

Item 10 - Correspondence

From: robert.l.bein@montgomerycountymd.gov
To: county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.katz@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.alborno@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.navarro@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.rice@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; marc.elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov; MCP-Chair
Subject: Delay Thrive Montgomery 2050 at least one year/Covid-19
Date: Saturday, September 26, 2020 7:31:29 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Council President Katz, Vice President Hucker, Councilmember Alborno, Councilmember Friedson, Councilmember Glass, Councilmember Jawando, Councilmember Navarro, Councilmember Rice, and Councilmember Riemer:

We are writing to request that you direct the Planning Board to delay consideration of Thrive Montgomery 2050, the update of the General Plan, for at least a year. It is currently scheduled for a Planning Board hearing in September and transmission to the Council in March 2021. We make this request in light of the unprecedented economic and personal hardships experienced by the County and its residents as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the unknown transformative impact beyond immediate pressing needs. In addition, the draft plan contains 46 goals, 154 policies, and 218 actions in areas that go far beyond the land use and natural resources addressed in previous general plans. These need informed, transparent, and diverse public debate (the implementation section has not yet been made public).

The current draft relies on pre-pandemic data and assumptions, yet recent data suggest we may be facing permanent changes in how we live, spend, work, commute, study, and play:

- Metro weekday ridership overall has declined nearly 95%since March.
- Multiple businesses in the County have closed permanently and others have laid off thousands of employees.
- Weakness in high-cost rentals is not translating into lower rents, as indicated by the conversion of luxury rentals into more profitable short-term rentals.
- Many companies and employees have discovered that telecommuting works and saves time and money –cutting into the commercial real estate market and altering the residential market in favor of homes with work space and outdoor recreation space on site or nearby.
- Government funding for services and pressing capital needs will be severely circumscribed by both diminished revenues and meeting immediate needs precipitated by the pandemic.

It is impossible to know which changes will be lasting, but their potential to affect housing choices, education, commuting patterns, brick and mortar retail, recreation, and transportation demands and solutions, among many things, is indisputable.For the foreseeable future, people are focused on staying healthy, keeping their jobs, feeding and schooling their children, and paying for housing. While the plan acknowledges the likelihood of increased telecommuting, it seems to miss or ignore the effects that will have on where and how people will continue their lives once the pandemic fades. We will learn much more about that in the next 12-18 months, and a 30-year vision divorced from the reality of human behavior will not serve the county well.

Thank you for your attention, and we hope you will agree with our position.

Sincerely,

Robert Bein
Arlene Bein

6201 Brookside Drive
Chevy Chase MD

From: [Melanie Rose White](#)
To: county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.katz@montgomerycountymd.gov;
councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov;
councilmember.friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
councilmember.jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.navarro@montgomerycountymd.gov;
councilmember.rice@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;
OCF@montgomerycountymd.gov; marc.elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov; [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Delay Thrive Montgomery_Updated copy of letter
Date: Monday, September 21, 2020 8:16:21 PM
Attachments: [Delay Thrive Montgomery CCCFH Letter.docx](#)

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Please see the (updated) copy of a letter from the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights.

Thank you for your consideration.

Melanie White

Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights

September 21, 2020

To: county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.katz@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.navarro@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.rice@montgomerycountymd.gov,
councilmember.riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov
CC: OCE@montgomerycountymd.gov, marc.elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov, MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Subject: Delay Thrive Montgomery 2050 at least one year/Covid-19

Dear Council President Katz, Vice President Hucker, Councilmember Albornoz, Councilmember Friedson, Councilmember Glass, Councilmember Jawando, Councilmember Navarro, Councilmember Rice, and Councilmember Riemer:

As chairperson of the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights, which represents 18 communities in Montgomery County, I am writing to strongly request that you direct the Planning Board to delay consideration of Thrive Montgomery 2050, the update of the General Plan, for at least a year. It is currently scheduled for a Planning Board hearing October 1 (Item# 10), a public hearing before the Planning Board on November 19 and transmission to the Council in March 2021. We make this request in light of the unprecedented economic and personal hardships experienced by the County and its residents as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the unknown transformative impact beyond immediate pressing needs. We feel that a plan as far reaching and important as this demands full participation of the citizens that live in Montgomery County. In addition, the draft plan contains goals, policies, and actions in areas that go far beyond the land use and natural resources addressed in previous general plans. These plans need informed, transparent, and diverse public debate. **Citizens of Montgomery County should be able to attend these hearings in person. Virtual representation is not sufficient.**

The current draft relies on pre-pandemic data and assumptions, yet recent data suggest we may be facing permanent changes in how we live, spend, work, commute, study, and play. The current pandemic changes are so substantive that they have to be considered in a long-term view.

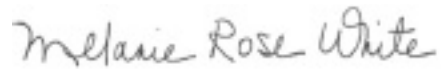
It is impossible to know which changes will be lasting, but their potential to affect housing choices, education, commuting patterns, brick and mortar retail, recreation, and transportation

Representing the Communities of Brookdale, Chevy Chase Village, Chevy Chase West, Drummond, Glen Echo Heights, Green Acres, Kenwood, Kenwood Condominium, Kenwood Forest II, Kenwood House Cooperative, Kenwood Place Condominium, Somerset, Somerset House Condominiums, Springfield, Sumner Village, Village of Friendship Heights, Westbard Mews, Westmoreland, Westwood Mews, and Wood Acres

demands and solutions is indisputable. Right now citizens are focused on health, jobs, housing and education. When and if the pandemic fades, solutions will be different than what this plan proposes. We will learn much more about what life will be like in the next 12 to 18 months, and a 30-year vision divorced from the reality of current human behavior will not serve the county well.

Thank you for your attention, and we hope you will agree with our position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melanie Rose White". The ink is a light grey or blue color.

Melanie Rose-White, Chair
Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights

From: [Naomi Spinrad](#)
To: county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.katz@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Hucker's Office, Councilmember](#); councilmember.albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Nancy Navarro](#); councilmember.rice@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Councilmember Riemer's Office](#)
Cc: OCE@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Marc Elrich](#); [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Delay Thrive Montgomery 2050 at least 1 year/Covid-19
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 9:23:43 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Council President Katz, Vice President Hucker, Councilmember Albornoz, Councilmember Friedson, Councilmember Glass, Councilmember Jawando, Councilmember Navarro, Councilmember Rice, and Councilmember Riemer:

I am writing as a private citizen to request that the Council direct the Planning Board to delay further development of Thrive Montgomery 2050 for at least a year, until there are effective and broadly available therapeutics and/or a vaccine for Covid-19.

While the overarching goals of this version of the General Plan are unquestionably deserving of our full support, the potential long-term changes wrought by the pandemic in how we live, care for our families, work, play, get healthcare, educate our children, and otherwise cope are unknown and difficult to predict. The draft plan contains 46 more tangible goals, 154 policies, and 218 actions - and the implementation section, likely to be even more specific, has not yet been made public. In addition, there is no plan to include an economic analysis of suggested actions.

In light of possible significant changes in work patterns, commuting, housing arrangements, retail - and no significant consensus among experts about how these will play out long term - moving forward at this time with a plan that aims to guide every aspect of life in Montgomery County risks creating a deeply flawed trajectory for the future. This is exacerbated by known and likely revenue shortfalls and the immediate demands of responding to the hardships created by the pandemic.

Finally, with the majority of county residents, businesses, and employees focused on their immediate and, for many, very basic needs, few will have the bandwidth to provide the feedback such a plan warrants. This in itself is an equity issue.

I believe the wisest course is to delay further development and consideration of Thrive Montgomery 2050 until the Covid-19 crisis is under better control and we have a better sense of its longer term impact on how we live. A delay for at least a year is fully warranted.

Thank you for your attention, and your consideration. I hope you will agree and act.

Sincerely,
Naomi Spinrad
Chevy Chase West