

Item 8 - Correspondence

From: [Anderson, Casey](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: FW: Ashton Village Center Sector Plan and Implementation Advisory Committee
Date: Friday, October 23, 2020 7:47:36 PM

From: Amy Medd <amymedd@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2020 3:09 PM
To: Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: Ashton Village Center Sector Plan and Implementation Advisory Committee

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Dear Chairman Anderson and Members of the Board,

I am writing on behalf of the Sandy Spring Rural Preservation Consortium (SSARPC), formed in 2006 to defend the Sandy Spring Ashton Master Plan (“the Plan”) in reviews of development proposals. We are Pro-Master Plan, not Anti-Development. We are fully supportive of the Public Hearing Draft’s recommendations to institute an Implementation Advisory Committee (“the Committee”) and to make the proposed Design Guidelines part of the Council’s Master Plan document. We also recommend additional language to the Overlay Zone referencing the guidance in the Plan and Design Guidelines.

We understand that the Committee would serve the purpose of reviewing and offering comments on any development proposed in the Plan Area to promote compliance with the Plan. It would also advocate with other agencies such as the State Highway Administration and Montgomery County Department of Transportation for the Plan’s recommendations to make improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

Ashton is a fragile area -- it is small and in danger of losing its rural character. The vision put forth in the Plan is strong, but the Committee would provide needed coordination and added “eyes” on the process of review, promote community commitment, and potentially produce better results in harmony with the Plan’s intent.

The Design Guidelines should be included in the Council-approved Plan to help achieve Plan compliance during any reviews of development proposals. To be as clear as possible to anyone proposing development in the Plan area, we recommend the Board add language to the text of the Overlay Zone that references the Master Plan and the Design Guidelines.

We propose the following, or similar, additional language (in *italics*):

A. Purpose

The purpose of the SSA Overlay zone is to preserve and enhance the rural village character of the Sandy Spring and Ashton village centers, using detailed site review and the continuation of community serving businesses within the village centers *and promoting conformance with applicable Master Plans and Design Guidelines.*

We believe these recommendations in the Plan are of utmost importance in achieving the Plan's vision to create "a viable and vibrant rural village that protects and enhances the character of the greater Ashton community," and we urge you to reiterate, if not strengthen them in the Planning Board Draft.

Ashton is at a crossroads, both literally and figuratively. An implementation advisory committee, that includes all stakeholders and fosters collaboration, can achieve development that will make Ashton both a destination as well as a wonderful place to call home.

Sincerely,

Amy Medd

President, SSARPC

President SSARPC