ln, Apt 515
Bethesda, MD 20814

From: Luis Ascanio <lascaniof@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 26, 2015 9:03 AM
To: MCP-Chair; Kronenberg, Robert; Howerton, Leslye; DeOcampo, Marc; McManus, Patricia
Subject: PLEASE PRESERVE BATTERY LANE PARK

Dear Members of MOCO Urban Planning Leadership
Dear Ladies & Gentlemen,

I am kindly writing to you on THANKSGIVING day to express my opposition to the plan of sacrificing part of the Park located on Battery Lane (Bethesda) to build a public road. Not even a shared street will compensate for the loss of the green area used by local residents to walk and play with their children, walk their pets, to nurseries and preschool facilities which utilize the park as a play ground, and retirement homes that use the area as walking/resting place for senior citizen. When the weather is reasonable the park is extensively utilized by the local population! Please also consider the consequence of opening access to the already busy area surrounding the NIH, particularly taking into account that the crossing of Wisconsin Avenue with Battery Lane will receive traffic activity related to the opening of a supermarket. Bear also in mind that there is a rescue squad station at the crossing of Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane which is strategically located and requires fluid traffic in tending to emergencies. Additional traffic flow into Battery Lane will result in extreme traffic congestion! I also want to say that the argument about the park being unsafe to support a "share street" is simply weak. Safety issues are primarily resolved with improved policing and cooperation from the community (neighborhood watch) to report any inappropriate use of the facilities. Please preserve the Battery Lane Park neighborhood GREEN and do not approve any more brick and mortar to replace park and recreation areas! Please consider my concerns and think about the problem not only in the complex position of competent urban designers, regulators and managers who you surely are, but also from the local perspective of end users and neighbors.

Kind regards,

Luis Ascanio
4979 Battery Lane,
Bethesda, Md 20814

RECEIVED
12 19
NOV 23 2015

MCP-CTRACK

From: Michael Fetchko <mfetchko@earthlink.net>
Sent: Friday, November 20, 2015 6:11 PM
To: MCP-CR
Subject: Re: Park and Planning's infoShare: November 20, 2015

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

hello.

can you confirm where and when the meeting on 15 December will be?

and can you be more specific which aspects of the Bethesda plan will be discussed at that meeting?

thank you.

Michael Fetchko

Howerton, Leslye

From: holclem@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 1:50 PM
To: Howerton, Leslye
Cc: Michael Fetchko; Lee Weinstein; Bill Didden; Jim Clemans
Subject: Re: Battery lane park meeting Whitehall

Leslye,
Thank you and your team very much for presenting your plan and fielding our questions.
We are better informed thanks to your meeting with us.
Some of us will try to get to the January session.
Thanks,
Holly

Sent from my iPhone

> On Nov 18, 2015, at 9:20 AM, "Howerton, Leslye" <Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org> wrote:

>

> Holly,

> Thank you again for inviting us to speak to the group. We hope it was at least helpful in understand the recommendation completely.

>

> As promised below is information regarding the work session schedule, email addresses to send in written testimony to the Planning Board, and the location of the Planning Board sessions.

>

> 1. Next work session for the Bethesda Downtown Plan:

> Tuesday December 15th at 4:00pm (Typically Planning Board meets on

> Thursdays each week) Two more work sessions in January (Dates have not

> been confirmed yet)

>

> 2. Location of work sessions with the Board:

> Montgomery County Planning Department

> 8787 Georgia Avenue

> Silver Spring, MD

>

> 3. Email addresses for written testimony:

> Planning Board Chairman - Casey Anderson: mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org Area

> One Division Chief - Robert Kronenberg:

> Robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org

> Project Manager - Leslye Howerton:

> Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org

> Master Planning Supervisor - Marc DeOcampo:

> Marc.DeOcampo@montgomeryplanning.org

> Parks Section Chief = Patricia McManus:

> patricia.mcmanus@montgomeryparks.org

>

> Thanks again!!

>

> Leslye Howerton, Assoc. AIA, LEED-GA

> Planner Coordinator, Area One
> Montgomery County Planning Department
> M-NCPPC
> 8787 Georgia Avenue
> Silver Spring, MD 20910
> 301.495.4551, leslye.howerton@montgomeryplanning.org
> montgomeryplanning.org

>
> www.Bethesda Downtown Plan
> sign up for our e-mail list here
>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: holclem@aol.com [mailto:holclem@aol.com]
> Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 11:07 PM
> To: Howerton, Leslye <Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org>
> Cc: Jim Clemans <jecvfg@aol.com>
> Subject: Battery lane park meeting Whitehall

>
> Leslye,

>
> I understand that getting a picture of the proposal for Battery Lane won't happen by tomorrow, and we are happy to have you tell us about the project.

> Thanks, and I'll see you tomorrow evening.

>
> Holly

>
> Sent from my iPhone

From: Howerton, Leslye
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 9:21 AM
To: 'holclem@aol.com'
Cc: 'Mfetchco@earthlink.net'
Subject: RE: Battery lane park meeting Whitehall

Holly,
Thank you again for inviting us to speak to the group. We hope it was at least helpful in understand the recommendation completely.

As promised below is information regarding the work session schedule, email addresses to send in written testimony to the Planning Board, and the location of the Planning Board sessions.

1. Next work session for the Bethesda Downtown Plan:
Tuesday December 15th at 4:00pm (Typically Planning Board meets on Thursdays each week) Two more work sessions in January (Dates have not been confirmed yet)
2. Location of work sessions with the Board:
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD
3. Email addresses for written testimony:
Planning Board Chairman - Casey Anderson: mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org Area One Division Chief - Robert Kronenberg: Robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org
Project Manager - Leslye Howerton: Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org
Master Planning Supervisor - Marc DeOcampo: Marc.DeOcampo@montgomeryplanning.org
Parks Section Chief = Patricia McManus: patricia.mcmanus@montgomeryparks.org

Thanks again!!

Leslye Howerton, Assoc. AIA, LEED-GA
Planner Coordinator, Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.4551, leslye.howerton@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

[www.Bethesda Downtown Plan](http://www.BethesdaDowntownPlan.org)
sign up for our e-mail list here

-----Original Message-----

From: holclem@aol.com [<mailto:holclem@aol.com>]
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 11:07 PM
To: Howerton, Leslye <Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Jim Clemans <jecvfg@aol.com>

Subject: Battery lane park meeting Whitehall

Leslye,

I understand that getting a picture of the proposal for Battery Lane won't happen by tomorrow, and we are happy to have you tell us about the project.

Thanks, and I'll see you tomorrow evening.

Holly

Sent from my iPhone

From: Howerton, Leslye
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2015 10:43 AM
To: 'MFetchko@earthlink.net'
Subject: FW: Battery lane park meeting Whitehall

Michael,
See my email below to Holly. Apparently I input your email address incorrectly.
The topic is still being discussed for the work session on December 15th at 4:00pm, but I believe we will be discussing the zoning and building heights for the Eastern Greenway, Arlington North, and Arlington South Districts.

Thank you!!

Leslye Howerton, Assoc. AIA, LEED-GA
Planner Coordinator, Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.4551, leslye.howerton@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

www.Bethesda Downtown Plan
sign up for our e-mail list here

-----Original Message-----

From: holclem@aol.com [mailto:holclem@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 1:50 PM
To: Howerton, Leslye <Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Michael Fetchko <MFetchko@earthlink.net>; Lee Weinstein <Lee.Weinstein@lmco.com>; Bill Didden <gm@whitehallcondo.net>; Jim Clemans <jecvfg@aol.com>
Subject: Re: Battery lane park meeting Whitehall

Leslye,
Thank you and your team very much for presenting your plan and fielding our questions.
We are better informed thanks to your meeting with us.
Some of us will try to get to the January session.
Thanks,
Holly

Sent from my iPhone

> On Nov 18, 2015, at 9:20 AM, "Howerton, Leslye" <Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org> wrote:
>
> Holly,
> Thank you again for inviting us to speak to the group. We hope it was at least helpful in understand the recommendation completely.
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> been confirmed yet)

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> 2. Location of work sessions with the Board:

> Montgomery County Planning Department

> 8787 Georgia Avenue

> Silver Spring, MD

>

> 3. Email addresses for written testimony:

> Planning Board Chairman - Casey Anderson: mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org Area

> One Division Chief - Robert Kronenberg:

> Robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org

> Project Manager - Leslye Howerton:

> Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org

> Master Planning Supervisor - Marc DeOcampo:

> Marc.DeOcampo@montgomeryplanning.org

> Parks Section Chief = Patricia McManus:

> patricia.mcmanus@montgomeryparks.org

>

> Thanks again!!

>

> Leslye Howerton, Assoc. AIA, LEED-GA

> Planner Coordinator, Area One

> Montgomery County Planning Department

> M-NCPPC

> 8787 Georgia Avenue

> Silver Spring, MD 20910

> 301.495.4551, leslye.howerton@montgomeryplanning.org

> montgomeryplanning.org

>

> [www.Bethesda Downtown Plan](http://www.BethesdaDowntownPlan.org)

> sign up for our e-mail list here

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: holclem@aol.com [<mailto:holclem@aol.com>]

> Sent: Monday, November 16, 2015 11:07 PM

> To: Howerton, Leslye <Leslye.Howerton@montgomeryplanning.org>

> Cc: Jim Clemans <jecvfg@aol.com>

> Subject: Battery lane park meeting Whitehall

>

> Leslye,

>

> I understand that getting a picture of the proposal for Battery Lane won't happen by tomorrow, and we are happy to have you tell us about the project.

> Thanks, and I'll see you tomorrow evening.

>

> Holly

RECEIVED

From: Lila Asher <lilaasher@verizon.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 07, 2015 2:39 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: planning for Town of Chevy Chase

1744
NOV 09 2015
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

I want to express my feeling against the need of our nice little park on Elm Street to be changed. It is happily much used by many residents and local workers. We do not need our parking areas to be changed. The above ground parking is very important to many people of our town and constantly used. We most certainly do not need or desire any high rise building in our area as proposed. We do not want the additional traffic, noise, crowded schools over use of other facilities which it would impose. These ideas are shared by many of my neighbors. We hope the planning commission will cease and desist from so called improvements of our area.

Lila O Asher
4100 Thornapple St
Chevy Chase, Md 20815

RECEIVED
1192
NOV 06 2015

MCP-Chair

From: Jim Fitzpatrick <fitzpatrick.jf@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, November 06, 2015 1:23 PM
To: al.lang@townofchevy Chase.org; jbickerman@townofchevy Chase.org;
vtaplin@townofchevy Chase.org; kstrom@townofchevy Chase.org;
fcecere@townofchevy Chase.org
Cc: thoffman; MCP-Chair
Subject: Beth. Sector Plan & Town's "History of Elm Street Park"

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Nov. 6, 2015

Re: Elm Street Park
To: Town Council, LRP Committee, etc.
Cc: M-NCPPC
From: Jim Fitzpatrick, 7203 46th St.

<http://www.townofchevy Chase.org/DocumentCenter/View/144>

I thought it would be of interest to the Town Council, Long Range Planning Committee, and other residents that there is a document, referenced above, on the Town's own Document Center entitled "the Elm Street Park." The brief history was written by the late Dallas Read, a long-time resident of Elm Street, who with her husband Nick, were instrumental in the long slog it took to create this park 35 years ago as a buffer for the Town against Bethesda's animation. In paragraph 12, she wrote ". . . today, Park and Planning says it is the best-used urban park in the County. It is used by office workers from the business district as well as by the neighborhood. And it certainly fulfills its purpose – which is to cut off commercial expansion from Wisconsin Avenue."

With all due respect, I offer this from the Town's own archives and will continue to add whatever evidence I can to counter the mischaracterization of Elm Street Park as "severely underused" or in need of activity enhancement. Please make this a part of the record of submissions on the Bethesda Sector Plan. Thank you.

RECEIVED

NOV 05 2015

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

1133

From: Deborah Vollmer <dvollmer@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 05, 2015 4:25 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: 'Town Office'
Subject: Bethesda Sector Plan

TO: Maryland National Park and Planning Commission

From: Deborah A. Vollmer, Resident of the Town of Chevy Chase

Re: Bethesda Sector Plan, Elm Street Park, and Parking Lots

I write to express my strong dissent, as a long-time resident of the Town of Chevy Chase, to the Position Statement with respect to the Bethesda Sector Plan, which was presented to the Park and Planning Commission by Town Council Member Fred Cecere. That position paper was presented by Mr. Cecere on behalf of the Town with very little effort in advance of the presentation, to survey the Town residents with respect to their opinions with regard to these plans.

In particular, I take issue with the description in the Town's position paper of Elm Street Park as a "severely underused park", and I also take issue with the assertion that the parking lots currently owned by the County behind the Farm Women's Market and across from the Writer's Center are "merely parking lots", which might just as well be replaced with underground parking, and might also serve as property on which yet more buildings might be constructed.

With respect to Elm Street Park, it was designed to be, and currently serves as, a passive park, for quiet use by Town residents and also for use by those who work in the Bethesda office buildings, as a refuge from the more intense level of activity, which is a characteristic of a quickly-developing Bethesda. The park serves both as a buffer between Bethesda and the Town, and as a haven for wildlife. Many of our Town's residents feel very strongly that the park should maintain its nature as a passive park, and that its current facilities should be maintained but not altered in such a way as to change the essential, quiet nature of the park.

With respect to the parking lots behind the Farm Women's Market and across from the Writer's Center, I take issue with the statement in the Town's position paper that these are "merely parking lots" and the implication that they might be replaced by underground parking, and that building might be permitted on parts of those lots.

The current lots serve as open space, and as a buffer between development in Bethesda and our quiet residential Town. Also, a significant segment of our Town residents are mobility-challenged seniors, who are dependent upon their cars, and who are legitimately concerned with regard to safety issues, with respect to underground parking, especially at night. In addition to serving a need of Town residents, the parking lots make user-friendly parking available to others in the larger community who frequent the Farm Women's Market, the Writer's Center, and the restaurants and shops on this side of Bethesda.

I therefore request that the Elm Street Park be kept as the passive park that it was designed to be at the time of its creation, and that the parking lots be maintained as surface level parking both for Town residents and other members of the public.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Deborah A. Vollmer
Resident, Town of Chevy Chase
7202 44th Street

RECEIVED
7736
NOV 05 2015
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

From: Jim Fitzpatrick <fitzpatrick.jf@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 05, 2015 1:46 PM
To: 'Kathy Strom'
Cc: MCP-Chair
Subject: RE: Town position statement on Bethesda Sector Plan

Nov. 5, 2015,

Dear Town of Chevy Chase Councilmember Strom,

Thank you Councilmember Strom for your e-mail support today of our opposition to the Town of Chevy Chase Council's characterization of Elm Street Park as "severely underused." I will circulate it to neighbors I blind-copied our Nov. 2 e-mail to regarding this, and know they also will appreciate your action.

By copy of this e-mail, I also am forwarding your e-mail and our Nov. 2 e-mail to the Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org) so that they are aware that the Town Council's submitted position to them does not reflect the views of a significant segment of our residential community. I urge my neighbors to do the same so that the Planning Board recognizes this division prior to submitting its recommendations on the Bethesda Sector Plan to the County Council.

We attended the Town meeting Tuesday night and, like you, noted that several other residents expressed similar dismay to the Town Council's submission to the Planning Board. It is important that the planning board be aware that there is a live split among those who want to maintain this park's special character and those who want more vibrant and programmed animation. Unlike M-NCPPC, which designed the Elm Street Park, I am unaware that any members of the Town Council possess real professional expertise in park design and use. The suggestion by one member of the Town's Long Range Planning Committee that our community look for guidance on changing our park to New York City's Bryant Park or the Barnes and Noble bookstore "plaza" was particularly unsettling.

The bare majority of Town Council members who incorrectly characterized Elm Street Park as "severely underutilized" is just one threat to this wonderful natural resource, which is enjoyed by so many in the residential and business community. The towering building development proposed so near to it is the more serious threat. After all, you can only ask a little park to do so much.

Thank you again for your thoughtful response.

Jim Fitzpatrick
7203 46th St.

From: Kathy Strom [mailto:strom.kathy@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 04, 2015 9:21 PM
To: Jim Fitzpatrick
Subject: Re: Town position statement on Bethesda Sector Plan

Dear Jim,

Thank you very much for your comments with which I agree. In fact, when the draft statement was circulated by the Mayor to the Town Council for consideration by email, I objected to the use of the term "severely underused" as well

as other points, and when that phrase was not changed, I voted against the adoption of the position paper. Only Councilmembers Bickerman, Cecere and Lang voted in favor of it.

At the meeting last night we heard from other Town residents who also were concerned about Elm Street park and maintaining an appropriate mix of passive and other activities there so that the park can continue to serve as a buffer to our residential community. Thank you very much for writing to us. Please continue to share your views with the Council. As you may know there is a public comment period typically near the start of every Council meeting.

Thanks very much for writing to the Council to express your position.

Best regards,

Kathy

On Mon, Nov 2, 2015 at 12:26 PM, Jim Fitzpatrick <fitzpatrick.jf@verizon.net> wrote:

11/2/2015

Dear Town Council and Long Range Planning Committee (LRP) members,

We were dismayed to read in the proposed Town's Bethesda Sector Plan position statement the description of Elm Street Park as "severely underused". Please explain to us how this subjective and, we believe, inaccurate assessment was made. What specific information did the Council and/or LRP rely on to make this characterization, which we believe has negative implications for Town residents living near this park?

We have lived opposite Elm Street Park for 37 years and, in our view, "severely underused" is not an accurate characterization. In fact, over the years since its establishment, usage has increased substantially and not all of this animation has been welcomed by nearby residents.

As the first chair of the Town's Elm St. Park Committee, Jim Fitzpatrick clearly recalls that this small park was specifically and intentionally designed by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission,

with extensive Town input, to consist of an active area (the northern recreation portion) and a passive area (south of what was Elm St. between 47th and 46th Sts.). The park was designed in large measure as a buffer for the Town from Bethesda's increasing animation, as well as a respite for the many nearby office workers. In the so-called passive area, the gazebo and many benches and tables provide ample opportunities for use by groups small and large, including local school band concerts, Save the Trail gatherings, family celebrations, and other local events.

The park is and always has been widely enjoyed by many office workers and others at lunch time and by many Town residents throughout the day, who take advantage of both the active and passive features of the park. Scores of toddlers from nearby day care centers use the park daily. Increasingly, many (in our view, too many and too noisy) special events also take place in the park when it is used as a staging area for large all-day charitable marathon runs/walks and other special events.

Specifically, what more does the Town Council envision for the sector plan that would correct its assessment of this park as "severely underused"? A light rail station? A dog park? A public swimming pool? More ball courts or playground equipment? A soccer field? More frequent large public events? What specifically would correct your subjective assessment about park usage?

Rather than further animate this little buffer park, we believe the Council and LRP should work to ensure its originally designed balance of active and passive use. This balance has served both the residential and business community well for many years.

We look forward to hearing from the Council and/or LRP on this issue and hope your response addresses the concerns many residents would have about any dramatic shift in the usage of Elm Street Park.

Specifically, it is our hope that the Council will amend its proposed position statement prior to sending it to the County Council later this month by deleting the reference to Elm Street Park as "severely underused." Maintaining Elm Street Park's character would be a more appropriate goal.

If we are unable to attend tomorrow night's working group session, please make this e-mail part of the record and copy it to the LRP members.

Thank you.

Jim and Annette Fitzpatrick

7203 46th St.

MCP-CTRACK

RECEIVED
11 725
NOV 03 2015

From: Ben Shneiderman <ben@cs.umd.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, November 03, 2015 1:35 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: Ben Shneiderman; preece@umd.edu
Subject: FW: plans to make Woodmont Avenue pedestrian friendly

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board,

I write to you to promote a more pedestrian/bike friendly atmosphere on Woodmont Avenue in Bethesda. My wife Jennifer Preece and I live in the Lionsgate on Woodmont and Old Georgetown Road – below is my professional contact info for identification purposes.

The traffic down Woodmont is often fast, noisy, and dangerous, undermining the pleasures of walking and talking with friends and neighbors. As the resident population increases in this area, I'm eager to make sure Woodmont Avenue becomes a walking friendly place where street life is appreciated, conversations flow in sidewalk cafes, children walk safely, parents meet friends while pushing the baby carriages, and street performers attract crowds in appropriate venues.

I'm sure there are other possible steps but some ideas that I have are to:

- Widen the sidewalks to promote walking and maybe allow more trees or sidewalk cafes
- Add a bike lane to encourage bike riding
- Reduce the number of hours that NO Parking rules promote faster driving
- More speed bumps to slow traffic

Thanks for your work to make Bethesda a more satisfying neighborhood... Sincerely... Ben Shneiderman

Prof. Ben Shneiderman ben@cs.umd.edu
Dept of Computer Science 301-405-2680
A.V. Williams Building www.cs.umd.edu/~ben
University of Maryland www.cs.umd.edu/hcil
College Park, MD 20742 Twitter: @benbendc

Distinguished University Professor of Computer Science
Glenn Martin Professor of Engineering
Member, Institute for Advanced Computer Studies
Member, National Academy of Engineering
Fellow AAAS, ACM, IEEE, SIGCHI Academy

RECEIVED
1086
OCT 20 2015

MCP-CTRACK

From: holdem@aol.com
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2015 2:15 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: No Road please Battery Lane Park

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

October 26, 2015

Dear Elected People,

We are writing to express our thanks for the resurfacing of the tennis court in Battery Lane Park.

And we also want to tell you of our opposition to the proposed "shared park street" for car traffic to cut through Battery Lane Urban Park from Norfolk Avenue to Battery Lane. This is shown on page 120 of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, Staff Draft, May 2015, and Figure 3.13 "Battery Lane District Public Realm Improvements".

We use our neighborhood park, with its grass and mature trees, for playing with grandchildren and strolling to the Norfolk Avenue. It is not one of the brick and concrete public spaces for gathering. We do not want to lose this grass space and large tree area for concrete, even though concrete and brick technically meet the definition of public space and are sometimes colored dark green on plan maps.

We want to preserve the wonderful children's play ground, the walkways, the bike path, the ball courts, the Trolley trail and the trees and grass areas for people and dogs. The current quiet park will be disrupted by adding "retail opportunities" and/or "flexible public space for events" and concerts.

We do not see the logic of connecting the downtown to a relatively quiet residential area by road. The park and Norfolk Avenue would be less 'walkable' for most of us, because the extension adds a road to cross and non-local traffic to our roads.

The additional intersection would be dangerous because it is near the apex of the curvature of Battery Lane. A traffic light would be necessary. The Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue Squad trucks, which use Battery Lane at all times of day and night, would need to run sirens and honk at the new intersection in our relatively quiet neighborhood. Traffic management would be needed to avoid having the added traffic signal cause gridlock during rush hour, when Battery Lane is busiest.

The proposed road is unnecessary. Car drivers can continue to drive around the park. Woodmont Triangle is easily accessible by car from Battery Lane using Old Georgetown Road or by turning right on Woodmont Avenue from Battery Lane. Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Roads give access to public parking lots, therefore these are the roads for cars to use, rather than a new cut through road.

If a connector road is absolutely necessary for some reason, unknown to us, then please consider your original plan "B", which was extending Auburn street out to Battery Lane.

Battery Lane Urban Park is a quiet, safe, well-used park that improves the quality of life for residents and visitors, and it provides habitat to plants, birds, squirrels and other wild life. We feel that it is essential to preserve and enhance our neighborhood walking and biking potential rather than expand car traffic, especially through our lovely green park.

Sincerely,
Holly and Jim Clemans
4977 Battery Lane #420
Bethesda MD

October 26, 2015
Dear Elected People,

We are writing to express our thanks for the resurfacing of the tennis court in Battery Lane Park.

And we also want to tell you of our opposition to the proposed "shared park street" for car traffic to cut through Battery Lane Urban Park from Norfolk Avenue to Battery Lane. This is shown on page 120 of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, Staff Draft, May 2015, and Figure 3.13 "Battery Lane District Public Realm Improvements".

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Sincerely,
Holly and Jim Clemans
4977 Battery Lane #420
Bethesda MD

MCP-CTRACK

RECEIVED
1080
OCT 28 2015

From: Bernadette Kiel <kielcrew@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 25, 2015 9:32 AM
To: Howerton, Leslye
Cc: MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan; MCP-Chair; DeOcampo, Marc; Kronenberg, Robert
Subject: Battery Lane Park

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Planners,

I live in downtown Bethesda, right near Battery Lane Park. I cannot believe that Montgomery County is considering decreasing this park to put in a access road. While this park is old and desperately needs an update, downsizing should not be a consideration. In fact with all the new high rises going up in Woodmont Triangle, we need to keep this park for those residents and the needed green space in downtown. What you should do is renovate the park to include things desperately needed by the kids who live here: playground; sports court; turf field; bike path. The tennis court is rarely used and tennis activity among children is down and other sports such as soccer and lacrosse is up - considering replacing the tennis court with a multipurpose sports surface. **DO THE RIGHT THING** - keep downtown green and provide a beautiful park for people to congregate in at the end of downtown district.

When making your decision, think about the people who live here, not the developers who just want to make more money from our valuable real estate.

Thank you,
Bernadette Kiel

MCP-CTRACK

RECEIVED

OCT 20 2015

From: Jane <jdemouy@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 25, 2015 9:43 AM
To: Howerton, Leslye; MCP-Chair; MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan
Cc: DeOcampo, Marc; Kronenberg, Robert
Subject: Don't destroy Battery Lane Park

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Montgomery County Planners,

I am writing to ask you to please keep Battery Lane Park green.

Battery Lane Park must remain a tree-filled, grassy oasis.

It combines multi-sport use with birds, small mammals, and insects that contribute to the ecology of the park.

As the posted Battery Lane Park sign says: **NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES.**

Please revise the plan to exclude the road. Battery Lane residents should continue to enjoy dog walking, pickup basketball, tennis, day care playground, all under mature shady green trees.

I ask you to reduce, not expand, our carbon footprint in Battery Lane Park.

Maintain the quality of Battery Lane Park, increase the quantity of users by renovating, not removing, the green from the park. The trees, grass, paths, and courts should be refurbished and the basketball court and the benches and picnic tables made handicapped accessible. The playground should be made even more appealing to older children by adding a simple climbing wall.

The planned increased traffic and pollution will destroy the existing green space.

As you head into the Bethesda Downtown Worksession Schedule

October 29 - Worksession #4— please continue to keep Battery Lane Park the car-free, grass and trees, senior, adult, child, dog, and ball-friendly place our family has used for thirty years.

Montgomery is the second wealthiest county in US;

surely, the county has the money to expend on maintaining the existing verdant park.

We have been told the tennis court is the only planned renovation for the next two years due to the uncertain outcome for our park. Two years is a long time in the life of a child and even seems long to me!

If cars are allowed in Battery Lane Park, the nearest car-free alternative parks will be

- Greenwich Park—0.62 mile,
- Lynbrook Park—0.80 mile, and
- Caroline Freeland Park—0.95 mile.

Too far for the very young, the physically challenged, and the elderly.

Keeping Battery Lane Park green will benefit current and future taxpayers of the Battery Lane neighborhood and the whole county.

Thanks for your prompt attention to this email,

Jane DeMouy
5807 Conway Rd.
Bethesda, MD 20817

OCT 26 2015

From: Tanya Riseman <tanya.riseman@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 25, 2015 2:32 PM
To: MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan; Howerton, Leslye; MCP-Chair; DeOcampo, Marc; Kronenberg, Robert
Subject: Re: Downtown Bethesda. Battery Lane Park (sorry wrong subject before)

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

On Sun, Oct 25, 2015 at 2:30 PM, Tanya Riseman <tanya.riseman@gmail.com> wrote:

I am disappointed to see that the proposal for "improvements" to the Battery Lane Urban Park

http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/bethesda_downtown/documents/BDPStaffDraft_051415_FINAL_sm.pdf p. 121 include a new vehicle road along the long edge of the park. Adjacent buildings are slated to demolition to try to maintain the size of the park, but I am concerned that it will be difficult to squeeze everything into the resulting long, awkward space. I did not find detailed drawings showing the road/sidewalk set backs (50 feet), bike trail (10-15 feet) and additional fencing required along side the park facilities such as playground, basketball court, tennis court, grassy field and shade trees. How will it all fit? I don't want a "look, but don't touch" linear park. There are two additional difficult-to-mitigate problems with the addition of the road.

The first impact is environmental. Currently the park is an extension of the NIH periphery trails which provide green, mostly shady trails to the Medical Center Metro and Suburban Hospital. For the vast majority, these are not along roads, so the air pollution, particularly in the summer, is far lower. As a person with asthma I try to find pedestrian routes like this. It is better for children's developing lungs (OK, everyone's) to exercise in low air pollution spots. For this reason, I would be disappointed to see a road added to Battery Lane Urban Park and subsequent increased motor "activation" of Norfolk street. Sandwiched

between heavily trafficked Wisconsin, Woodmont and Old Georgetown roads, Norfolk is very close to being a pedestrian mall— perfect for Saturday Night restaurant strolling, for Taste of Bethesda, art shows, Imagination Bethesda, etc. and lower air pollution to boot. Do we want Norfolk Ave to be as congested as Bethesda Ave, where the drivers' frustration makes it kind of scary to cross the street?

The second impact is the reduced ability of children to use the trail(s) and grass areas to freely play safely, which is a different kind of play than what is afforded by the playground area. The playground area need not be fenced in if there is no additional road. With increasing density, increasing numbers of families will be living in the new units which will be built adjacent (even if the units are "intended" for childless people). Many local adults as well currently use the basketball and tennis courts. This park will truly be THE backyard for the new condo and apartment dwellers. It's a small park, so it's shameful to reduce it's daily utility by putting in a road.

Why is there a need for a road here? Are people who are driving so lazy that they need to shave two blocks off their drive to their condo garage more than they need a good park? We have so many retail opportunities nearby, we do not need to break the park so it can have a road lined with stores.

Please demand that the planning board not put in a road.

Sincerely,

Tanya Riseman
104 S. Brook Lane
Bethesda MD 20814

tanva.riseman@gmail.com

P.S. I had trouble submitting this letter in June, so I apologize if it is a repeat.

From: Alicia Delahunty <info@valuablelessons.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 3:15 PM
To: ocmemail@montgomerycountymd.gov; Newhouse, Rachel; DeOcampo, Marc; howerton@montgomeryplanning.org; Schneider, Tina; Folden, Matthew; Shipman, Laura; Sandberg, Brenda; MCP-Chair; Garcia, Joyce; McManus, Patricia; Farquhar, Brooke; Ma, Michael; Komes, Linda; MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan; MCP-Chair
Cc: Dr. Willo Pequegnat; Holly Clemans; Lakshmi Goparaju; Elizabeth LeBarron; Judyth Gilbert
Subject: Battery Lane Park - Please Keep GREEN & Refurbished!

Wednesday
21 October 2015

RECEIVED
2065
OCT 21 2015

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Montgomery County elected officials and planners,

Thank you for resurfacing the Battery Lane Tennis Court! As your staff can tell you,

we are all stopping and watching with pleasure the renovation to our neighborhood green park.

We are only disappointed that, due to the uncertainty of planning, no other renovations are planned for the next two years.

Montgomery is the second wealthiest county in US; surely, the county has the money to expend on maintaining the existing verdant park.

Two years is a long time.

Please reduce, not expand, our carbon footprint in Battery Lane Park. Maintain the quality of Battery Lane Park, increase the quantity of users by renovating, not removing, the green from the park. The trees, grass, paths, and courts should be refurbished and the basketball court and the benches

and picnic tables made handicapped accessible. The playground should be made even

more appealing to older children by adding a simple climbing wall.

The planned increased traffic and pollution will destroy the existing green space.

As you head into the Bethesda Downtown Worksession Schedule October 29 - Worksession #4 please continue to keep Battery Lane Park the car-free, grass and trees, senior, adult, child, dog, and ball-friendly place our family have used for thirty years.

Once the cars are let in, the nearest car-free alternative parks will be

- Greenwich Park—0.62 mile,
- Lynbrook Park—0.80 mile, and
- Caroline Freeland Park—0.95 mile.

Too far for the very young, the physically challenged, and the elderly.

Battery Lane Park must remain a tree-filled, grassy oasis.

It combines multi-sport use with birds, small mammals, and insects that contribute to the ecology of the park.

As the posted Battery Lane Park sign says: NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES.

Please revise the plan to exclude the road. Battery Lane residents will continue to enjoy dog walking, pickup basketball, tennis, day care playground, all under mature shady green trees.

References:

Page 19 "Battery Lane Connector Street" (road runs through Battery Lane Green Park)

Page 27 "Battery Lane Connector

*Intended to improve connectivity between Battery Lane/Woodmont Triangle

*Recommendation largely based in urban design

*Not evaluated as part of the traffic mode"

(do not know what that all means but does not sound like green grass)

Page 28 "Functional Classification"

(Battery Lane Connector Street is dotted in as B-1 -
do not know what that all means but does not sound like green grass)

Page 35 "Implementation Strategy"

(Battery Lane Park loses about 2/3 of its size -
only one third of present green grass park is shaded green as "Proposed
Public Open Spaces")

I worry that the elimination of Battery Lane Park as green grass continues to
be planned.

The beneficiaries of keeping Battery Lane Park green will be current and
future resident taxpayers of the Battery Lane neighborhood and the whole
county.

Thanking you in advance for your prompt attention to this email,
Lesley-Alicia Bernadette Delahunty 240 426 5584
4987 Battery Lane, Bethesda MD 20814-4986

[http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/bethesda_downtown/do
cuments/BethesdaDowntownPlan_Worksession1-072015.pdf](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/bethesda_downtown/documents/BethesdaDowntownPlan_Worksession1-072015.pdf)

VALUABLE LESSONS

from

Alicia Delahunty

M.S. University of Maryland

C.E.L.T.A. University of Cambridge (U.K.)

240-426-5584

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October 15, 2015

Dear MNCPPC Planning Board,

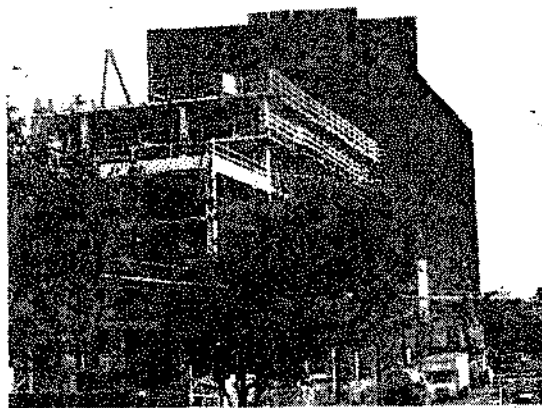
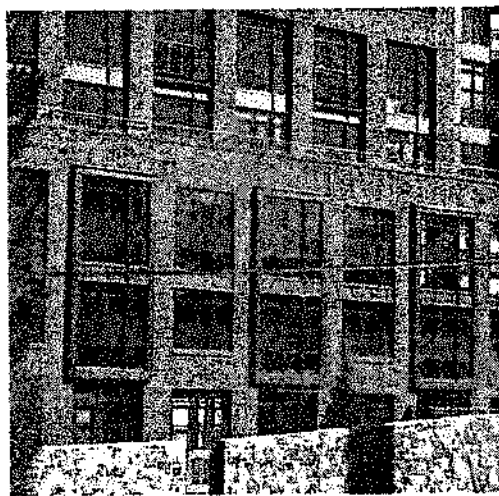
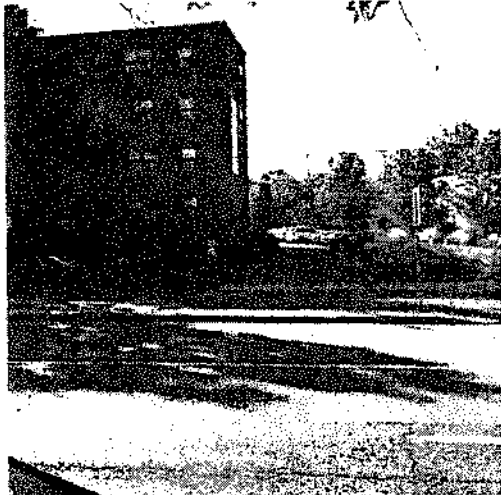
Do you know where the following photos were taken from? Below are some hints.

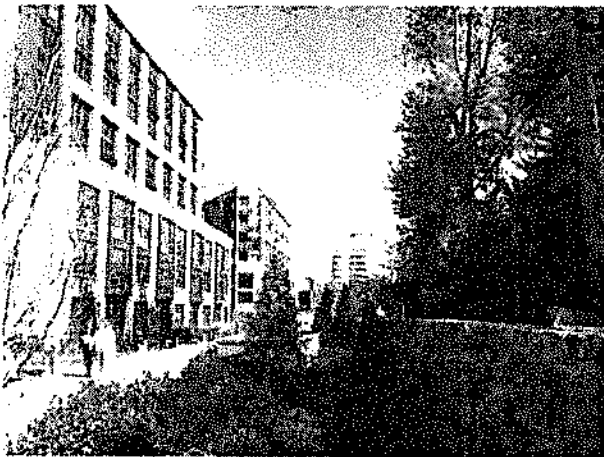
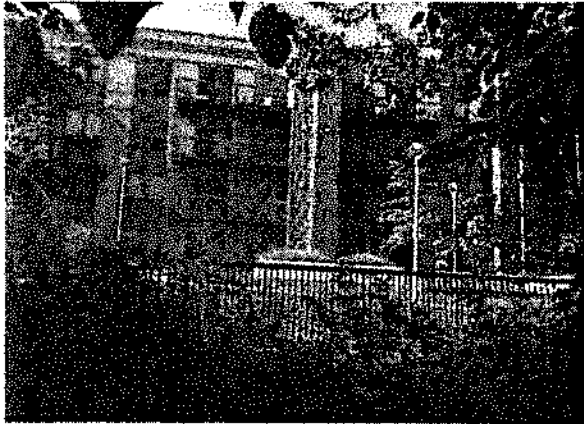
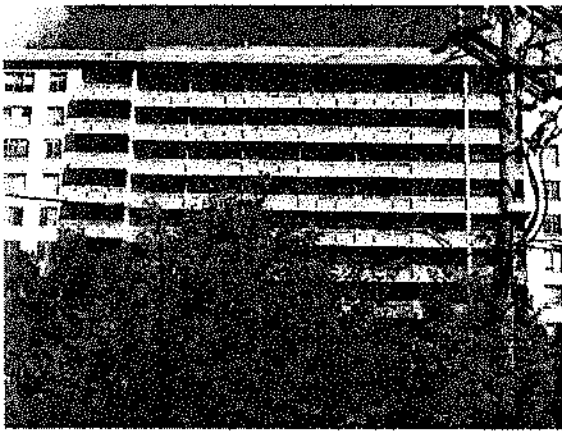
- Location is in Montgomery County
- Location is close to public transportation - just a 3 minute walk to a purple line station, a 6 minute walk to a subway line and bus transit center and less than a minute walk to a major commercial center of activity
- Density is approximately 12 people per acre (excluding streets)
- It is an area where there is a need for affordable housing
- It is an area where the surrounding population is expected to significantly increase

RECEIVED
1056

OCT 20 2015

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

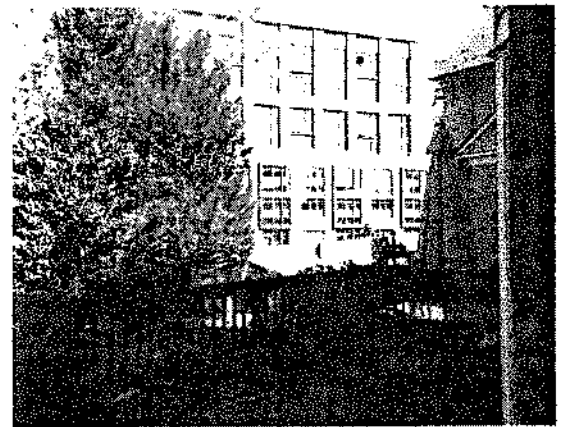
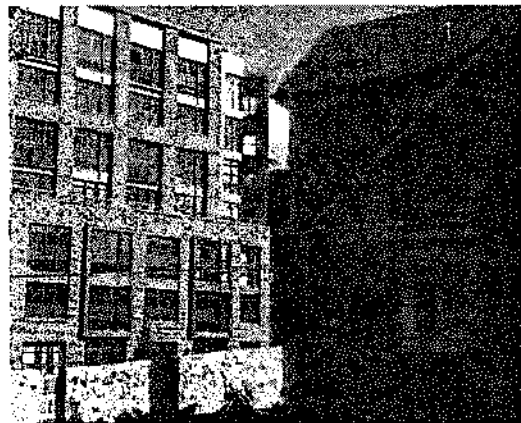
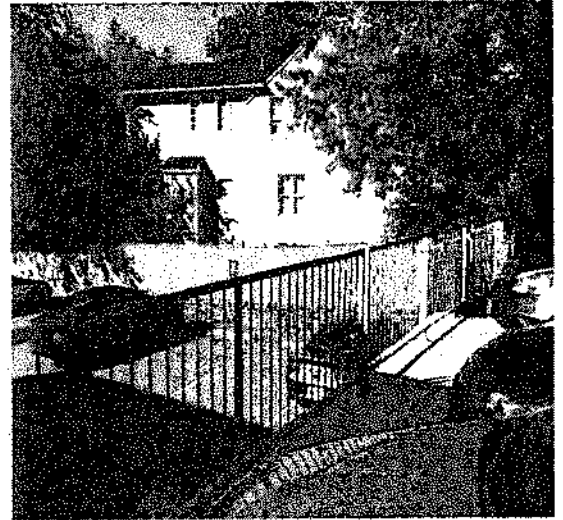




The location is the Sacks Subdivision which is located in the South Bethesda District of the Downtown Bethesda Master Plan.

Sacks is an area of 60 houses surrounded by commercial development. I encourage you to review the written and verbal testimony regarding Sacks that is part of the Master Plan record. Please take the time, as did Casey Anderson, to visit Sacks prior to workshops where options will be considered for transitioning Sacks to higher density as part of the revised Master Plan.

Below are additional photos showing the very close proximity of houses next to commercial structures.





Thank you for taking the time to look at the photos and information presented. Please call or e-mail me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Ellen B. Rader

Ellen B. Rader
4841 Leland Street
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815
240-277-1876

RECEIVED
1050
OCT 19 2015

MCP-CTRACK

From: Linda Yoder <yoderlt@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 18, 2015 2:06 PM
To: Anderson, Casey; Wells-Harley, Marye; Dreyfuss, Norman; natali.fani-gonsalex@mncppc-mc.org; Presley, Amy
Cc: Wright, Gwen; Kronenberg, Robert; DeOcampo, Marc; Howerton, Leslye
Subject: NO to CR at Fire Station 6

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Dreyfuss, Fani-Gonzalez, and Presley:

I request that you retain residential zoning at Fire Station 6 (Bradley and Wisconsin). We do not need or want mixed-use zoning at this location since it is a residential neighborhood. I do approve the designated green space at Fire Station 6.

Thank you for consideration of my and my neighbors' requests.

Sincerely,
Linda Yoder
4624 Morgan Drive
Chevy Chase West

OCT 19 2015

From: Claudia Maria Alvarez <cma Alvarez@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2015 9:59 AM
To: Anderson, Casey; Wells-Harley, Marye; Dreyfuss, Norman; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali; Presley, Amy
Cc: Wright, Gwen; Kronenberg, Robert; DeOcampo, Marc; Howerton, Leslye
Subject: NO to CR at Fire Station 6

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Dreyfuss, Fani-Gonzalez, and Presley:

Retain residential zoning at Fire Station 6 at Bradley and Wisconsin.
No mixed-use zoning at Fire Station 6.
Approve designated green space at Fire Station 6.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

Claudia Alvarez
4618 Nottingham Dr
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Chevy Chase West

MCP-CTRACK

RECEIVED
2036

OCT 15 2015

From: Pamela Lindstrom <pamela.lindstrom@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2015 4:33 AM
To: MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan; MCP-Chair
Subject: comments on the draft plan
Attachments: Bethesda MP comments.docx; Appendix; affordable housing.docx

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Planning Board members and Bethesda planners:

Attached is a rather long statement making the complete case for additional attention to affordable housing in the plan. The Appendix outlines briefly the contents of the proposed Housing section for the plan.

Thank you for your attention,
Pamela Lindstrom

Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan and Equitable Smart Growth

Usually there is plenty of rhetoric and deficit of action in officials' approach to affordable housing, thus my goal is usually to narrow the gap between rhetoric and action. The draft Bethesda plan, however, could use more rhetoric. The CR zone is written to reward the amount of rhetoric in master plans, as a criterion for assigning priority to public benefits. If the plan doesn't clearly favor affordable housing, developers can choose the easier and cheaper environmental and design public benefits. In the draft, the green shady walkable vision for Bethesda is set out much more concretely than is the vision for an equitable Bethesda. Yet the most important contribution this plan, and the downtown, could make to environmental goals would be a substantial increase in affordable housing.

Let us examine how the Bethesda plan treats affordable housing, and compare that treatment to environmental goals such as green space and efficient buildings. This statement will address:

- o Chapters 1 and 2. The Overarching Goals, Objectives etc. and Areawide Characteristics;
- o A proposed strategy to maximize the affordable housing provided, including suitable properties (Chapter 3)
- o An Appendix, which outlines a section for the Bethesda plan called "Housing".

What Priorities (Goals, Vision, Characteristics) Does the Plan Set? The goals, concepts, performance areas, etc. all refer to affordability along with other items by which developers earn public benefit points. The Vision set out on pages 3 to 5 foresees a more affordable downtown. Affordable housing appears in the introduction to its central concept of Sustainability, and among the Overarching Goals (p. 6). The Housing Objectives (p. 8) include:

- Incentives for preservation and expansion of affordable housing.
- Balanced growth, with housing available for all employees who work in the area.

That is a good start, but after these opening pages, the plan's other priorities dominate. The vision that emerges from the Concept Framework and the Summary of Recommendations does not include a key roll for affordable housing or for housing at all. The list of "six key performance areas" (p. 10) does not include adequate housing, addressing it only indirectly as Equity.

I recently wrote an essay on the key role affordable housing plays in effective Transit Oriented Development. Suffice to say here that government participation in planning, zoning, and finance of housing is as important to TOD communities as is the transit itself. The

beneficiaries of transit-proximate affordable housing go far beyond the residents of the housing. Affordable housing development and availability are enablers of progress in all six of the key performance areas. Conversely, TOD locations for affordable housing maximizes the benefit to the lower income residents.

Table 1.01. Sustainability Performance Area Metrics details the metrics used for each of the key performance areas. The Equity metrics include growth in rental housing units and in jobs, but...

- There are no targets for total or affordable housing units.
- "Targets" for jobs and rental housing appear to be copied from the County's Growth Forecasts, without attribution, rather than numbers to aim for.
- The targets for housing units and jobs imply widening divergence, adding nearly 15,000 jobs but only 3800 housing units. Predominance of jobs is well known to drive up the price of housing.

By comparison, the other five performance areas list many concrete, implementable targets for parks, streets, green roofs, and LEED certified buildings.

The New Approaches (p. 6) also focus attention on aspects of the plan other than affordable housing: historic preservation, landscaping, energy conservation.

The Plan for Bethesda's Areawide Characteristics

The plan itself begins with Chapter 2. Affordable housing, and in fact, housing itself are not addressed directly.

Section 2.2 Land Use and Zoning lists several tactics for preserving existing affordable housing, including use of "density incentives". Uniform density increases of 20% are applied to all properties, residential and commercial. None of the additional value is captured as additional public benefit.

The bullets in the draft plan envision increases in both housing and jobs. The land use map shows almost the whole downtown area as mixed use.

The plan urgently needs a section entitled "Housing" equivalent to those on Transportation, Urban Design, Ecology. The draft lacks any organized discussion of housing. Figure 2.07 maps existing affordable rental units. The map is useful, but it needs both data and analysis to convey the status of the dots on the map:

- How many existing affordable units altogether, including condominiums as well as rentals?
- Who owns them? An affordable housing provider like HOC or private company that can raise the rent?
- What is the duration of affordability?
- How affordable are they? Of the rent restricted units, how many are MPDUs for moderate income people vs. those with low incomes?
- Are the market affordable units affordable to medium and lower income residents?

- Etc.

Study of data on current rents charged for Bethesda apartments shows that market rate affordable units cost more or about the same as MPDUs. (table below) The supply of these lower end garden apartments will never increase, Their rents will surely rise faster than the regulated MPDUs. Plus the garden apartments are substandard by current standards, in particular they often use more energy, thus have higher utility costs for residents.

**Rents for Modern Market rate, MPDUs
and Older Garden Apartments**

	Market Rate - \$		MPDUs \$	
	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	1 bedroom	2 bedroom
<u>Older Garden Apts.</u>				
The Glens, Battery Lane	1340-1700	1705-1950		
Aldon at Chevy Chase	from 1525	from 1780		
8200 Wisconsin	1400-1600	from 2175		
4507 & 4511 Avondale	1250 -1350			
Battery Gardens	1125	1325		
<u>Recent High Rise</u>				
Bainbridge	2300-2400	3300-4000	1175	1410
Seasons	1950	2600	1266	
Upstairs at Bethesda Row	2477-3810	2800-4850	1270	1300

Data from DHCA Apartment Rental Guide for Montgomery County, Feb. 2015.

The plan includes an objective of supplying enough housing to provide for the entire workforce. That is a very ambitious objective, and sure enough the plan doesn't elaborate on what it means and how it could be achieved. MPDUs, even at 15%, would not meet the need for the moderate income workforce, much less those with low incomes. The CR zones for many properties (Tables, Ch. 3) show a higher FAR for housing than for commercial building. Many zones, however, permit enough commercial/office FAR to make that option attractive when the market for office space rebounds.

Sections of the plan on habitat/tree canopy, pervious area, energy, the High Performance Area, open space and urban design all convey that goals are ambitious: Bethesda is expected to be extraordinary; that is, to exceed ordinary standards. The topic of Housing deserves similar treatment. Without this rationale, the Overall Vision, the Housing Objectives, just baldly stated, even the priority given to 15% MPDUs for public benefit points (Chapter 4), are not compelling.

My principal objective is that this plan be the best possible for increasing affordable housing. The attached Appendix makes the case and outlines the content of the Housing section.

Section 2.3 Transportation specifies well what's needed to give Bethesda the form of a real traditional downtown, if it can be implemented. Specifying the role of Parking, however, is not resolved. As with other planning parameters, parking and household income are connected by feedback loops. The need for parking at residences rises with household income. The cost of parking, in turn affects the households' usable income. It's costly to have a space available to a low income resident who may not own a car. It should be possible for low income residents to reap the financial benefit of living car-free.

The new zoning code sets a baseline parking space requirement at one space per housing unit in downtowns. Parking spaces for affordable units may be reduced to 0.5 space per units. For all new housing, the zoning code allows "unbundling", in which residents pay separately for parking space. That option allows a reduction to 0.5 to 0.75 space per unit depending on bedroom count. Housing developers can also choose to pay a fee to the Parking Lot District and reduce garage space accordingly. We need to know if those options are used in current buildings, and how it affects parking occupancy.

In theory developers/landlords could combine discounts and provide fewer than 0.5 parking spaces. The code, however, does not permit that. One hears that multifamily housing, both market rate and affordable, in the Metro station areas has excess parking capacity. Garage parking is such a high cost for builders and occupants. It would be worth study to learn if there are situations in which fewer spaces could be required, both within buildings and in public garages. Also, the County should learn from other jurisdictions' experiences in reduced parking requirements.

Chapter 3. Opportunities to Increase Affordable Housing in the Districts

Certain properties lend themselves to development with high share of affordable housing. The number is substantial, including all properties in public or quasi-public (such as HOC or other agency) ownership, some properties labeled "market affordable housing" and the enclaves of detached single family houses. In some cases, the plan already makes the recommendation; in other cases, it would need to be amended.

As an Appendix attached to these Comments, an annotated copy of the draft plan's Recommended Land Use map, Figure 2.03, shows properties to be considered for high share of affordable housing.

- o **Metro Core.** The draft plan includes signature buildings and affordable housing in its Goals for the Core. Planners need to be flexible and encourage creativity, to achieve the plan's goals efficiently.

The Metro Core above the Metro station is the perfect place for this signature building, a tower visible from a distance announcing "here is Bethesda". There are concerns about a tower's impact on the plaza, consuming the open space and casting too much shade. Thus this is also the place to raise the height limit in exchange for perfect building design. Challenge the creativity of one of the current crop of innovative, conservationist architects to design a narrow stepped back tower in exactly the right location and shape to

- add livability and vitality to the Core,
- minimize shading of adjacent buildings,
- use sun path and modern glass to produce a light-filled building with low energy consumption,
- rest on a base of interesting retail and entertainment establishments, laid out so that they attract customers from Metrorail and bus bays, and
- require some residential component to reach maximum height and density, including a significant share of affordable units, or a substantial payment into the housing fund.

The west end of the plaza badly needs redesign to connect people more visibly and easily to the Metro station. Relocating the County's Regional Services Center (RSC) would allow more space for creative urban design; a new building could be an added reward for providing affordable housing.

o **Properties owned/used by affordable housing providers.** The Metropolitan is HOC's "flagship" property, at the west end of the Metro plaza but up and down around several bends and not visible to transit riders. The Metropolitan is built on County-owned land and houses several County facilities. Neither the residents nor the users of the RSC and other offices contribute much "liveliness" to the plaza or patrons to nearby shops. The Metropolitan is not a prospect for redevelopment, but reconfiguring/reuse of the lower level non-residential space should be considered, to increase its contribution to the plaza and add value to HOC. For instance, the space could accommodate the Regional Services Center, or a new library (See below) freeing one of those properties for redevelopment.

HOC testimony states that the Metropolitan as built leaves substantial FAR unused. That unused capacity could be sold and the funds used by HOC toward redeveloping one of its properties or participating in redevelopment of another garden apartment site.

In the Pearl District, The Waverly, an HOC-owned apartment building for the low income elderly is recommended as a "priority sending site for density averaging to preserve existing affordable housing". HOC has no plan to redevelop the Waverly, so becoming a sending area is appropriate. Selling development rights would provide welcome funds. Other HOC buildings proposed as sending sites, including the three small buildings on Avondale Street, should be rezoned and redeveloped. HOC's plan for the property take advantage of its contiguity with The Waverly to design an integrated housing estate with shared amenities that benefit all the residents.¹

o **Public Parking Lots and Garages.** The draft plan recommends "a constrained parking policy that supports a transit-oriented downtown". The County's Parking Lot District properties should all be considered as potential sites for affordable housing. Public ownership means that affordable housing providers don't have to pay the high market cost of land. Development costs could be reduced by low parking requirements for the new housing. Not only use of the lots, but also the garages "should be considered as they... are evaluated for replacement and as the market allows..."

Developers may choose not to provide parking for all residents, but instead pay a fee to the Parking Lot District. As transit and other travel alternatives increase in Bethesda, use of the public garages and payment of the fee may decline. Thus the goals of the sector plan may hasten the time when facilities will be redundant and available for redevelopment. The affordable housing developers should be approached. Working with the Parking Lot District is discussed in Section 4.6.3. Redevelopment of parking facilities should not necessarily be contingent on "replacement of parking". Planning decisions for the County's business districts should not be made based on the financial interest of the Parking Lot Districts. Declining car ownership and use in Bethesda should be applauded and rewarded.

The land use section calls Bethesda's eastern edge the Eastern Greenway, including a large area of surface parking lot. Giving all this public land just to park and quasi-open space is not justified fiscally or socioeconomically. Housing development at 3 to 4 stories can serve as a buffer between the high rise downtown and the neighborhoods to the east; the site plans should preserve a green vegetated strip along the eastern edge, preferably with a public pathway and several small parks.

o **Other properties in public or quasi-public ownership.** Several speakers for fire company properties expressed the desire for zoning that gave the potential for redevelopment. New buildings could provide a new home and more resources for the institution, and housing at a range of prices. It would be justified to recapture some of the added value by asking for a higher than minimum share of affordable units.

o **Older garden apartments.** Both HOC and Aldon Management own multiple properties that the plan considers "market rate affordable", though both pointed out that the market supports rather high rents. Few units are actually affordable to those with moderate incomes (See Table above), much less those with low incomes.¹¹

The recommended CR density and/or height is relatively low. They are designated as priority sending sites; the plan recommends selling unbuilt capacity rather than redeveloping. HOC and Aldon Management, however, testified to their interest in redeveloping. Redeveloping these properties at high density would increase total housing and, if done right, the number of affordable units, including those for low income households. If owned and developed by affordable housing providers, the affordability would be permanent.

The generous public benefit points in the CR zone mean that developers providing at least 20% affordable units in transit-proximate locations can earn all their public benefit point from these two categories. Chevy Chase Lake, a joint development by HOC and private developer EYA, illustrates the possibilities. AHPs have gained several other bonuses: discounting the square footage of MPDUs and elimination of impact fees for projects with extra high affordability. Several AHPs besides HOC have capacity to undertake large development projects. Their benefits will make them attractive partners for landlords and private developers. This is the mechanism that can provide a quantum increase in high quality affordable housing in Bethesda.

o **Enclaves of Single Family Houses.** At the public hearing it appeared that some residents and owners want to keep the houses, others want CR zoning so they can sell for higher density development. The plan should offer a mechanism for allowing some residential redevelopment, and recapture some of the added value by asking for high share of affordability or purchase of development rights. To avoid "forcing" homeowners to sell before they are ready, the property tax reassessment could be delayed until redevelopment was imminent.

Chapter 4. Implementation

Section 4.1.4 lists the Top Priority Public Benefits, which includes Affordable Housing among others. A developer providing 15% MPDUs would receive 30 points toward the goal of 50 (CRT) or 100 (CR) points. Adding up the points for Top Priorities and the points from a few other automatic or required benefits yields more than 100 points. The table shows the points earned by a project a half mile (low) and a quarter mile (high) from a Metro station.

	Public Benefit Points	
	low	high
transit		
proximity	30	50
structure		
parking	15	20
BLTs	5	5
energy		
efficiency	15	15
vegetated		
roof	15	15
exceptional		
design	10	10
MPDUs	30	30
TOTAL	120	145

In addition, many of the actions and features recommended in Chapter 2. Areawide Approach come with public benefit points: bicycle and

pedestrian facilities, reduced parking, public open space, tower step back, tree cover, vegetated area. Are developers expected to provide these benefits without earning any points? Are these features that developers provide anyway, thus they don't deserve points? Or a final possibility: will developers prune away the excess points, including the MPDUs, in site plans?

Section 4.2 explains the idea for Priority Sending Sites. Any CR zoned property can sell or buy development rights from another CR zoned property in Bethesda, if some criteria are met. The plan designates some properties, including some older garden apartments as priorities for preserving the existing housing and thus Priority Sending Sites. These properties are mostly clustered around the HOC-owned Barclay apartments. Their CR zoning is designed to achieve this goal. Zoning of other properties clustered along Battery Lane is designed to encourage them to buy development rights.

The basic idea of exchanging development rights is good, if designed to maximize affordable housing. It is doubtful that the reward is high enough to tempt developers into selling density and agreeing to keep rents affordable. The arrangement of sending and receiving area is far from optimal for providing regulated affordable housing. The far better strategy is encouraging redevelopment of properties owned or financed by AHPs. That includes the HOC owned small apartment buildings on Avondale Street.

Even with substantial density increase, redevelopment would improve the performance on environmental criteria such as pervious area, tree cover and stormwater management. Large surface parking lots at HOC and Aldon properties would be replaced by garages.

Conclusion

This draft plan shows the benefits of many lessons learned since the last master plan was written. Via this plan, Bethesda faces a future as a model community for a future in which sustainability is a preoccupation not just of scientists, but of all of us. As such, Bethesda must be available to all, not just to the prosperous.

I fully support the plan's goals for greenhouse gas reduction, water quality, public spaces and building design. I appreciate the concrete detailed portrayal of what is needed to carry out the plan's vision. The concern is that housing and affordability, while supposedly a priority, suffer by comparison. Most of this problem could be solved by adding a section called Housing to Chapter 2. The Housing section would explain the role of affordable housing in making Bethesda a successful urban place, as I have explained in the Appendix below, and in my essay. It would call attention to HOC 's and other affordable housing estates in the downtown, how they contribute to various aspects of the community including housing members of the workforce who cannot afford MPDUs. It would emphasize the need for

more such high quality, mixed income urban housing with a substantial share of affordable units.

The Housing section should make the case for requiring 15% MPDUs, recommend adding still more moderate and low income, encourage the efforts of affordable housing providers, remove any doubt about affordable housing as a "highest priority" for public benefit points, recommend establishing a housing payment as public benefit for non-residential developers, and set the stage for housing-focused recommendations for individual properties.

¹ HOC statement for the sector plan public hearing.

¹¹ Aldon and HOC statements at the public hearing.

Appendix. A Housing Section in the Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan.

"Housing" should be a subhead in Chapter 2, a new section 2.2 following 2.1 Land Use.

The Housing section should discuss:

1. Demographics, including current households and jobs, forecast growth, and the balance between households (workforce) and jobs; and income: range and median for all households and rental households if available; share of households/rental household that are rent stressed (over 30% of gross income for rent). Compare median income and number of rent stressed, in Bethesda and countywide.

2. The importance of housing the workforce within "existing and growing regional employment centers", to current and prospective employers.

- Cite recent study from George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis and its "Policy Implications".

- Also cite the report The Planning Department commissioned, "Office Market Assessment" which stresses that future office growth will favor the mixed use transit served centers. This strengthens the case that employment growth in these centers, Bethesda being the County's largest example, will be self limiting without more housing affordable to the workforce.

3. Targets for additional affordable units and units with new rent restrictions.

4. Explanation of the affordable housing map Figure 2.07.

- Total number of affordable units and units in various categories (the colored dots)

- Level of affordability in terms of % of median income needed to pay the rent

- Status: Is the rent regulated, or is it "market affordable" subject to unregulated increases?

Much of the housing labeled market affordable on the map actually charges rents at the MPDU level or higher (See my full statement for documentation). This should be explained in the text.

5. Strategies for increasing affordable housing produced, and preserving where appropriate:

- Use public benefit points to reward more than minimum MPDUs.⁴¹

- Require 15% MPDUs for residential development in Bethesda.

- Facilitate the activity of affordable housing providers (AHPs) in housing development, as efficiently increasing the yield of affordable units that stay affordable.

- Add a housing payment from non-residential development as an option for public benefit points. Put the funds into a Housing Fund used as gap financing by AHPs.

6. Explanation that the detailed land use for individual properties (Chapter 3) considers their potential as a resource for affordable housing.

ⁱ "Policy Implications

These jobs-driven housing demand forecasts have several implications for local governments, builders, economic development professionals, and employers in the region:

1. Local jurisdictions are planning for an insufficient amount of housing to accommodate future workers.
2. More housing is needed closer to jobs, in existing and growing regional employment centers.
3. There is a need for more multi-family housing and smaller, more affordable owner and renter homes in the region.
4. A lack of a sufficient supply of housing contributes to worsening traffic and quality of life and threatens our region's economic vitality."

ⁱⁱ This list of four includes explication and justifications of 2 Implementation items proposed in Ch. 4, plus two suggestions having both equity and potential for producing substantial affordable housing units.

MCP-CTRACK

From: MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2015 9:35 AM
To: Pamela Lindstrom; MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan; MCP-Chair
Cc: Kronenberg, Robert
Subject: RE: comments on the draft plan

Ms. Lindstrom,

Thank you very much for the detailed and insightful comments on the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan and most notably your focus on affordable housing.

We appreciate the care and thoughtfulness that went into your comments and your attention to Bethesda's future. We will continue to work with the Planning Board on refining the Sector Plan recommendations.

We hope you will participate in the work session on affordable housing in the coming months.

Thank you!

Leslye Howerton, Assoc. AIA, LEED-GA
Planner Coordinator, Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.4551, leslye.howerton@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

[www.Bethesda Downtown Plan](http://www.BethesdaDowntownPlan)
sign up for our e-mail list [here](#)

From: Pamela Lindstrom [mailto:pamela.lindstrom@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2015 4:33 AM
To: MCP-BethesdaDowntownPlan <BethesdaDowntownPlan@montgomeryplanning.org>; MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: comments on the draft plan

Dear Planning Board members and Bethesda planners:

Attached is a rather long statement making the complete case for additional attention to affordable housing in the plan. The Appendix outlines briefly the contents of the proposed Housing section for the plan.

Thank you for your attention,
Pamela Lindstrom



Dr. Gerald M. Robin

RECEIVED
0786
OCT 07 2015

OFFICE
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

6820 WISCONSIN AVE. #6014

BETHESDA, MD 20815

10/3/15

6820 WISCONSIN AVENUE, SUITE 6014

BETHESDA, MD 20815

TELEPHONE: (301) 913-2929

FAX: (301) 913-0229

EMAIL: dpmdr@robinonline.net

Chair, MCP Planning Board

8787 Georgia Avenue

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Subject: Bethesda/Chevy Chase Fire Station No. 6

Dear Chair, MCP Planning Board and all involved parties:

I live in the Adagio Condominium located at 6820 Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda, the zip code is 20815. This is on Wisconsin Avenue a half block before Bradley Blvd. My wife and I have lived and worked in the BCC area for over 50 years. This is a busy area surrounded by a continuum of construction on all sides. The construction has been going on for the past several years. Bethesda and its neighbors are turning into a bizarre cement jungle! Enough congestion (and noise). Please, please, we do not need another eight-story condo in place of or over the fire station. It's the only area I can still enjoy green space, unimpeded. HAVE MERCY.

We are senior citizens and respectfully, ask to halt and desist. Improve the fire station, Yes! There is no need for further condos.

Respectfully,

Gerald and Sandra Robin

Email: dpmdr.gr@gmail.com

Cc: Roger Berliner, Montgomery Council

LINOWES
AND BLOCHER LLP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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0995
OCT 08 2015

October 7, 2015

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PLANNING COMMISSION
Todd D. Brown
tbrown@linowes-law.com
301.961.5218

Ms. Leslye Howerton
Planner Coordinator, Area One
M-NCPPC
Montgomery County Planning Dept.
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Lot 667, Woodmont – Bethesda Downtown Plan

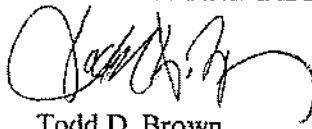
Dear Ms. Howerton:

On behalf of White Flint Express Realty Group Limited Partnership (“Owner”), the purpose of this letter is to request, consistent with other decisions by the Planning Board, that the recommended zoning for the property shown on the attached exhibit be “equalized” between the commercial and residential components. The recommended zoning is CR 6.0, C-1.25, R-5.75, H-250 and CR 6.0, C-1.25, R-5.75, H-175. Considering the property’s location within the Woodmont Triangle either commercial or residential development would be appropriate. Owner therefore requests the recommended individual zoning elements be equalized to CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-6.0, H-250 and CR 6.0, C-6.0, R-6.0, H-175.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

LINOWES AND BLOCHER LLP



Todd D. Brown

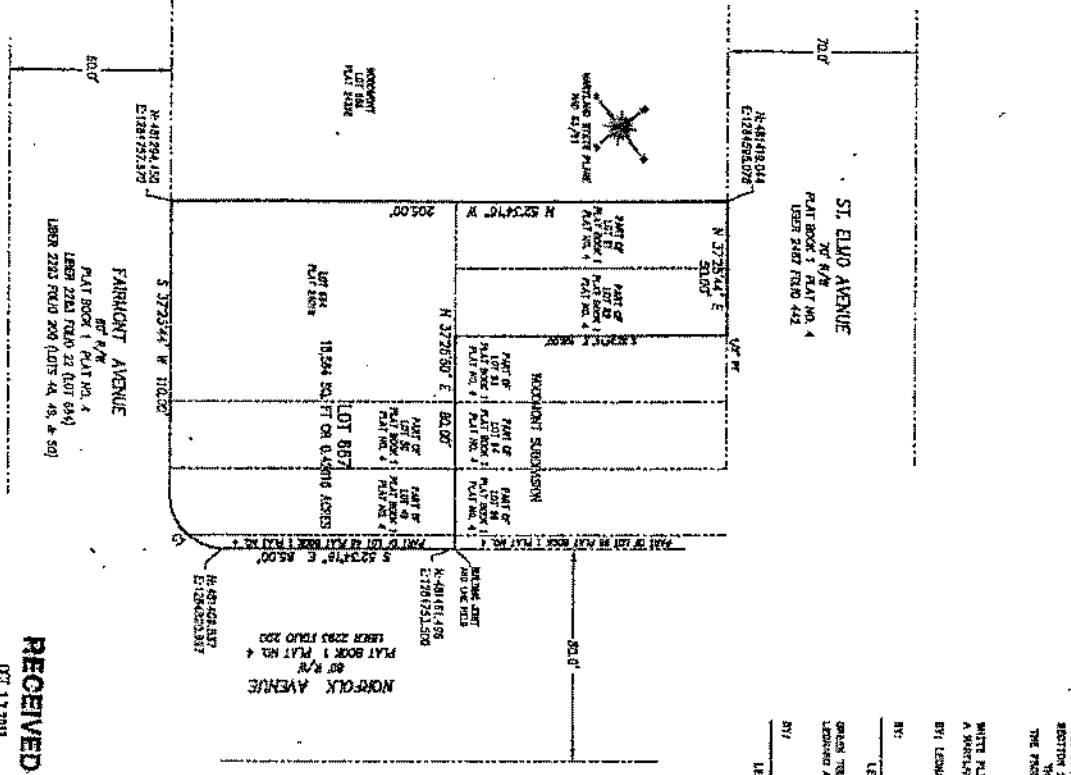
cc: Planning Board Members
Robert Kronenberg
Marc DeOcampo
Leonard Greenberg
Richard Greenberg

**L&B 5264376v1/00955.0017

DATE	10/17/2013
TIME	10:30 AM
BY	RECORDS SECTION
FILE NO.	10-24677
BOOK	
PAGE	

AREA TABULATION

LOT 867	15,664 SQ. FT. OR 0.3535 ACRES
LOT 868	50,000 SQ. FT. OR 1.1461 ACRES
LOT 869	15,664 SQ. FT. OR 0.3535 ACRES
TOTAL	41,328 SQ. FT. OR 0.9491 ACRES



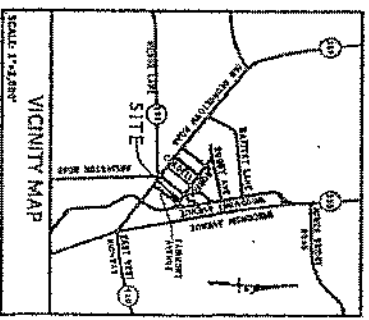
OWNER'S CERTIFICATE

WE, THE undersigned, owners of the Land described herein, HEREBY ACQUIT THIS PLAT OF ENCUMBRANCES, AS MUCH OF THIS SUBDIVISION AS WE OWN ACCORDING AND AS FAR AS WE OWE ALL PROPERTY OWNERS, SHARERS AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, TO BE SET BY A REGISTERED SURVEYOR AND SURVEYOR, IF APPLICABLE WITH CHAPTER 10, SECTION 24 (31) OF THE HANOVER COUNTY CODE. THERE HAS NO RECORDS SET, LINES, LOTS, BOUNDARIES, OR TRUST AGREEMENT THE PROPERTY INCLUDES IN THIS PLAT OF RESUBDIVISION.

WHITE PLAIN COMMON REALTY GROUP LIMITED PARTNERSHIP, L.P.,
A HANOVER COUNTY LIMITED LIABILITY CORPORATION
BY: LEONARD A. PASTERNAK (REGISTERED), GENERAL PARTNER
A HANOVER COUNTY LIMITED LIABILITY CORPORATION

BY: *[Signature]* **Michael A. Cook**
DATE: **7/26/13**
ADDRESS: **72303 Michalka & Cook**

BY: *[Signature]* **72303 Michalka & Cook**
DATE: **7/26/13**
ADDRESS: **72303 Michalka & Cook**



PLAT No. 24677

GENERAL NOTES

1. ALL TOWN, ZONING, REGULATORY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND REQUIREMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAT, PROJECT PLAN, OR OTHER PLAN ALLOWING DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAT, SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROPERTY OWNER AND NOT BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE REGISTERED SURVEYOR.
2. THE OFFICIAL RECORDS FILED FOR AND SIGNED AND DATED BY THE REGISTERED SURVEYOR AND ARE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AT THE REGISTERED SURVEYOR'S OFFICE.
3. THE REGISTERED SURVEYOR IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED BY ANY OTHER PARTY.
4. THE REGISTERED SURVEYOR IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED BY ANY OTHER PARTY.
5. THIS DEVELOPMENT IS SUBJECT TO ALL TOWN AND ZONING REGULATIONS.
6. THIS PLAN IS SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 24.20 OF THE HANOVER COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE.
7. THE PROPERTY IS SUBJECT TO ALL TOWN AND ZONING REGULATIONS.

SUBMITTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, SUBMITTER, HEREBY CERTIFY TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION AND BELIEF THAT THE INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON IS CORRECT AND COMPLETE. I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON IS CORRECT AND COMPLETE. I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON IS CORRECT AND COMPLETE. I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON IS CORRECT AND COMPLETE.



RECEIVED
OCT 17 2013
Dept of the Circuit Court
Hanover County, VA

SUBDIVISION RECORD PLAT
LOT 867
WOODMONT

THE HANOVER-HANOVER COUNTY PARK & PLANNING COMMISSION
MONITORING COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
APPROVED: *[Signature]*
CLARENCE
DATE: 6-25-13

MONITORING COUNTY LANDWARD
DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES
APPROVED: *[Signature]*
DATE: _____
Pol. No. _____

J.B.A.
Johnson, Bennett, Associates, Inc.
Engineering, Surveying, Planning
205 N. Frontline Ave, Suite 400
Galesburg, MO 64607
Tel: (301) 963-1133
Fax: (201) 963-6306
www.jba-inc.net

BEING A RESUBDIVISION OF
LOT 864, AND PART OF LOTS 48, 49, 50, 51 AND 52
REGISTERED ELECTION DISTRICT NO. 7
HANOVER COUNTY, VIRGINIA
SCALE: 1" = 50' JULY 29, 2013

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0965
OCT 05 2015

MCP-CTRACK

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

From: Virginia Hume <virginiahume@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 03, 2015 8:25 AM
To: Anderson, Casey; Wells-Harley, Marye; Dreyfuss, Norman; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali; Presley, Amy
Cc: Kronenberg, Robert; DeOcampo, Marc; Wright, Gwen; .howerton@montgomeryplanning.org
Subject: NO to CR at Fire Station 6

Dear Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Dreyfuss, Fani-Gonzalez, and Presley:

In anticipation of your meeting Monday, I am a resident of the Chevy Chase West neighborhood, and request that you retain residential zoning at Fire Station 6 at Bradley and Wisconsin, that you reject mixed-use zoning at Fire Station 6, and that you approve designated green space at Fire Station 6.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,
Virginia Onufer
4622 Norwood Drive
Chevy Chase, Maryland

RECEIVED
OCT 05 2015

MCP-CTRACK

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

From: Terri Lukas <terri.lukas@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 04, 2015 3:06 PM
To: Anderson, Casey; Wells-Harley, Marye; Dreyfuss, Norman; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali; Presley, Amy
Cc: Wright, Gwen; Kronenberg, Robert; DeOcampo, Marc; Howerton, Leslye
Subject: Reject CR zoning at Fire Station 6: Wisconsin and Bradley, Bethesda

To Planning Board Commissioners:

My bottom line message to you is:

- **RETAIN** residential zoning at the subject Fire Station 6 property at the Wisconsin and Bradley corner and **REJECT MIXED-USE ZONING**.
- **APPROVE** designation of green space on the undeveloped piece of land on this property -- your actions to date have reduced below acceptable levels the allocation of green space per person in Bethesda.

I am a 30 year resident of the Chevy Chase West neighborhood. My husband and I moved to our present home in order to be able to walk to Bethesda, Friendship Heights and have access to Metro for longer commutes. Contrary to what the Washington Post claims, we did NOT purchase property in this community in order to live a "suburban lifestyle". I do not know of anyone in our neighborhood who considers life in Chevy Chase to be of a suburban nature. That is a canard invented by the pro-development Washington Post.

At the same time, we came to this neighborhood because of its residential character. As a community, we've fought off various commercial incursions, and been successful. We are united as a residential neighborhood in wanting to remain a residential enclave, just as our contiguous communities do, i.e., Somerset and the Village of Drummond. Those communities are incorporated and ours is not, so ours is susceptible to the kind of commercial incursions with which you are threatening us.

This is patently unjust and discriminatory and we will resist you if you rule against us.

The preservation of the small parcel of green space that exists next to Fire Station 6 should be what is called a "no brainer" for you. The quality of life in Bethesda has been irreparably harmed by your approval of multiple locations of high rise apartment buildings without paying any attention to how such actions are reducing the ratio of green space per person.

The impending destruction of the Capital Crescent Trail between Bethesda and Silver Spring reduces the numerator even more drastically. Unless you stop the building of high rise apartment buildings and find new sources of green space, we will all be left with a Bethesda known as a concrete heat and pollution island -- another Rosslyn. You are engaging in urban planning of the 20th century, not of the 21st.

Stop building now, preserve the green space we have, plant trees, look for new green spaces to accommodate the population you are planning to bring to Bethesda.

Terri Lukas
4703 Morgan Dr.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

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OCT 05 2015

MCP-CTRACK

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

From: Robert Silverberg <rsilverberg@sbgdc.com>
Sent: Monday, October 05, 2015 9:35 AM
To: Anderson, Casey; Wells-Harley, Marye; Dreyfuss, Norman; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali; Presley, Amy
Cc: Wright, Gwen; Kronenberg, Robert; DeOcampo, Marc; Howerton, Leslye
Subject: Fire Station 6

Subject: NO to CR at Fire Station 6

Dear Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Dreyfuss, Fani-Gonzalez, and Presley:

Retain residential zoning at Fire Station 6 at Bradley and Wisconsin.

No mixed-use zoning at Fire Station 6.

Approve designated green space at Fire Station 6.

The Fire Station Company is trying to become a real estate developer for profit. How is that compatible with its stated mission? Don't let the Fire Station Company's desire for profits to conflict with the views and wishes of the community to keep the Green Mile intact. Density creep is neither desirable nor necessary expect to fuel the profit ambitions of the fire station company. And is it really a fire station company as the County pays for the equipment, equipment maintenance and fire fighting staff, leaving the fire station company with no real mission--other than now latching on the planning process to generate profits for this non-civic organization.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Silverberg

4612 DeRussey Parkway

Chevy Chase, MD

(Resident since 1986)

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0851
SEP 16 2015

MCP-CTRACK

From: Judyth Gilbert <jgilbert112@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 6:36 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Battery Lane Park on 9/15/15

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

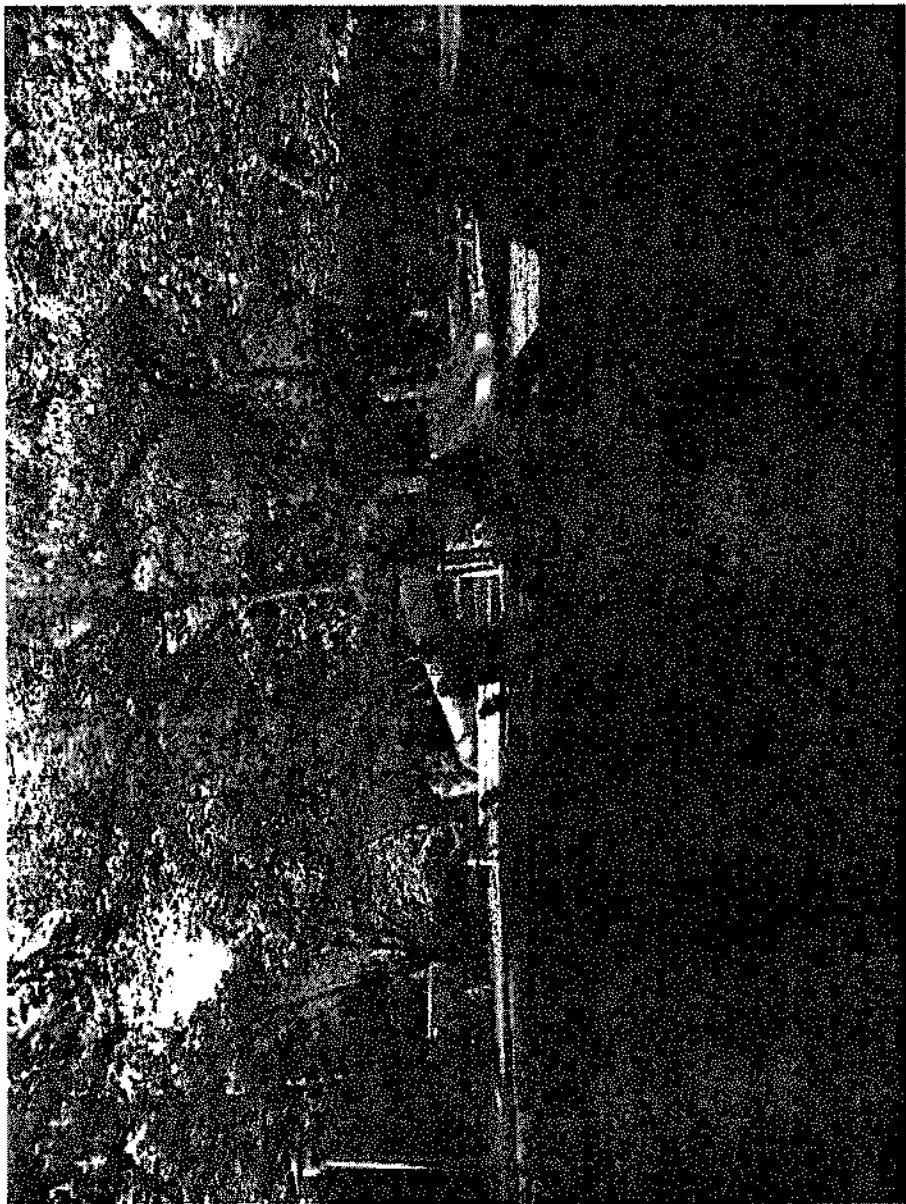
Dear Casey and members of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission,

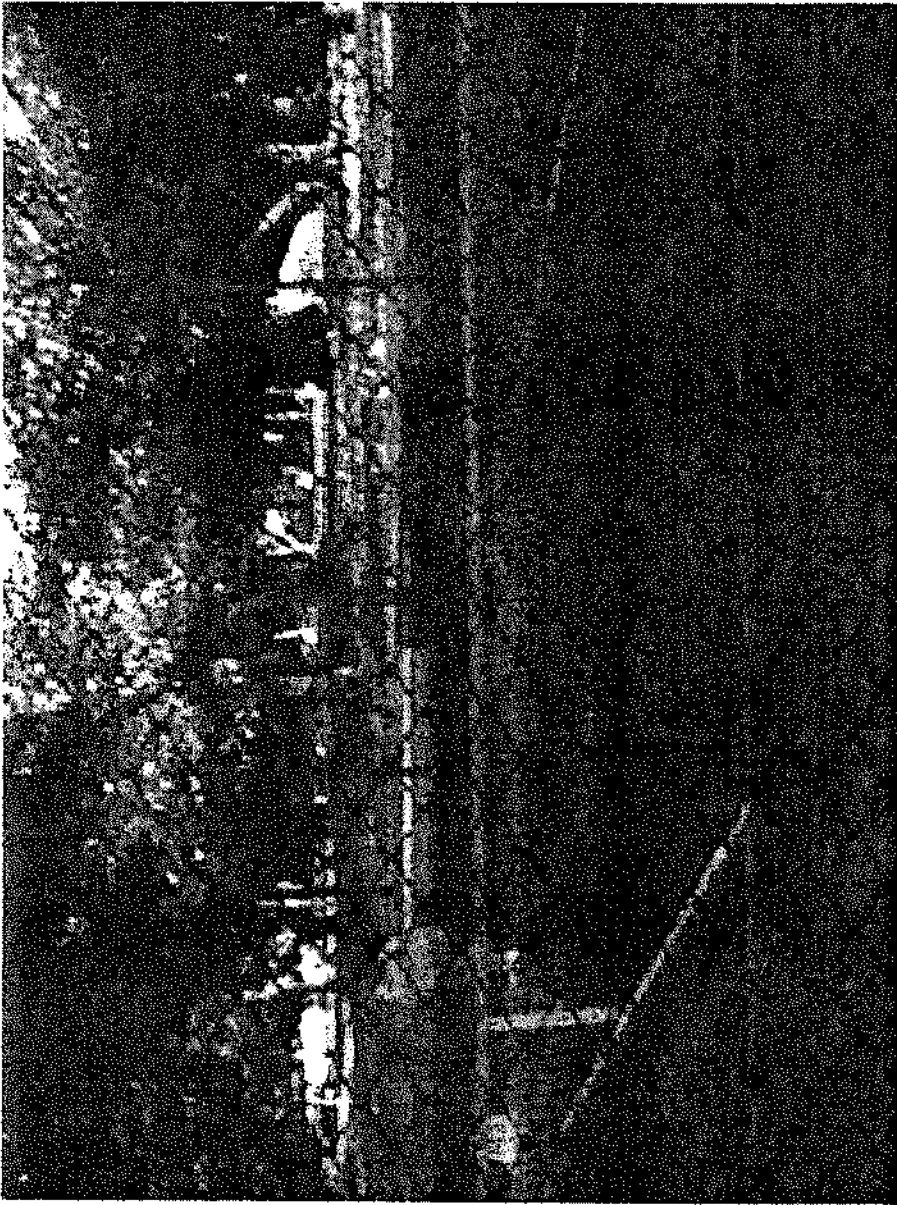
As I was walking through Battery Lane Park today around 5:30 pm when the two pictures were taken, I was thinking how horrible or terrible it would be to have a short road that is slated to be built and how it would affect this part of Bethesda. At the time I was walking, I counted over 20 of us were walking, walking dogs, running or riding bikes on the two paths, over 12 adults and children were at the play grounds, someone playing basketball and someone was on the tennis court even in terrible shape since they have been left behind in any upgrading since I have lived here for 16 years at 4977 Battery Lane. I walk through the park to go to do my errands, walk or take the shuttle to Metro and many other areas in Bethesda instead of walking Old Georgetown Road because of the car & truck traffic and no shade is provided on the sidewalks. I can't image how this became part of the study. Instead of Bethesda Green, this park would become Bethesda Brown and it would be an embarrassment to the community to have the trees taken down and to have a road replace the green space when the area would be a concrete/brick jungle on Battery Lane. Residents with bikes use this as a bike path to NIH and Walter Reed Medical.

I can't image urban planning classes would have this in any text books or any student of the environment would suggest a road through a park where so many of it's residents use the facility daily.

Regards,

Judyth Gilbert
4977 Battery Lane
802N
Bethesda, MD 20814
jgilbert112@verizon.net





Sent from my iPhone

MCP-CTRACK

From: Katharine Kosin <kkosin@gwmail.gwu.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2015 8:15 AM
To: bethesdadownplan@montgomeryplanning.org; MCP-Chair
Subject: Save Battery Lane Park--Revise the Downtown Plan

Dear Montgomery County elected officials and planners,

It has come to my attention that the plan for downtown Bethesda still includes the destruction of Battery Lane Park, despite the overwhelming opposition to this proposal by the community (especially area residents and property owners) and despite the fact that such an elimination of pedestrian space and parkland directly violates the Plan's own stated goals to 1) "expand neighborhood green at Battery Lane Park," 2) "improve pedestrian and bike connectivity through the district and along the park," and 3) "enhance neighborhood livability."

I urge you to make these revisions during your next work session on September 17. Failure to do so would show an alarming disregard for the clear will of the people and for the abundant evidence of the decreased quality of life that would result from the destruction of this park. Furthermore, as a taxpayer I am disgusted at the idea that at the same time that the County makes major cuts to educational funding, you also propose to spend millions on this destruction of an important community resource (since it would cost a tremendous amount of money to a) purchase the nearby properties as discussed in the plan and b) tear out the playground, basketball court, grass and trees to make a road); I do not complain of the high taxes in this county, since I support the social services and education provided by them, but I do strenuously object to my tax dollars being spent on a project that actively lowers both my property values (one of the main appeals of my condo building is that it fronts a peaceful, quiet park) and my personal quality of life. And for what? There is no transportation need justifying a road in that place--it would save drivers only a few minutes at such a high negative cost. This project is completely wasteful and unnecessary.

Furthermore, as one of the millennials that you are allegedly trying to draw to the area, I protest the sacrifice of pedestrian space in favor of cars that this plan entails. Like many millennials, I do not own a car and I do not drive; I cut through the park daily on my way to and from the Metro and the attractions of downtown Bethesda. I enjoy having such a peaceful, lovely pedestrian space as part of my daily commute, and I resent the idea that car drivers should be given this space instead. All over the world, communities are spending money converting roads into pedestrian spaces and trying to create more parks, recognizing their value, but here you are spending money to do the opposite. Destroying parks and making the area less pedestrian-friendly is the last thing that is going to attract millennials to the area.

Finally, one of the only reasons I can see for doing this is an attempt to include more shops and thus try to increase the tax base--yet the streets near Battery Lane are already filled with empty storefronts. Do we really need to remove one of the main appeals of that neighborhood (aka something drawing new residents there) to add a few more empty storefronts? Please don't let greed make you short-sighted.

Sincerely,
Katharine Kosin
4970 Battery Ln, #201
Bethesda, MD 20814

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0842
SEP 15 2015

MCP-CTRACK

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

From: lv1509 <lv1509@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2015 3:08 PM
To: MCP-Chair; Elizabeth LeBarron; Judyth Gilbert; Phyllis & Al Rosenthal; Lesley-Alicia Delahunty; Holly Clemans; Lakshmi Goparaju; Lee Weinstein; Bonnie Forman; Michael Fetchko; Willo Pequegnat
Subject: Battery Lane Park

Dear Mr. Casey,

We are very concerned about our community park--Battery Lane Park--that is a real community asset. The plans indicate that a road will be going through our park and destroying its character. We want a REAL park, not an URBAN park like Veterans at Woodmont and Norfolk. The rationale is that it will "connect" Battery Park to the Woodmont Triangle area. We feel quite connected to that area -- it has my Starbucks and some of my favorite restaurants (Blacks), stores (Cornucopia). Our area for the homeless. When I walked through the park last --there were two men playing tennis and when someone lost a point, the father would hit a ball to his little boy and then resume playing; there are a group of high school kids playing basketball and an older group sitting on the lawn waiting their turn; some families were swinging their kids. People were walking through the park with their grocery bags.

This is what a community is all about -- not another road with cars speeding by further congesting Battery Lane.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Willo Pequegnat
4977 Battery Lane
Bethesda, Maryland

MCP-CTRACK

From: Alicia Delahunty <info@valuablelessons.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 7:58 AM
To: oicemail@montgomerycountymd.gov; Newhouse, Rachel; DeOcampo, Marc; howerton@montgomeryplanning.org; Schneider, Tina; Folden, Matthew; Shipman, Laura; Sandberg, Brenda; MCP-Chair; Garcia, Joyce; MCP-Chair; McManus, Patricia; Farquhar, Brooke; Ma, Michael; Komes, Linda
Cc: Dr. Willo Pequegnat; Holly Clemans; Lakshmi Goparaju; Elizabeth LeBarron
Subject: "Battery Lane Connector Street" and Battery Lane Park

15 September 2015

Dear Montgomery County elected officials and planners,

Please keep Battery Lane Park the car-free, grass and trees, senior, adult, child, dog, and ball friendly place our family has used for thirty years.

Battery Lane Park must remain a tree-filled, grassy oasis. It combines multi-sport use with birds, small mammals, and insects that contribute to the ecology of the park. As the posted Battery Lane Park sign says: NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES.

Please revise the plan to exclude the road. Battery Lane residents will continue to enjoy dog walking, pickup basketball, tennis, day care playground, all under mature shady green trees.

Montgomery is the second wealthiest county in US; surely, the county has the money to expend on maintaining the existing verdant park.

Please reduce, not expand, our carbon footprint in Battery Lane Park. Maintain the quality of Battery Lane Park, increase the quantity of users by renovating, not removing, the green from the park. The trees, grass, paths, and courts should be refurbished basketball court and the benches and picnic tables made handicapped accessible. The playground should be made even more appealing to older children by adding a simple climbing wall.

The planned increased traffic and pollution will will destroy the existing green space known as Battery Lane Park.

- Page 19 "Battery Lane Connector Street" (road runs through Battery Lane Park)
- Page 27 "Battery Lane Connector *Intended to improve connectivity between Battery Lane/Woodmont Triangle *Recommendation largely based in urban design *Not evaluated as part of the traffic mode" (do not know what that all means but does not sound like green grass)
- Page 28 "Functional Classification" (Battery Lane Connector Street is dotted in as B-1 - do not know what that all means but does not sound like green grass)
- Page 35 "Implementation Strategy" (Battery Lane Park loses about 2/3 of its size - only one third of present green grass park is shaded green as "Proposed Public Open Spaces")

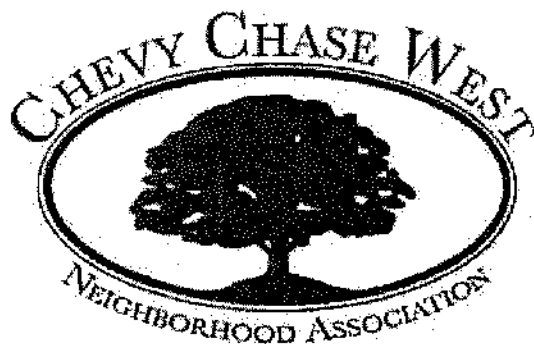
It appears the elimination of Batter Lane Park as green grass continues to be planned.

The beneficiaries of keeping Battery Lane Park green will be current and future resident taxpayers of the Battery Lane neighborhood and the whole county.

Thanking you in advance for your prompt attention to this letter,

Lesley-Alicia Bernadette Delahunty 240 426 5584
4987 Battery Lane, Bethesda MD 20814-4986

From: Naomi Spinrad <nspinrad68@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2015 8:34 AM
To: Anderson, Casey; Wells-Harley, Marye; Dreyfuss, Norman; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali; Presley, Amy
Cc: Councilmember Berliner's Office; Councilmember.leventhal@montgomerycountymd.gov Gov; Councilmember.floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov Gov; councilmember.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov; Ike Leggett; Ike Leggett; Greg Ossont; Goldstein, Scott; fire.chief@montgomerycountymd.gov; Dimitriadis, John; Wright, Gwen; Kronenberg, Robert; DeOcampo, Marc; Howerton, Leslye; Barbara McCall; Debrah B. Shaver
Subject: Bethesda Plan - Fire Station 6, Density Transfer south of Bradley



Dear Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Dreyfuss, Fani-Gonzalez, and Presley:

Once again I am writing on behalf of the Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association, with a proposal to amend the map on page 131 of the draft Bethesda Plan and the recommended zoning in that part of circle 3 on page 129.

Chevy Chase West proposes that the green space between Nottingham Drive and Chevy Chase Drive, to the west of Fire Station 6, be designated and preserved as green, open space. This would provide non-vehicular connectivity to Norwood Park from the area of the Eastern Greenway, and would continue to serve the immediate neighborhood.

This green space is already used by the surrounding community. Children from nearby midrise apartment buildings (including the HOC property) and St. John's Church Oneness School and its summer program play there regularly. Pedestrians cut through now to the park. Some additional improvements (for example, installation of a sidewalk on the north side of Nottingham between this green space and the park, attention to drainage and plantings at the park entrance, and appropriate signage to and within the park) would make this both an attractive and valuable connector between green spaces and a compatible transition to a residential area.

Making this a designated green space would accomplish the following:

- Purchase or lease of the property by the County and/or Parks would maintain a sizeable green space in Bethesda, where such space is limited.
- Any funds generated for the Bethesda Fire Department might be designated for refurbishment or replacement of the standalone station.

- Although the MCFRS draft plan makes it clear that no expansion of Fire Station 6 is currently envisioned, maintaining the green space would leave open the possibility of expansion in the far future, a significant public safety consideration in light of continuing growth in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area and the geographical distribution of nearby fire stations. Fire safety is the stated mission of the BFD.

As you know, the Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association believes that the area south of Bradley is a long-established residential area, and should be maintained as such. In addition to proposing this green space, we also support the concept of density transfer for the properties south of Bradley. Allowing density to be transferred to properties nearer to transit centers will result increase regulated affordable housing, provide more affordable housing within easy reach of transit, and improve job accessibility for these residents. We remain concerned, however, that there may not be adequate incentives for potential sellers to sell, and potential buyers to buy, and also that potential sellers south of Bradley are also free to buy density.

Our concerns about CR zoning south of Bradley in general, and at the fire station property in particular, are not simply about added density and how that will affect public safety, traffic, etc. (as described in our earlier letters to you), although these are all major issues for CCW. Rezoning to a zone in the CR family for these properties increases the likelihood of commercial development incompatible with the residential character of this area, as it allows uses that either are not currently allowed or under current zoning require greater regulation and public input. We have stated earlier that, short of removing this area from the Bethesda plan, CCW's preference is that the fire station site be rezoned R-60. If, however, you agree that keeping the green space is a good idea, then it may make sense to leave the zoning at R-10 pending any future changes in public safety needs and development patterns. With traffic at this and nearby intersections highly unlikely to diminish, we believe that the best zoning here is the least dense zone possible.

Although we were disappointed that at the June 24 hearing the Bethesda Fire Department asked for density nearly identical to its original request, and for height exceeding its original request (ignoring the opposition by neighboring communities, stated in testimony as well as public and one-on-one BFD-community meetings), we are pleased to hear that it is planning to hire an executive director to handle daily operations and improve its fundraising. Given the timeline the BFD has discussed for its potential redevelopment plans, we hope that a combination of improved fundraising, zoning appropriate to its location in a residential area, and true cooperative efforts among the BFD, the communities it adjoins and serves, and the County will give it the resources it may need to maintain its ability to support public safety requirements.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Naomi Spinrad

Vice President/Development, Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association

Cc: Councilmember Roger Berliner, District 1

Councilmember George Leventhal, President, County Council

Councilmember Nancy Floreen, Chair, PHED Committee

Councilmember Marc Elrich, Chair, Public Safety Committee

Ike Leggett, County Executive

Greg Ossont, Deputy Director, GSA

Scott Goldstein, Chief, MCFRS

John Dimitriadis, MCFRS

Gwen Wright, Planning Director

Robert Kronenberg, Area 1 Supervisor, Planning Department

Marc DeOcampo, Area 1 Deputy Supervisor

Leslye Howerton, Lead Planner, Bethesda Downtown Plan

Barbara McCall, 4720 Chevy Chase Drive Condominium

Debrah Shaver, 4800 Chevy Chase Drive Condominium

The Home Owners and Residents of Middleton Lane
Statement for the Record before the Montgomery County Planning Board
Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan
June 24, 2015, 7:00-9:30 pm
Bethesda / Chevy Chase Regional Service Center

Within the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD), Middleton Lane is geographically the residential street of single family homes nearest to the Bethesda Metro. Moreover, Middleton Lane is the only residential street of single family homes the entirety of which is wholly within the CBD. As a result, the home owners and residents of the 22 single family homes on Middleton Lane are uniquely interested in the current draft Bethesda CBD Sector Plan (Plan) and future development the Plan contemplates in the CBD.

We have been active for the past year in reviewing drafts of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan, meeting with Planning Board staff, writing letters, and meeting with other neighbors. During that time we have been extremely impressed with the dedication, professionalism and responsiveness of the Planning Board staff. In addition to the numerous public meetings on the Plan staff have attended, staff members have twice come to evening meetings on Middleton Lane. They have patiently explained both the proposals in various iterations of the draft Plan, listened to our concerns and answered our questions.

Further, in our letter to Chairman Casey Anderson, dated February 23, 2015, we identified three major issues with the draft Plan as of that time. The current draft Plan under consideration has addressed each of those issues to our satisfaction. In particular, we appreciate the deletion of the potential extensions of Waverly Street and Avondale Street, deletion of a so-called “desire line” that was to extend from Middleton Lane to Avondale Street through one house on Middleton Lane, and ensuring the building heights of the Avondale Street apartments remain at 35 feet. We also appreciate the positive statements in the current draft Plan concerning attempts to limit “cut-through” traffic in the East Bethesda neighborhood.

That said, while we are generally pleased with the current draft Plan, there are several critical issues and a few technical items or simple errors in the current draft Plan that we would like to bring to your attention. If left unaddressed, these issues could negatively affect Middleton Lane, the East Bethesda or “Pearl District” area and potentially lead to confusion when future development projects are being considered.

Critical Issues

- **Building Heights:** On page 69, Figure 2.20, building heights along Wisconsin Avenue are much higher than the heights in the previously approved Sector Plan. In the Plan approved in 1994 the residents of Middleton Lane and East Bethesda worked with the County to have a simple principle drive the heights. That principle was that the highest buildings would be at the Metro Center or the cross-roads of Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway. Moving north on Wisconsin, east along East-West Highway and northeast towards the residential area, the height limits for buildings are supposed to

decrease progressively. The idea is that the highest building would be at the Metro Center, at 200 feet, and would function as, essentially, the center pole of a tent with a uniform decrease as buildings moved away from the center. In the current draft plan, Figure 2.20, shows the height at the Metro Center increasing to 290 feet and then heading north on Wisconsin Avenue on the west side decreasing to 175 feet for several blocks, then increasing to 250 feet for two blocks and then decreasing to 175 feet for a block, 145 feet for a block, 110 feet for half a block then up again for 145 feet for half a block then down again for 110 feet for half a block then up again for 120 feet. The same inconsistent and haphazard heights occur on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue, decreasing from 290 feet at the Chevy Chase Bank building to 110 feet for 2 and a half blocks then up again to 250 feet starting at the Chevy Chase Acura Car dealership and going north for two blocks and then down again to 120 feet until Chestnut Street. The heights step-down to 90 feet going east into the residential area and then to 35-70 feet at Tilbury Street. Beyond being a hodgepodge of heights that would ultimately be unsightly, the variance in heights on the east side of Wisconsin from Chevy Chase Acura to Chestnut Street seems virtually impossible to develop in any rational way given the size of the lots at issue. We believe these heights are unacceptable, especially from the Acura Dealership to Chase Avenue. Not only are these proposed heights in violation of the principle of massing building height toward the Metro Center, but they would be extraordinarily tall buildings directly to the west of and likely casting afternoon shadows on existing single-family homes on the residential streets of Chase Avenue, Harling Lane, Cheltenham Avenue, and Sleaford Road. No reasonable step-down of building heights would protect the residential blocks from the intrusion of 250 foot buildings less than a block away.

We believe the height on the east side of Wisconsin should not be any higher than 110 feet from Avondale Street to Chestnut Street. The height on the west side of Wisconsin should not go up and down. The highest it should be moving north from the Metro Center is 175 feet progressively decreasing to 145 feet and then 120 feet, consistent with the vision of the previous Master Plan, which has been held up as a successful model and emulated elsewhere.

- Roadway Classification: On page 33, Figure 2.08, all of the streets perpendicular to Wisconsin Avenue and Tilbury Street, as well as Tilbury Street, Sleaford Road, Middleton Lane and Pearl Street are show as “business roads.” This appears to be a mistake since the maps, figures and accompanying narrative describe each of these streets as residential streets of single-family homes. We ask that you revise the plan to show Tilbury Street; Sleaford Road (from Tilbury Street to E. Plan Boundary); Pearl Street (from N. Plan Boundary to Middleton Lane); and Chelton Road (from Sleaford Road to East-West Highway) as Secondary Residential Streets.

It is important to us that the Plan show Middleton Lane, from the mid-block closure to Pearl Street, as a Secondary Residential Street, consistent with the narrative on pages 34 to 36. And, as described below, it is equally important to show the existing mid-block closure on Middleton Lane.

- Middleton Lane Closure: It is critically important that Middleton Lane remain closed to Wisconsin Avenue. The Plan demonstrates a clear intention that this be the case. Specifically, the narrative on pages 34 and 35 as well as figures on pages 123 and 126

reflect this intention. However, there are 10 figures which fail to show the closure. These figures need to be corrected. The figures in need of correction are on pages 24, 25, 33, 54, 67, 69, 73, 75, 83, and 141.

Technical Items and Errors

- **Bikeway Classification:** There are several issues with this section. First, on page 42: The east end of Bikeway SR-8 should terminate at Wisconsin Avenue, or at least no further east than the east end of Avondale Street. It should not be shown as cutting through to Pearl Street. Also, Bikeway LB-7 (the Pearl Street bikeway) should be shown as a Shared Roadway between East-West Highway and Middleton Lane. On page 43, the Shared Roadway bikeway on Sleaford Road between Tilbury Street and the Capital Crescent Trail should be shown in Table 2.02. The segment of LB-3 between Montgomery Avenue and the Capital Crescent Trail should also be shown in Table 2.02. On pages 44-50, a description of the Sleaford Road bikeway is missing from the "New Bikeway Proposals" starting on page 44.
- **Pearl District Recommended Zoning:** On page 111, Figure 3.07, there are some inconsistencies between this figure and the surrounding pages. For example, the Recreational Park along Montgomery Avenue is zoned for buildings with heights of 35 feet. The Our Lady of Lourdes parking lot is shown on page 113 as a park. However, the same area is zoned for buildings 50 feet high on page 111. Either resolve these inconsistencies or explain why there is zoning for buildings in these areas in one part of the draft Plan while also showing these areas as parks in another section of the draft Plan.
- **Gateways to Bethesda:** On page 36 at the end of the page there are four gateway intersections that are identified, and the text notes that they "are discussed below." But the discussion is missing. We would like to see what the Plan contemplates for these intersections.

Edgemoor Citizens Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 30459
Bethesda, MD 20824

March 2, 2015

Gwen Wright, Planning Director
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Wright,

We are members of the Board of Directors of the Edgemoor Citizen's Association, a civic organization representing residents of the Bethesda neighborhood encompassing Edgemoor, Bradley Village and parts of Bradley Hills. We are writing about the Bethesda Downtown Plan.

We appreciate your and your staff's work on the Plan, including your community outreach activities and efforts to obtain public input. However, we have two areas of concern: (i) the potential new development at the Bethesda Metro Plaza; and (ii) the proposed height increases on the west side of Arlington Road at Bradley Boulevard. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you or members of your staff to discuss these concerns.

Our principal concerns are:

Bethesda Metro Plaza

- There has been little public discussion of changes being contemplated for the Metro Plaza. The Plan Concepts documents appear to include a new high-rise building on a large part of the front of the Plaza that is currently public open space, but do not indicate the scope of the changes being contemplated.
- Reducing the amount of public open space on the Plaza by adding a new building that blocks sight lines and inhibits public access to the Plaza is inconsistent with the Plan's goals to "activate and increase visibility of public use spaces" and make "a greener and more connected downtown."
- Members of our community are aware of the Brookfield Properties and Clark Enterprises proposals, but we have not yet had the opportunity to discuss concepts for the Metro Plaza with you or your staff.
- To find the best solution for all of Bethesda, public discussion and consideration of a range of ideas for the Metro Plaza is needed before you forward a Staff Draft Plan to the Planning Board.

Arlington South

- The Plan Concepts documents currently propose increasing the height limit for the Bradley Shopping Center property and a part of the Euro Motorcars property from 45 feet to 70 feet, described as "appropriate to the surrounding context."
- To the west of the Bradley Shopping Center and EuroMotorcars properties are residential areas with a height limit of 35 feet. All other properties on the west side of Arlington Road are also subject to a 35-foot limit.
- A 70-foot height limit is not appropriate to the area or to the surrounding context, given the adjoining residential areas and the character of the west side of Arlington Road.

Bethesda Metro Plaza

The neighborhoods we represent are immediately adjacent to the Bethesda CBD, bordering the CBD at its boundary to the west of Arlington Road. At our northeastern end we are three blocks from the Bethesda Metro Plaza. Our children attend Bethesda Elementary School and Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, schools that straddle the Metro Center. We commute to our jobs and to downtown cultural and sporting events by Metro, entering at the Bethesda Metro Plaza. We frequent the businesses in downtown Bethesda, including its stores, restaurants, and movie theaters, as well as its professional services. We are stakeholders in the future of the Bethesda Metro Plaza and the overall Bethesda CBD.

There is general agreement that the current Bethesda Metro Plaza has not achieved its potential as an urban open public space. However, the Plan Concepts presentation to the Planning Board in December 2014 included no substantive discussion of current problems with the Metro Plaza area or any ideas for solutions for this "Symbolic Center" of Downtown Bethesda. The owner of the land lease for the Plaza, Brookfield Properties, has presented a proposal to reconfigure the area, with a new building on the northeastern part of the current public open space and a redesign of the remainder of the Plaza. Clark Enterprises has circulated an alternative idea for redesigning the Plaza space without a new building. Members of our community have met with representatives of both Brookfield and Clark to hear about their proposals. Additionally, Brookfield held an "Open House" on its proposal on February 7.

The Plan Concepts slides include several items that suggest your staff is thinking about major changes to the Metro Plaza. On Slide 61 (Wisconsin Ave Corridor - Public Realm), the Metro Plaza area is highlighted by a text box that says: "Activate and increase visibility of public use spaces." The graphic also shows a large irregular box designated as "Illustrative Potential Development" that drastically reduces the size of the existing public use space on the Plaza. There is no explanation in the presentation about what this new potential development might be.

At the January 29, 2015, Bethesda Downtown Plan public meeting, we spoke with a member of your staff about the Metro Plaza and asked what the carved out space in the graphic was intended to convey. She said that the box drawn in represents a new office building, and that the Planning Staff believes that a new building should be built in that location. She said that it would create

"corridors of commercial activity" between the buildings that would draw people into the remaining open space behind the new building.

Both the current 1994 Bethesda CBD Plan and the Plan Concepts slides clearly reflect the need for more green open space, accessible to pedestrians and perceived as both open and public. The 1994 Plan designates the entire Metro Plaza as urban open space, with no additional buildings contemplated. The Planning Board recognized the importance of this open space in turning down a prior owner's proposal for an additional office building on the site. We believe that replacing a large portion of this open space with a new high-rise building is not a solution to the problems of the Metro Plaza, and presents new problems of its own. It would reduce the size of the public open space and close off the remaining space, making it even less accessible to the public than it is now. It would be inconsistent with the goals and vision of the Bethesda Downtown Plan, and would violate the commitments of prior plans.

We believe that, as with other interior spaces in Bethesda intended for public use (for example, the plaza at The Metropolitan), an interior "public" space at the Metro Plaza that is blocked off by a new high-rise building would not invite the public and would not provide the "public open space" that has consistently been envisioned by planners. The Plaza is the largest remaining public open space in the area of the Bethesda Metro Center, and we believe that public discussion and consideration of other options is essential to achieving a solution that works for the entire community. (We also encourage you to think about working with the Montgomery County Department of Parks as you consider the future of the Plaza. We have been pleased and impressed with their work on redesign of and improvements to Caroline Freeland Park (which is in the CBD and borders our community).)

This is not to say that some development on the Plaza area might not be helpful. Perhaps that is part of the solution, and perhaps not. We are concerned that your staff seems to have already decided on a building in the middle front of the plaza without making that decision clear, without public discussion, and without full consideration of alternatives. Making Metro Plaza the true symbolic center of Bethesda is an important goal, and the Bethesda Downtown Plan can be an important step toward achieving that goal. But, the process has to be clear, open, and public. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you or members of your staff to discuss the plans for the Bethesda Metro Plaza and the impact on Bethesda and our community.

Arlington Road

We are also concerned about the proposed increase in the permitted height on the west side of Arlington Road near Bradley Boulevard, at the location of the Bradley Shopping Center and a portion of the Euro Motorcars property. These properties are currently subject to a height limit of 45 feet. The Plan Concepts documents show an increase to 70 feet, described as "appropriate to the surrounding context."

To the west of these properties are residential areas with a height limit of 35 feet (retained under the Plan Concepts). The current 45-foot height already exceeds that of any other property on the west side of Arlington Road. All other west side property is subject to a 35-foot limit,

recognizing the residential nature of the adjoining properties. It is difficult to see how a 70-foot high building on the Bradley Shopping Center and Euro Motorcars properties would be appropriate to the area or to the context of the adjoining residential areas.

The 1994 Bethesda CBD Plan significantly limited development on the site of the Bradley Shopping Center, finding the center important because of the community retail and services it provides. (Strosniders Hardware, Breads Unlimited, Bradley Food & Beverage, Bradley Drugs, and others are long-time neighborhood fixtures, important to many in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase communities and beyond.) To encourage retention of the Bradley Shopping Center and its shops and services (and mindful of the adjoining residential areas), the 1994 Plan created an overlay zone restricting the density to approximately the existing density, effectively prohibiting redevelopment. While it may be appropriate to reconsider the restrictive overlay that keeps the center as it is, we believe it is not appropriate to increase the underlying height limit. Modification of the overlay in itself would be a substantial change to the restrictions applicable to this property.

We recognize that increased density and development at the location of the Bradley Shopping Center may be inevitable, and that redevelopment of this property, well done, maintaining neighborhood retail and services for residents, could be a positive for Bethesda and for our community. However, we do not believe an increased height limit is required to encourage this development, especially since there has been considerable development on the east side of Arlington Road at the 45-foot limit, including the new building at 7001 Arlington Road. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you our concerns about the proposed increased height limit.

Regarding both the Bethesda Metro Plaza and Arlington South, and indeed the entire CBD, we acknowledge that there are a number of competing interests and considerations to be taken into account. We encourage you to continue to reach out to all communities in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area in the development of the Bethesda Downtown Plan. We all wish to see a plan that will serve well the entire Bethesda community, including its residents, its businesses, and its surrounding residential communities. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss our concerns. You may contact us by email at davidkbarnes@gmail.com (David Barnes) and JTGwadz@gmail.com (Joyce Gwadz).

Respectfully submitted,



David Barnes
ECA Land Use Committee



Joyce Gwadz
ECA Land Use Committee