

Item 8 - Correspondence

From: [Douglas B. Farquhar](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Letter attached re Ashton Village Sector Plan
Date: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 9:58:15 PM
Attachments: [SSCA letter to Planning Board re Ashton Village Sector Plan \(00702618\).pdf](#)

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

I attach for submission to the Chair of the Montgomery County Planning Board, and its members, correspondence from the Sandy Spring Civic Association, relating to the Ashton Village Sector Plan, which will be discussed at a Planning Board meeting. Would you please confirm receipt, and let me know whether I have sent the letter to the proper address for inclusion in Board packets for the meeting on September 17, 2020?

Thanks in advance.

Doug Farquhar
SSCA Correspondence Secretary

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Sandy Spring Civic Association

www.sandyspringcivic.com

*Meeting the second Monday of each month, 6:30pm at the Ross Boddy Community Center
located on Brooke Road in Sandy Spring, Maryland*

September 1, 2020

To Chairman Anderson and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board

Re: Ashton Village Sector Plan

Dear Chairman and Members of the Planning Board:

The Sandy Spring Civic Association, which represents a diverse group of residents of the Sandy Spring, Brighton, and Ashton area, offers the following comments on the proposed Ashton Village Sector Plan to be discussed at the Planning Board meeting on September 17, 2020.

We fully support the Draft Plan's objective to maintain the rural and historic character of Ashton. However, we are gravely concerned about the height and density of the buildings that would be allowed on the Southeast Corner of the Ashton crossroads (referred to as the "Southeast Quadrant" in the draft). As presented, the proposal would seriously threaten the historic and rural character of our community.

The staff's proposal to permit a floor to area ratio (FAR) of .5 residential on all but one of the parcels (the exception being the parcel that is owned by Baltimore Gas & Electric, which cannot be developed in any event) could lead, by the staff's calculation, to as many as 159 units of apartments and small townhouses on the Southeast Quadrant (see Technical Appendix Draft, table I-6). A developer would also be permitted to build additional units in the form of Moderate-Price Dwelling Units (MDPUs). The height (40' to the midpoint of the roofs) and density visible from the streets would mirror the large townhouses in the Thomas Village development constructed next to the original Sandy Spring Bank building. The density of those townhouses will be overwhelming, especially because the portion of the Southeast Corner furthest away from the intersection is protected as a stream buffer but is included in the number of acres used to calculate building density of the FAR, even though building is not permitted in the stream buffer. Our membership views that type of development to be grossly out of character for what has been characterized as a rural village. Moreover, the local infrastructure simply cannot handle the number of cars that would be generated by so

many units.

We support increased mass transit to our area, but, realistically, in an area so distant from Metro stations and employment centers, residents in each unit will require at least two automobiles to commute, to shop, to attend private schools and public school events, and to utilize recreational facilities.

One of the critical points is that the parcels to be developed on the Route 108/New Hampshire Avenue corner include three parcels that are currently zoned R-60, permitting a maximum of 6 houses per acre (and, practically speaking, fewer than that when road and driveway infrastructure are included). In addition, the largest parcel is currently zoned RC, permitting only the one single-family home there to be replaced or rebuilt. Together, these parcels, which together comprise nearly half of the land area in the Southeast Quadrant, are currently limited to a maximum of about 23 homes (Technical Appendix Draft, Table I-3). However, the proposed plan would permit more than triple that many units to be constructed based on the amount of land in those parcels (indeed, nearly 80 units), and all at a height of 40'. In addition to destroying the concept of a transition from large rural farms and fields into a dense village center, construction of this many large buildings would compromise the historic nature of many of the sites close by, including Cloverly, Woodlawn Farm, Sandy Spring Friends Meeting House, Tanglewood, and the original Sandy Spring Bank building (currently unoccupied). The community has watched as design recommendations, in the past, have fallen by the wayside as developers at Thomas Village and Ashton Market maximized development potential on those parcels. These types of development practices conflict with unfulfilled design recommendations and leave the community suspicious that design criteria will be met.

We do not oppose change, and we would welcome more moderately priced housing in our area, but we strongly request that the transitions to the village center be protected by a FAR of .25 on these outlying parcels (with a maximum height of 35'). This would allow an increase from a maximum yield of 23 units to as many as 38 units, representing a "modest increase" in housing (the stated goal of the staff proposal) compared to existing zoning.

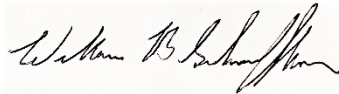
We support the urgent recommendations of the proposed plan to improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and Route 108, along with the following staff recommendations:

- Preservation of the green space in front of the existing Sandy Spring Bank Ashton branch building,

- Maintenance of the rural buffer between the village centers of Sandy Spring and Ashton,
- Creation of an advisory citizens' group to address the plan's implementation (we request consideration of allowing the advisory citizens' group to exercise a veto over plans that propose overdevelopment in Ashton, if the overdevelopment threatens rural character), and
- Preservation of publicly accessible open space, ideally adjacent to the environmental features at the eastern edge of the Southeast corner.

Thank you for your consideration of our position on these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W.B. Schauffler', written in a cursive style.

W.B Schauffler, President

The SSCA is the first racially integrated civic association in Montgomery County. Founded in 1958, it represents the interests of residents of the greater Sandy Spring area.

From: [Robin Ziek](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [SSARPC](#); [Kathleen Wheeler](#)
Subject: Ashton VILLAGE Sector Plan
Date: Saturday, September 5, 2020 6:50:02 PM

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Dear Planning Chair Anderson,

I have been participating in the county's development of this new sector plan. Please consider my comments:

- 1) I pity the single family house adjacent to the property on the SE corner, which will either have a public road or 40' height (to the mi- point of the roof) buildings right adjacent; and,
- 2) The proposed additional height is inconsistent with the approved building height across the street and in the remaining quadrants of the Village Center. This was a contested point in the past, and should not be revisited.
- 3) What rural village does anyone know that has its public green in the back of the village buildings? The best comparable is the tiny house directly between the new Fire Station on Brook Road and the commercial buildings. Very attractive, right? AND, it's disingenuous for the county to give away the community need for a public green by designating the not-able-to-be-built-upon wetlands as the public green space.
- 4) All lighting should be full, rather than partial, cutoff. The Dark Sky experience is iconic for any rural area, and residents in the Ashton-Sandy Spring Master Plan area value that highly.
- 5) Please consider, and compare, the proposed number of new residential units (ca. 150) to the previously approved number (ca. 75). Please consider as well that a rural village is mostly a commercial opportunity for the surrounding residential community and not a town center. Olney is our local town center, and you will recall that Olney developed into a not-so-small town as part of the non-development of the Ag Reserve. This was hard won, and Olney is prized as a town with facilities such as an outstanding hospital and easy access to the Metro and Park-and-Ride along Georgia Avenue. Ashton has zero infrastructure, and that is also by design. Let's keep our Rural Villages "rural" and concentrate new development in accordance with the wedges-and-corridors plan which has guided the county for the past several decades. The towns which developed from that plan, including Olney, are not overbuilt and the plan is not outdated.

Thank you for your consideration. Robin Ziek, 18000 Bentley Road, Sandy Spring, MD 20860 (301-570-6268)

From: [Amy Medd](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Sept 17 2020 Ashton Village Center Sector Plan Planning Board Hearing
Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 10:49:04 AM
Attachments: [Letter to Planning Board re Ashton Village Center Sector Draft Plan.pdf](#)

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Chairperson Anderson,
Please see the attached letter regarding my thoughts on the Planning Draft. I have attached it as a PDF to maintain the integrity of the images within.

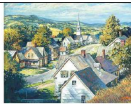
Thank you,
Amy Medd

Dear Chairman Anderson and Board Members,

I am writing to voice my concern regarding the Ashton Village Center Sector Plan Public Hearing Draft to be presented on Sept 17, 2020. While I have a multitude of concerns, I will focus on the need to keep an overlay zone and implement an Advisory Committee that includes members of the community. This would allow a more detailed review of plans prior to finalization with the Planning Board. In past experience, master plan design guidelines are nice in concept, but they alone have not been sufficient to influence what gets built in the Sandy Spring/Ashton area.

It is important to the community that we maintain a rural village character that embraces the heritage and uniqueness of Ashton. This came out as a key theme in the very well attended Design Workshop held in Oct 2019. See slide below regarding the output on the community's definition of a rural village.¹

What is 'rural village' character?



- Visible green space/setbacks, and space in-between
- Sightlines/viewshed of rural areas
- "Small town feel": safe, sidewalks, trees, fences
- Public realm and buildings promote social interaction
- Visually varied within a vocabulary
- Smaller-scale buildings and low building heights (2 story) with garages behind
- Staggered buildings, curving roads
- Can intermingle building types
- Style and scale can vary by neighborhood (e.g. duplexes)
- Density increases and setbacks decrease toward village core
- Porches large enough for table & chairs (for residential and commercial)
- Successful example: Wyndcrest/Hidden Garden Ln

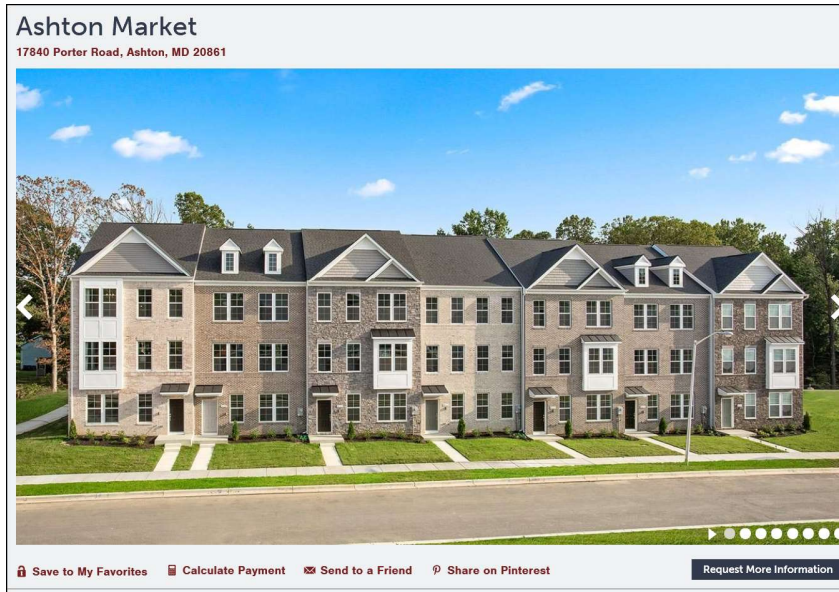
Ashton Village Center Sector Plan – Design Workshop Summary

10/16/19 8

The Planning Staff took this feedback into account, paired it with their own expertise and research, and have incorporated this, as well as other features into Chapter 5 of the Ashton Village Sector Plan Public Hearing Draft, which is very good to see.

My primary concern is that, while these recommendations sound enticing to the public & may garner support for the draft, it is very likely they won't be implemented in the final development of the South East Quadrant of 108/NH Ave. What will require a builder or developer to follow these guidelines? Their own good will? The overlay zone and an Advisory Committee will be essential to securing the vision of a rural village towncenter.

We already have evidence of straying from this vision in the planned townhouses for Ashton Market on Porter Road. The image below comes from the builder's own website, so I can only assume that this is what will be built.²



Compare this with what was presented at the Planning Board Meeting on Nov 15, 2018 for the Ashton Market Preliminary Plan, that was **approved** by the board.³



Figure 26 – Townhouse Façade Treatment from MD 108

The Site Plan is in substantial conformance with the recommendations of the 1998 *Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan*. The primary objective of the Master Plan is to preserve the rural character of the Sandy Spring/Ashton Area. The Subject Property is within the “Ashton Village Center” as designated in the Master Plan (pg.38).

I think many would agree that the stretch of townhouses from the builder’s website **does not** evoke images of a rural village and it does not look anything like the figure in the document presented on Nov 15, 2018. And while Ashton Market was developed prior to the Ashton Village Center Sector plan, many of the design guidelines that have been incorporated into the Planning Draft have been highlighted by the surrounding community for years – including back during the original development plans for the SE Quadrant (once called Ashton Meeting Place) and during the planning for Thomas Village.^{4,5} The document presented at the Nov 15, 2018 Planning Board meeting **even cites** the 1998 Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan (as seen in the text below the image above). So these concepts are nothing

new. They existed in the 1998 plan the 2015 *Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan*. As outlined in the current Ashton Village Center Sector Planning Draft, rural village architecture includes features such as bay windows, recessed entries, shutters, stoops, porches, varied rooflines/cornice heights. The image from the builder's website has bay windows and varied rooflines, but even those without a degree in architectural design would not describe it as a rural village. It also does not match with what was presented in 2018, which is particularly concerning.

My point is not to argue the merits of the Ashton Market, as that proverbial horse is out of the barn and we'll be stuck with whatever gets built. Rather the core issue is that once rezoning and development is approved, what gets built might meet the "rules" laid out by the county and yet not at all reflect the vision of the community. Words in a Planning Draft are not enforceable. And unless there is an Advisory Committee that provides input into any final designs, we may end up with something very different than what people envisioned when reading the Planning Draft and imagining a rural village center.

Thank you for taking these comments into consideration as the choices that made now will impact future generations of Ashton.

Sincerely,

Amy Medd

Resident of the Wyndcrest neighborhood in Ashton

¹https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/19.10.16_Design-Workshop_Summary.pdf, slide 8

²<https://www.danryanbuilders.com/communities/maryland/ashton-market/>

³ http://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Ashton-Market-Report-Final-11_15_18.pdf

⁴http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2007/documents/20070628_AshtonMeetingPlace.pdf

⁵<http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-3/sandy-springashton/>, pg 52 of PDF or xii of print

From: [Robin Ziek](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Ashton Village Plan Public Hearing
Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 11:05:25 AM

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NEED FOR AN IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

I support setting up an implementation advisory committee, to allow community input and information during the entire development process. Without that, our experience is that the community has limited input, and often this occurs at the end of the process when all the decisions have already been made.

Possible areas of concern where community input will be valuable include:

1. The Southeast corner: This would provide an opportunity for the community to monitor the development as it proceeds through the design process. Similar advisory committees, with representatives from both residents and developers, have been found useful in the County, including for the Olney Town Center and Bethesda downtown.
2. There is high potential for redevelopment in the Ashton Village center, most notably at the Northeast corner; and, along Porter Road. It would be useful to the County to have community input early on in the development process, to help things move along smoothly.
3. Infrastructure is a major component of this Village Plan. An advisory committee could coordinate and provide community input with the County, State, and other entities involved in evaluating and implementing intersection improvements, crosswalks, sidewalks and side paths, green space and recreation, and trails. Since the Planning Department is also advisory for these items, it will be important to establish local community participation in planning and implementation discussions.
- 4.. And finally, there will be a new overlay zone for the Ashton Village planning area that will go beyond the zoning requirements. As this will provide additional requirements specific to the Plan area and will also include design guidance to help ensure compliance with Plan guidance, it will be most useful to include community comments throughout implementation and development.

Thank you for your hard work. Sincerely,

Robin Ziek, 18000 Bentley Road, Sandy Spring, MD 20860 301-570-6268

From: [Charlie Glendinning](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Ashton Crossroads
Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 8:10:10 PM

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Dear Mr. Anderson,

I am writing to urge you to reduce the density of the development in Ashton more in keeping with its **RURAL** and—more important—**HISTORIC** character.

I have been in contact with both Jen Ruffner and Sarah Rogers with the Maryland Historical Trust and we find that the property in question (the southeast corner of 108 and New Hampshire Ave.) does indeed fall within the boundaries of the Maryland Certified Heritage Area. This is why great care must be taken to protect the **aesthetics** of what is planned for that parcel.

The **history** that Ashton embraces is **unique in the county**, and the teaching opportunities for all who visit are golden. Here are a few to consider ::

- **Clifton** - house built - 1740
- **Cherry Grove** - house built - 1773
- **Cloverly** - house built - 1849
- **Harewood** - house built - 1793
- **Quaker Meeting House and graveyard** - 1817
- **Woodlawn** - house built - 1832
- **The Underground Railroad**
- **Sandy Spring museum**
- **The Sandy Spring Slave Museum**

The residents do realize that there has never been a "town plan" for Ashton. Developers have been allowed to build without any regard to a cohesive design. Consequently, our town has a sort of "ransom note" look to it :: a hodge-podge of style. This is regrettable. Regrettable, but fixable. **We think it is essential that there be a Neighborhood Advisory Board to**

help shape our community sensibly.

What the **OVERWHELMING MAJORITY** of Ashton/Sandy Spring citizens would like to see is a well-designed and modest **RURAL VILLAGE** that is more in keeping with the wonderful **HISTORY** that is already established here.

With the addition of the Thomas Village cluster in Sandy Spring and the new Porter Road cluster of townhouses in Ashton, we have already made a significant contribution toward "**Thrive 2050**"...especially since we are at the very Eastern edge of the county where dense residential projects make no sense.

Please do not allow over-development to crush Ashton and Sandy Spring's sense of history. The preliminary proposals for Ashton are totally out of character.

Sincerely,

-Charles Glendinning

--

CHARLES GLENDINNING

Ashton, Maryland USA

Mobile :: 301.980.1087

chazglen@gmail.com

From: [walt fennell](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Ashton Village Center Plan
Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 8:48:21 PM
Attachments: [Ashron Plan PBoard.pdf](#)

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Members of the Planning Board -

I would respectfully request your review and consideration of my comments regarding the Ashton Village Center Plan. I would hope that this comments may be included within the existing document currently under review by your organization.

Thank you.

Walt Fennell
410-443-1672

September 9, 2020

Casey Anderson, Natali Fani-Gonzalez, Gerald R. Cincy, Tina Patterson, Partap Verma

Montgomery County Planning Board

RE: Ashton Village Plan

Planning Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DRAFT Ashton Village Center Plan.

As you know, Ashton is but a small village within the larger and more urban Montgomery County. The unique character of Ashton is aptly characterized within the existing plan adopted in 1988, which uses the word "rural" over 680 times within the 150 pages of that plan.

Recognizing that change is inevitable, I would ask that the Planning Board strive to help Ashton maintain its distinctiveness as a small village, existing within the urban landscape of Montgomery County. I would ask for a path forward that will prevent Ashton from being overrun with multi-story apartment buildings and towering townhomes ill-suited for our small village.

Ashton and Sandy Spring have seen, and continue to see, new development and the addition of housing stock within and around the Village Center. Reference Thomas Village, the new Mt. Olive Church being built adjacent to Sherwood High School and the housing project at Porter Road (which will in all likelihood be expanded in the near future). On a percentage basis, the amount of new housing stock currently added to the Ashton Village Center compared to existing stock in the Ashton Village Center, is significant.

As the Planning Board seeks to now finalize the DRAFT Plan, I would respectfully request the Planning Board to incorporate the following issues into the plan.

1. A clear statement that Ashton should be permitted to retain the "rural" character that has defined it since the founding of the County.

2. The establishment of an "Advisory Board" to help guide, shape, and direct any future development plans within Ashton to ensure a reasonable and pragmatic approach is followed and that the plan is consistent with the ideals outlined in the DRAFT Plan. I believe that such an Advisory Board has been used in Olney and Bethesda and in other portions of the County.

While Item 1 is perhaps a symbolic concept, Item 2 is a critical issue for the following reasons:

A. The DRAFT plan contains a reasonable, although aggressive approach, toward the development of the Ashton Village Center. However, the DRAFT Plan contains no real safeguards to ensure that future development will adhere to the concepts articulated within the DRAFT Plan. Indeed, future developers would only need to adhere to the sterile requirements of the Building Code, without following the aesthetic ideals outlined within the DRAFT Plan. An Advisory Board, similar to other Advisory Boards used throughout the County could ensure that the design aesthetics were followed as outlined by the Planning Board.

B. Several of the design concepts and elements included within the DRAFT Plan, such as roadway improvements, shared use path improvements, crosswalk improvements, public transit improvements, and green space improvements, are dependent on resources and approvals of organizations beyond the Planning Board's control (i.e., the State, public transit authorities, etc.). The creation and implementation of an Advisory Board, in conjunction with the implementation of the DRAFT Plan, could ensure that future development is actually completed in a manner consistent with the vision in the DRAFT Plan by working with those organizations outside of the Planning Board's control to implement future development.

C. The DRAFT Plan references the use of an "Overlay" zone within certain parts of Ashton. There is a concern that the Overlay Zone could be used in the future to usurp the conceptual vision outlined in the DRAFT Plan. The Advisory Board could ensure that future development in Ashton, not just within the Village Center Area, but more broadly throughout Ashton would be completed in a manner consistent with the DRAFT Plan.

Ashton is but a small portion of Montgomery County. Like all good citizens we want to contribute to the continued progress of the County. But I would respectfully request the Planning Board to allow Ashton to retain some form of

uniqueness. I would ask that the Planning Board ensure that the changes to Ashton are not so dramatic as to transform Ashton to look like any other part of the County. To manage the growth in a reasonable manner, and to allow the citizens of Ashton to have a "voice" in the future development of our small village through the creation of an Advisory Board.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.



Walt Fennell
17516 Hidden Garden Lane
Ashton, MD 20861
(410)443-1672
waltster65@yahoo.com

From: [Randy Nittoli](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Ashton Village Sector Plan - R. Nittoli Testimony
Date: Friday, September 11, 2020 8:15:44 AM
Attachments: [AV HOA Petition .pdf](#)
[R. Nittoli Planning Board Testimony - R. Nittoli 17SEP2020.docx](#)
[Sector Plan Language Changes - AVHOA Suggestions \(10SEP2020\).docx](#)
[Ashton Village HOA Testimony - R. Nittoli 17SEP20.pptx](#)

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Good morning:

I am on the schedule to testify at the 17SEP2020 meeting regarding the Ashton Village Sector Plan. Attached are copies of my testimony and supporting documents. I wanted to ensure the Board had a copy of everything before my testimony.

Please let me know if you need anything else from me!


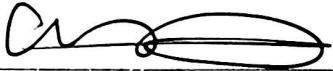



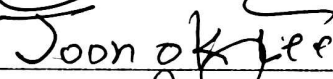
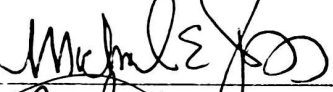


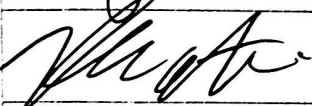
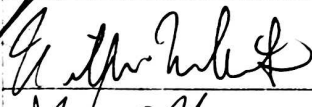


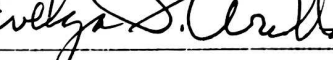
Kind regards,
Randy Nittoli
Ashton Village HOA President

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Randy R. Nittoli, M.S., NRP
(443) 812-8868 Mobile

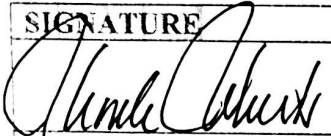


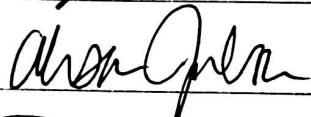
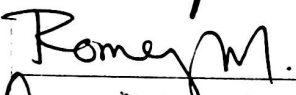
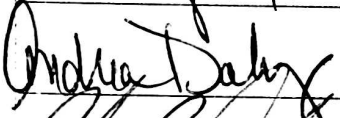

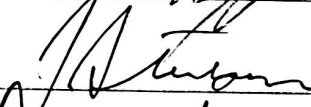
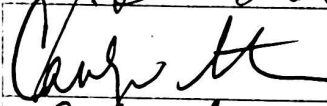
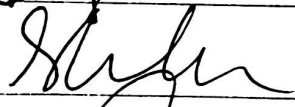

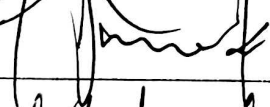



OPPOSITION TO TAKING ASHTON VILLAGE HOA PROPERTY FOR A PUBLIC PARK

We, the undersigned homeowners within Ashton Village HOA, oppose the use or taking of any portion of the HOA's common area for a public park or other public purpose. The property was created as, is and should remain green space for the benefit of the residents of Ashton Village HOA.

SIGNATURE	PRINT NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
	Chris A. Teti	17922 Ashton club way Ashton, MD 20861	8-15-20
Melanie Koehn	Melanie Koehn	17931 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8-15-20
	Anna Fabes	17925 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8-15-20
	Fadi Abdallah	17919 Ashton club Ashton, MD	8/15/20
	Mike Micka	17924 Ashton club way Ashton MD.	8/16/20
	Ricci Spurrier	17965 Ashton Club way Ashton, MD 20861	8/16/20
	Joonok Lee	17969 Ashton club way Ashton MD 20861	8/16/2020
	Mike Jones	17939 Ashton Clubway Ashton MD 20861	8-16-2020
	Melvin Underwood	21 Orion Club Dr. Ashton MD 20861	8-16-2020
	Michael Robinson	4 Orion Club Dr Ashton MD 20861	8/16/2020
	Randy N. Hill	22 Orion Club Dr Ashton MD 20861	16 Aug 2020
	William White	44 Orion Club Dr. Ashton MD 20861	8/16/2020
	Alvin Robinson	24 Orion Club	8/16/2020
	Kevin Polen	28 Orion Club Dr.	8/19/2020
	Evelyn P. Arillo	12 Orion Club Dr.	8-21-2020




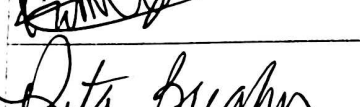

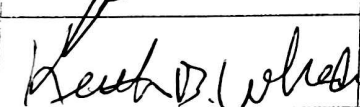
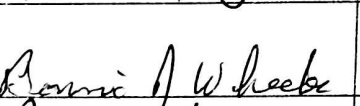



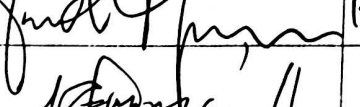

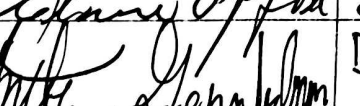
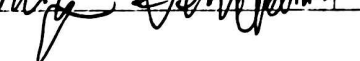

OPPOSITION TO TAKING ASHTON VILLAGE HOA PROPERTY FOR A PUBLIC PARK

We, the undersigned homeowners within Ashton Village HOA, oppose the use or taking of any portion of the HOA's common area for a public park or other public purpose. The property was created as, is and should remain green space for the benefit of the residents of Ashton Village HOA.

SIGNATURE	PRINT NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
	Rhonda Roberts	17934 Ashton Club Way Ashton MD 20861	8/13/2020
	Nicole Valerio	44 Orion Club Drive Ashton, MD 20861	8/13/2020
	ERIK WALL	42 ORION CLUB DRIVE ASHTON, MD 20861	8/13/2020
	Alison Subon	40 Orion Club Dr Ashton, MD 20861	8/13/20
	Roney Mehari	38 Orion Club Dr Ashton MD 20861	8/13/2020
	Andrea Daly	36 Orion Club Drive Ashton, MD 20861	8-13-2020
	JOHN R. DALY, JR	36 ORION CLUB DR ASHTON, MD 20861	8/13/2020
	John Stevenson	17927 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	
	Carolyn Stevens	17927 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/13/2020
	Shannon Cronin	16616 Cypress Bay Lane Ashton, MD 20861	8/13/2020
	Doug Koehn	17931 Ashton Club Ashton MD 20861	8/13/20
	NWOKORIE	17933 Ashton Club Way	8/13/20
	Julie Snarely	17947 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/13/20
	Luis Trelles	17951 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/13/20
	Allison Pacheco	17951 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/13/20


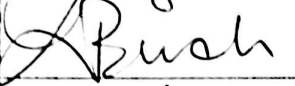

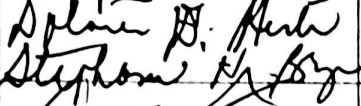
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SIGNATURE	PRINT NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
	Alexandra J Evans	17900 Ashton Club Way Ashton MD	8/13/2020
	Kasey Alexis	17904 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD	8/13/2020
	Michael Alexis	17904 Ashton Club Way Ashton MD	8/13/2020
	Giselle Rosales	17908 Ashton club way Ashton md	8-13-2020
	Rita Brigham	17918 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD	8/13/2020
	Rick Brigham	17918 Ashton Club Way Ashton MD	8/13/2020
	Keith Wheeler	17961 ASHTON club way Ashton	8/14/2020
	Bonnie Wheeler	17961 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD	8/14/2020
	Kelly Meyer	17959 Ashton Club Way	8/14/2020
	Maria Boone	17937 Ashton Club Way	8/14/2020
	James Boone	11	8/14/2020
	Harold Imper	17945 Ashton Clubway	8/14/2020
	Maria Guzman	26 Orion Club Dr.	8/14/2020
	Elaine Offord	20 Orion Club Dr.	8-14-20
	Dmitry Gendelman	17916 Ashton Club Way	8/14/2020

OPPOSITION TO TAKING ASHTON VILLAGE HOA PROPERTY FOR A PUBLIC PARK

We, the undersigned homeowners within Ashton Village HOA, oppose the use or taking of any portion of the HOA's common area for a public park or other public purpose. The property was created as, is and should remain green space for the benefit of the residents of Ashton Village HOA.

SIGNATURE	PRINT NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
	Monica Gendelman	17916 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/14/2020
	Mark Burch	17912 Ashton Club Ashton MD 20861	8/14/2020
	Adrielly Martins	17912 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/14/2020
	Lisa Burch	17912 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/14/2020
	Ana Rosals	17908 Ashton Club way Ashton, MD 20861	8/14/2020
	Elmer F. Giron	17917 Ashton Club way Ashton MD 20861	8/15/2020
	Evelyn Herrador	17917 Ashton Club Way Ashton MD 20861	8/15/2020
	Fernando Giron	17917 Ashton Club way	8/15/2020
	Christopher Della	17436 Ashton Club Way	8/15/2020
	Josue Melgar	17903 Ashton Club way Ashton, MD. 20861	8/15/2020
	Walter Melgar	17903 Ashton Club way Ashton MD 20861	8/15/2020
	Milagro Alpar	17903 Ashton Club Way Ashton MD 20861	8/15/2020
	Dolores D. Hester	17901 Ashton Club Way Ashton, MD 20861	8/15/2020
	Yemistach	17920 Ashton Club way MD 20861	8/15/2020
	Brittney Macaulay	17926 Ashton Club Way	8/15/2020

We, the undersigned homeowners within Ashton Village HOA, oppose the use or taking of any portion of the HOA's common area for a public park or other public purpose. The property was created as, is and should remain green space for the benefit of the residents of Ashton Village HOA.

2764409.1

Members of the Planning Board:

My name is Randy Nittoli and I am the Board President for the Ashton Village Homeowners Association. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for the opportunity to testify before you today, regarding the Ashton Village Sector Plan.

Our association is made up of 59 townhomes, located at the corner of New Hampshire Avenue (MD-650) and Olney-Sandy Spring Road (MD-108). Our community is very diverse in nature and our residents have a wide range of family demographics. Ashton Village HOA is also one of the oldest associations within Ashton, and many residents in our community are original owners. Being within the center of the Ashton area, we were not surprised to be referenced in the Sector Plan, Our HOA is mentioned twice – once on Page 36 and once on page 56. It is these two pages that I would like to discuss with you today.

Members of our Board and Association have participated in all the Community Meetings throughout the planning process. Since many of us have lived in Ashton Village for many years, we recognize that the area is changing and that several updates are needed. When the draft of the Plan was published in July, my initial review of the plan was met with confusion, since the two specific areas our HOA is referenced were never discussed in any planning meetings. In addition, the language of the plan is aggressive in nature, and has caused alarm amongst Association residents. The Plan has left many in my community under the impression the County is ready to annex our land for public use.

I'd like to direct the Board to page 36 of the draft plan, which discusses our common use area that surrounds the current stormwater management pond. The plan states that "options should be explored to make this space more accessible to the public" and refers to our Declaration of Covenants and the Associations ability to dedicate or transfer this land to the County. The Ashton Village HOA is firmly against any transfer of this land for public use or for the establishment of a public park. This area is currently enjoyed by our Association residents for recreational and private use and the Association currently maintains this area for that purpose. All residents of the Association have signed a petition opposing this, as well as many

local businesses that are also opposed. I've included those petitions in the documents that have been sent to the Board.

The second portion I'd like to direct you to is page 56 of the draft plan. This section refers to our community playground that is located in the center of the Association. The plan goes on to state that this playground should "ideally be incorporated into this gathering space", again referencing the public use space I mentioned before. The Ashton Village HOA firmly objects to annexing our private playground for use in a public space, in any form. This playground was paid for by our residents and is maintained yearly through private association dues. This playground is frequently used as a selling point for new families when they look at houses within our area, and the private use of this playground is reserved for the members of our Association and their guests.

The HOA has two major concerns regarding the current plan and how it affects our Association. Parking and foot traffic. I'd direct the Board to the current slide, which shows a copy of our current property plat. Currently, the HOA roads are maintained by the County (yellow portion) and the HOA Privately (the green parking). Over the last 5 years, our community has struggled constantly with parking. The circles on the County owned portion are frequently filled, and visitors to our association have on multiple occasions not had anyplace to park. In addition, the only way to access our association on foot is through the Ashton Village Shopping Center, located in the bottom right portion of the map. Visitors to our association for use of this "common area" would flood our association with additional traffic, and likely create significant parking problems. I say this because it is already something we struggle with and adding additional traffic will not eliminate these problems. There is no doubt that this would take away from the rural feel of Ashton and our association.

While the Association does have objections to these two specific portions of the Draft Plan, we also recognize that Ashton is a very up and coming neighborhood and that changes to keep the area vibrant are necessary. As such, I have prepared recommendations for updating the language that is currently in the Draft plan. This language has been reviewed by our Association, and we feel the language to be less hostile in nature, and hopefully reflect more

accurately the intentions of the Plan. In addition, the two areas of the Plan refer to our common space in two different sizes (two acres vs. three acres), so the language has been updated to reflect the true size of this common area. That being said, the language of the Plan currently does not convey positive intentions. Instead it implies a takeover by the County of our Association common space. It is clear from the draft plan that the planning board values Ashton and its surrounding areas, and the Ashton Village HOA is grateful to everyone for their efforts. We hope that future community meetings will continue to involve our association and its residents and look forward to continuing to be a voice for Ashton improvements

Again, I would like to thank the Planning Board for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today. Should there be any questions for me I would be happy to answer them at this time.

Two major considerations for Ashton are to provide:

- Active recreational opportunities for all ages, including the older adult population, and
- Strengthened connections to nearby public spaces, parks and historic programming.

This Plan recommends the creation of new open spaces for social gathering, play and active recreation with amenities that encourage social interaction, such as picnic areas, playgrounds, community gardens and dog parks. Opportunities for active amenities such as a skate park could be appropriate near the high school if land becomes available.

Two areas within the Sector Plan area have sufficient space to accommodate substantial new open space amenities: the land behind the townhouses and adjacent to an existing stormwater management facility in the northwest quadrant, and as part of the undeveloped land in the southeast quadrant.

A community playground is situated between the two cul-de-sacs (Ashton Club Way and Orion Club Drive), as well as approximately 3.2 acres of private open space. This space is identified as “common use facilities” for the Ashton Village HOA on the record plat for the community. It is recommended that a potential shared public/private use agreement be explored with the Ashton Village HOA to make the space potentially more accessible for a limited number of community events in the future.

Open space in the Residential Edge neighborhood is mostly privatized or designed to feel private and serving of the adjacent residential communities. A roughly 3.2 acre open lawn area surrounding the stormwater pond is owned by the Ashton Village Homeowners Association. The open areas around the pond may be suitable for a village gathering space.. Retrofitting the pond according to current standards would offer opportunities to redesign this space and add amenities. A playground on the property currently signed for the exclusive use of the Ashton Village homeowners could also potentially be incorporated into this shared use space. An existing sidewalk connects these open spaces to the Ashton Village Shopping Center aiding in accessibility from all points in the village center.



Ashton Village Homeowners Association Testimony

Randy R. Nittoli
Ashton Village HOA
Board President



About our association

- 59 attached family townhomes
- Located on the corner of MD-650 and MD-108
- One of the original developments in the Ashton Community
- Mentioned twice in the Ashton Village Sector Plan
 - Page 36 (3.5 Community Facilities and Open Space)
 - Page 56 (4.2 Residential Edge Neighborhood)



Ashton Village Sector Plan

- Members of the Association have participated in all Community Meetings throughout the process
- Review of the plan shows items that were never discussed as part of any community meetings
 - Language has caused alarm amongst Association residents
 - Our common areas are frequently enjoyed by residents
- Current plan language is aggressive in nature, and reads in a fashion that makes it appear the County is prepared to take the property



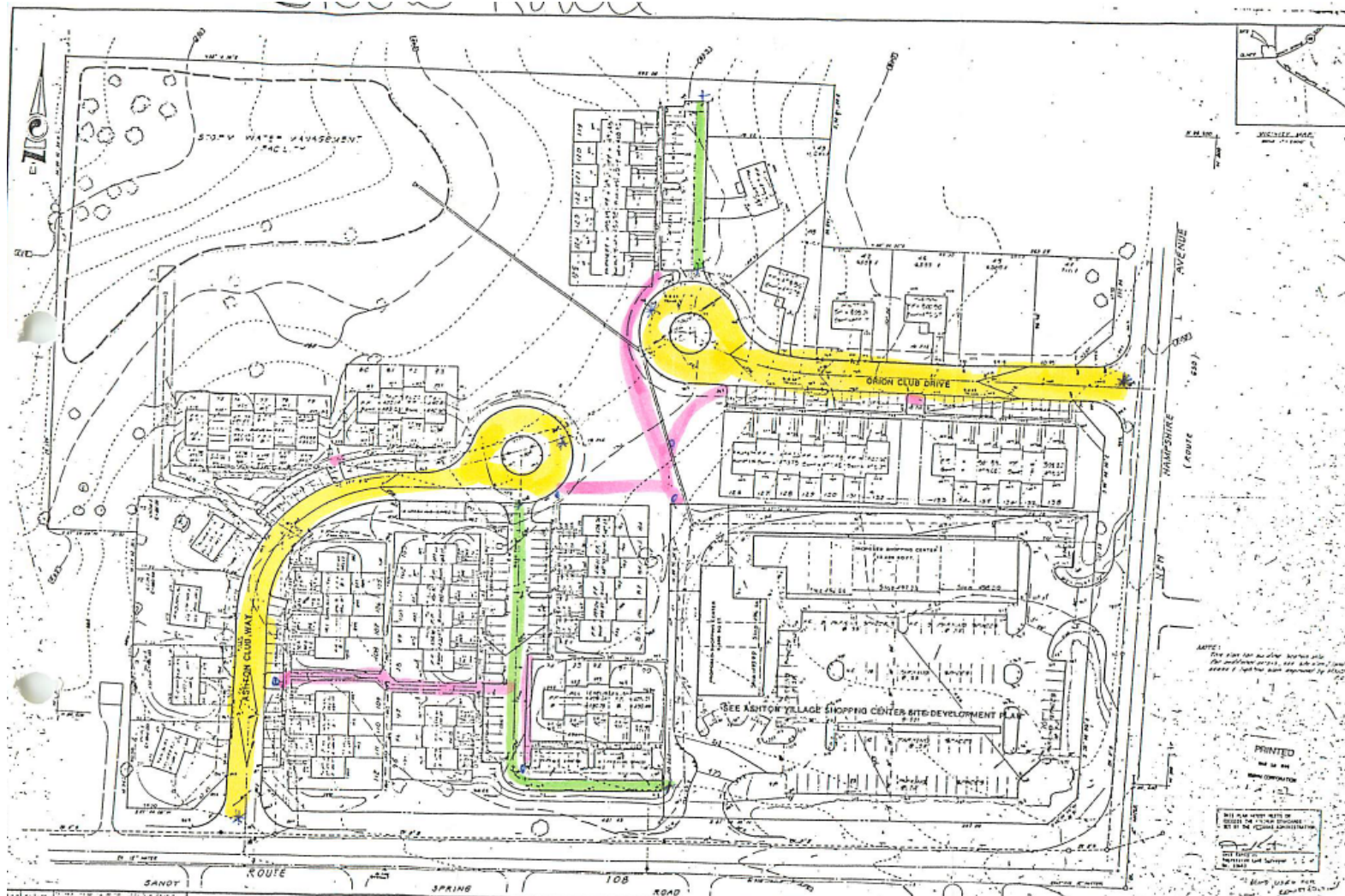
Page 36 (3.5 Community Facilities and Open Space)

- References our common use area that surrounds the current storm water management pond
- Also makes reference to our Declaration of Covenants
- “Options should be explored to make this space more accessible to the public...”
- **Ashton Village HOA firmly objects to making this land a public use park**
 - All community residents have signed a petition opposing this
 - Several local business are also against this plan



Page 56 (4.2 Residential Edge Neighborhood)

- References our community playground located in the center of the Association
- “Ideally be incorporated into this gathering space”
- **Ashton Village HOA firmly objects to annexing our private playground for use in any public space**
 - Residents pay for the updating and maintenance from private association dues
 - This playground is for the enjoyment of HOA residents and their guests



*yellow is county
+green is association

KALWA CORPORATION
ENGINEERS • PLANNERS • SURVEYORS
10321 New Hampshire Avenue Suite 300
Silver Spring, Maryland • 20904 • 301-584-4300

SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ASHTON VILLAGE
OLNEY (B1) ELECTION DISTRICT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MARYLAND

DATE: 10/1/88
SCALE: 1" = 100'
DRAWN BY: J. L. BROWN
CHECKED BY: J. L. BROWN
APPROVED BY: J. L. BROWN



Moving Forward



- Ashton Village Board of Directors has prepared a recommendation for updated language to be included in final draft of the Plan
 - Updated language changes factual inaccuracies
 - Referenced acreage is different in each section and is not accurate)
 - Updated language changes the aggressive nature of current written plan
- Board is open to future discussions regarding changes and updates to the Ashton area

Thank you
for the
opportunity
to testify
before you
today

From: [MCP-Chair](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: FW: Ashton Village Center Sector Plan hearing 9/17... CRM:0107071
Date: Friday, September 11, 2020 1:08:22 PM

From: MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2020 12:50 PM
To: James Meehan <jimboesq@verizon.net>
Subject: RE: Ashton Village Center Sector Plan hearing 9/17... CRM:0107071

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your comments. I am confirming receipt for distribution to the Planning Board and staff to review and consider.

Thank you,

Catherine Coello, Administrative Assistant
The Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission
Montgomery County Chair's Office
2425 Reedie Drive, Wheaton, MD 20902
Main: 301-495-4605 | Direct: 301-495-4608 | Fax: 301-495-1320
www.MontgomeryPlanningBoard.org

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

From: James Meehan;
Received: Fri Sep 11 2020 09:14:01 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)
To: MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org; MCP-Chair #; ;
Cc: jamey.pratt@montgomeryplanning.org; Jamey Pratt; keepashtonrural@gmail.com;
Subject: Ashton Village Center Sector Plan hearing 9/17...

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

Am out of town 9/17/2020 and cannot testify, nor will I be able to zoom/view the meeting. However, as a 23+ year Ashton resident and a 38 year educator in the Olney, Sandy Spring & Ashton corridor I do need to express concerns related to the possible future development at the present Sandy Spring Bank site...

What with at least three more entrances & exits (without lights) planned on to Rt 108 and New Hampshire Ave without the strong 2008-09 State DOT and Highway recommendations for improvements is unacceptable! Even with C-19 lower level traffic, the 7-11 parking lot is a logjam/gridlock adventure every weekday morning. The Board needs to remember there are three rush hours on 108: am, pm, & Sherwood HS's dismissal between 2:45 & 3:20. Also related to the traffic safety issue is the lack of left turn signals north on to NH Ave and left on to south NH Ave from 108. And, the daily drag races as traffic going south on NH Ave races to merge right, then pass left with cars/trucks hugging & overlapping that left turn lane on to 108 west. These current dangerous road conditions cannot handle any more traffic without major improvements to that 108/NH intersection! Yes, the speed limit on NH Ave drop to 30 is a small relief, but greater traffic flow is a major problem to any future Ashton development.

I have spoke to Mr. Platt on the need for vigorous oversight of the current developer (what with his need for "flexibility", no interest in a local Community Advisory Committee & height restrictions not followed @ Thomas Choice). I am hearten by the two Stop Work Orders at the Ashton Market/Porter Road site which

I hope is a result of Board & County policies being adhered to.

Speaking of the Porter Road/Ashton Market project, how about a moratorium on ANY future Ashton development until such time as all parties (State, County, local invested residents, etc...) can see what the effects of the Ashton Market project has done to safety, traffic, and keeping Ashton as rural as was planned. We/you cannot make our village what Rt 108 and Georgia Ave has become...especially since Ashton does not have the space to expand that Olney supposedly had. Time to learn from past mistakes



Jim Meehan
327 Westlawn Dr
Ashton, Md
20861
301-570-9102h
301-356-7576c

From: [Nadine Mort](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Ashton Village Center Sector Plan
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 4:07:32 PM

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

September 14, 2020

Dear Mr. Anderson and Members of the Planning Board and Staff,

I am writing in regard to the Ashton Village Center Sector Plan. After careful review, I am pleased that it contains many of the suggestions the community offered at the related workshops, meetings, and Zoom calls. Clearly the members of the design team have worked hard and the proposed drawings attempt to follow the guidance of the Master Plan that the intersection echoes a rural character.

My primary concern is that a Citizens Advisory Committee as recommended by the Planning Staff in Section 6.5 must be established as we move forward.

~According to Planning Staff, if implemented, "it would also serve as an interface between developers and County agencies in implementing recommendations of the Ashton Village Center Sector Plan".

As you have heard, many members of the community feel that their concerns were not acknowledged and or ignored in the past. In addition, building design images presented to the community and Planning Board during the initial and preliminary approval stages are very different from the final results. To be specific, the number of stories, roof heights, and rural design elements do not appear in the final construction. This has lead to oversized suburban-style developments such as Thomas Village and the enormous Alloway office building that must use a neighboring parking lot to accommodate client cars. It should be acknowledged that the designs initially submitted are often replaced with cookie-cutter components that fail to complement the rural character as stated in the Master Plan. A Citizen Advisory Committee would help avoid such pitfalls and ensure that the community continues to have a voice in monitoring the agreed-upon designs.

Another concern is the environmental impact overbuilding will have on the Southwest corner. At a time when our air quality is dangerously poor and the number of children with Asthma is skyrocketing paving over one of the few green open spaces in the area seems counterproductive and environmentally irresponsible. The proposed housing units versus open space currently shown in the Ashton Village Center Sector Plan appears to be out of balance and out of touch with concerns for Global Warming. Currently, the southeast corner hosts a large number of old-growth trees that would be destroyed under the proposed plan. Please recall that the Planning Board permitted ALL the trees on the Ashton Market and Thomas Village properties to be cut down without consideration to their environmental and aesthetic value.

Traffic at this intersection is another serious worry. If the projected housing density is allowed the traffic will overwhelm the crossroads and drivers will reroute to Tucker Lane, a winding roller coaster of a road. The Porter Road Development will become another short cut as a means to avoid the commuter snarl that will result from overbuilding.

The Ashton Village Center Sector has the potential to be a welcoming rural village crossroads featuring an environmentally responsible green space. Please recognize the wishes and needs of the community and promote the rural design characteristics that honor the historic nature of our community.

Kindly share this letter with all members of the Planning Board and enter it into the record for the Ashton Village Center Sector Plan.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Nadine R. Mort

320 Ashton Road

Ashton, Maryland 20861

"She stood in the storm, and when the wind did not blow her away, she adjusted her sails"
Elizabeth Edwards

