From:	Huang, Wen
To:	David Minton
Cc:	councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; MCP-Chair; Ma, Michael; Lai, Judie
Subject:	RE: Letter from David and Katherine Minton RE: Proposed Improvements to the Silver Spring Intermediate Park
Date:	Wednesday, July 25, 2018 10:24:00 AM

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Minton,

Thank you for your thoughtful comments. I remember that we talked on the phone regarding the on-line survey result at Open Town Hall Forum.

I would like to explain the on-line survey result in more details here:
We received 116 response to the on-line survey. Among them, 4 are from outside of Silver Spring and Takoma Park area (3 voted for Option1, 1 voted for Option4). Among the rest of the 112 voters who are from the surrounding area, 47 voters selected Option 1 or 2, and 58 voters selected Option 4. So that is 42% vs. 52%. Option 4 still received the majority of votes.

All four options were developed based on the public comments to preserve the openness of the lawn area and mature trees. Even though option 4 is chosen by the majority voters, people choose it for different reasons because Option 4 provides more new amenities than the other three options do. The final plan will be adjusted based on the community input and our budget. This park is only 3.6 acres, which is not big enough and is not appropriate to fit in official soccer fields. The purpose of the re-grading is to firstly resolved the drainage issues, and secondly enlarge the playable space for existing soccer practice needs and neighborhood volleyball team, as well as many other sports activities on site. During the detail design process, we will make sure to preserve the natural and open characters of the park.

Also, please see my response below to your requests:

- My neighbors and I request
    - another community meeting to hear the proposed decision BEFORE it is adopted, with another opportunity for community input.
      We will post the final concept plan on our website for public to comment before we present to the Planning Board.
- We request assurances that:
    - The green spaces will be maintained and not divided

      Yes, the green space will be maintained and the proposed walkways will be at the perimeter of the open space
    - Every effort will be made to keep as many trees as possible

      It's our intent to minimize the impact of the proposed improvements on the existing trees.
    - If any open green space is regraded or leveled, the two hills (the one between Philadelphia Avenue and the tennis courts; and the other one, from the parking area toward the green space between the tennis court and the playground) be kept intact, so young children can continue to use these hills for sledding

      The sliding hill opportunities will be provided.
    - No use will be added to the tennis court that will dominate that space and the rest of the par.

      In more urbanized areas such as this neighborhood, it is our intent to convert single-

purpose courts to multi-purpose courts in order to accommodate increased demands from various user groups. Our Park Planning staff will conduct a study to see how the public tennis and basketball courts in the surrounding area are being used. The result of the study will help inform the design of the courts in terms of potential uses.

I hope my response addressed your concerns. The final concept plan will be post on-line to receive public comments before we present to the Planning Board. Thank you again for taking the time to send us your thoughts on this project.

Sincerely,

Wen Huang
T: (301) 495-2466 | **F**: (301) 585-1921
www.montgomeryparks.org

From: David Minton [mailto:threefates3@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 1:41 PM
To: Huang, Wen <wen.huang@montgomeryparks.org>
Cc: councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: Letter from David and Katherine Minton RE: Proposed Improvements to the Silver Spring Intermediate Park

Dear Wen Huang, Members of the Montgomery County Planning Department, and County Council member Representatives:
Like our fellow neighbors adjacent to the **Silver Spring Intermediate Park**, my wife and I are writing with regard to the proposed Plans for this Park. Our family has been involved with the County's Park Planning process at every opportunity reserved for community input... and beyond. My wife attended the first Community Planning Meeting for initial input, and I attended the Second Community Planning Meeting when the four Options for Improvements to the Park were outlined. We responded to the On Line Survey regarding these four Options. In addition, I have contacted Ms. Huang twice by telephone to give my views of both the process the Park's department has chosen for community input as well as the substance of the Park Options.
In all of our communications we have made one point distinctly clear – shared by my neighbors fronting the Park - that is: keep the improvements *minimal* thus allowing the Park to function simply and organically as it has done SO WELL for so many years. Cluttering the Park with concrete and permanent structures viewed from a distance may seem like a "best practices" way of keeping this park current - but this is very generalized thinking. This Park has its own personality, natural green areas, and best functions which are obvious to those of us who see and use the Park every single day. "More" is not best. The Park is not broken; going to extreme lengths to "fix" it will only serve to erode or destroy its essential character.
While we support the proposed ADA and drainage improvements which are clearly necessary for practical and legal reasons, we do NOT support, and further will vigorously oppose, Options 3 and 4 or any elements of Options 3 or 4 which transform the Park into a more or less permanent soccer field. This is a small neighborhood part which was NEVER intended to accommodate the crowds which would attend regular soccer matches or heavy usage which overflow the already small Park parking lot. Currently, Boston Avenue bottlenecks on weekends when the green area of the park is used for temporary soccer practices – residents have great difficulty using their own parking and even navigating what turns into a one-way street. The impact of encouraging MORE soccer and

OUTSIDE use in the small SSIP would have a decidedly negative impact on our immediate neighborhood.
Further, there was a clear MAJORITY of respondents who favored the combined Minimal approach (Options 1 & 2) as opposed to the Aggressive approach (Option 4). Option #4 is inconsistent with the weight of opinion at BOTH community meetings, when community members supported necessary modifications to address drainage issues and ADA compliance, but strongly favored minimal changes that do not change the character of the park.
As our neighbors Heidi and Roger Coleman have pointed out, the previous survey asked respondents whether they lived near the park and how often they use the park. Such questions were omitted from this latest survey. SSIP is very small and has always been intended as a local, neighborhood park. People who don't use the park and don't live nearby should not decide the outcome of its future.
My neighbors and I request another community meeting to hear the proposed decision BEFORE it is adopted, with another opportunity for community input.

- We request assurances that:
    - The green spaces will be maintained and not divided
    - Every effort will be made to keep as many trees as possible
    - If any open green space is regraded or leveled, the two hills (the one between Philadelphia Avenue and the tennis courts; and the other one, from the parking area toward the green space between the tennis court and the playground) be kept intact, so young children can continue to use these hills for sledding
    - No use will be added to the tennis court that will dominate that space and the rest of the par.

We look forward to your response. Thank you.
Sincerely,

David and Katherine Minton
705 Boston Avenue
Takoma Park, MD
Residents since 1997

cc: Hans Reimer, County Council At Large
Tom Hucker, County Council District 5
Montgomery Planning Board