

From: [Folden, Matthew](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: ACT NOW: Still Time to Save the Co-op and Junction
Date: Monday, December 16, 2019 10:02:22 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)
[image013.png](#)

FYI – response to residents from MDSHA



Matthew Folden

Planner Coordinator

Montgomery County Planning Department
 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org
 o: 301.495.4539



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From: Kandese Holford <KHolford@mdot.maryland.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 16, 2019 9:56 AM
To: Matthew Stark Blumin <matthewstarkrubin@gmail.com>
Cc: Samantha Biddle <SBiddle@mdot.maryland.gov>; Andre Futrell <AFutrell@mdot.maryland.gov>; Jessica Pilarski <JPilarski@mdot.maryland.gov>; Darren Bean <DBean@mdot.maryland.gov>; Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrch@montgomerycountymd.gov; Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>; Matt Baker <MBaker4@mdot.maryland.gov>
Subject: RE: ACT NOW: Still Time to Save the Co-op and Junction

Dear Mr. Blumin,

Thank you for your email concerning the Montgomery County Planning Department's review of the

proposed development at 7221 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park. The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) is committed to ensuring a comprehensive transportation network throughout the State that improves infrastructure and ensures safety.

MDOT SHA initiated the Takoma Junction Vision Study to identify a long-term vision to address pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular mobility at Takoma Junction. I invite you to visit <https://www.roads.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=365> for an update on the currently study status and anticipated next steps. MDOT SHA has been working hard to incorporate the community's feedback into a final Vision Plan and your input is crucial.

Development approval authority for the proposed development at 7221 Carroll Avenue rests with the Montgomery County Planning Board. In February 2019, the developer submitted its initial application for this development to the Montgomery County Planning Department. Based on that application and its potential to impact transportation operations, the Planning Department determined that the developer was required to submit a study of future transportation impacts and options to mitigate impacts, often called a traffic impacts study (TIS).

The Montgomery County Planning Department's Development Review Committee (DRC) process often proceeds through successive rounds of reviewing, commenting, and resubmitting applications. As members of the DRC, MDOT SHA and other agencies review these submissions, including TISs. The DRC issued initial comments on the application, including the TIS, in March 2019 and currently is waiting for the developer to respond to these initial comments. The Takoma Junction Vision Plan, along with other planning and technical reference materials, will be used to evaluate the applicant's proposed improvements and potential mitigation strategies.

For questions concerning the Planning Department's development review process in your area, please contact Mr. Elza Hisel-McCoy, Montgomery County Planning Department Area 1 Chief, at 301-495-2115 or via email at elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org.

Thank you, again, for your email. If you have general questions regarding MDOT SHA's role in development review, please do not hesitate to contact Erica Rigby, P.E., MDOT SHA Deputy District 3 Engineer, at 301-513-7346 or via email at erigby@mdot.maryland.gov or Mr. Kwesi Woodroffe, MDOT SHA Regional Engineer, at 301-513-7347 or kwoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov. If you have additional questions about the Takoma Junction Vision Study, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Kandese Holford, MDOT SHA Study Manager, at 410-545-5678 or via email at kholford@mdot.maryland.gov.

Sincerely,
Scott

C. Scott Pomento, P.E.
Director, Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
MDOT State Highway Administration
spomento@mdot.maryland.gov
410-545-0411 - office
<http://www.roads.maryland.gov>



From: Matthew Stark Blumin <matthewstarkrubin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 2, 2019 10:19 AM
To: Samantha Biddle <SBiddle@mdot.maryland.gov>; Kandese Holford <KHolford@mdot.maryland.gov>; Andre Futrell <AFutrell@mdot.maryland.gov>; Jessica Pilarski <JPilarski@mdot.maryland.gov>; Darren Bean <DBean@mdot.maryland.gov>; Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>; Gwen.Wright@montgomeryplanning.org; Casey.Anderson@montgomeryplanning.org; Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@montgomeryplanning.org; Gerald.Cichy@montgomeryplanning.org; Tina.Patterson@montgomeryplanning.org; Partap.Verma@montgomeryplanning.org; Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org; matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: Fwd: ACT NOW: Still Time to Save the Co-op and Junction

I concur with everything below. In particular, this is the route me and many of my neighbors use to walk literally hundreds of little kids to elementary school each day. It is safe now—why mess with that?

As I said to our city Councilmembers, for those of us who live between Columbia and New Hampshire, it's incredible how serene it is despite the commercial development on either side—we have built for ourselves a very special and idyllic community, while being supportive of affordable housing, diversity and inclusion at every opportunity. This is extremely rare in America today, as you surely know. Part of the reason this is possible is the preservation of nature wherever possible. Everybody wins.

So, a massive concrete wall where there once was green space—which is what is proposed for the rear of this building—and the attendant traffic nightmares of this development, is the opposite of the Takoma Park we have fought to preserve and open to neighbors of all backgrounds. With the tree canopy deteriorating due to the beetle invasion, and our arborist doing nothing proactive to address that problem, the least we could do is leave nature alone.

Let me be clear: In exchange for something like affordable housing, or a child care center, or anything with a focus on equity and inclusion, I would gladly shoulder the cost of the junction. But for paint by numbers retail and office space designed for bourgeois folks, I oppose it strongly. Thanks for considering the views of your constituents as you evaluate this redesign.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Community Vision for Takoma <tjcommunityvision@gmail.com>
Subject: ACT NOW: Still Time to Save the Co-op and Junction
Date: December 1, 2019 at 7:43:44 PM EST

To: undisclosed-recipients;;

More than 1,500 people opposed the over-sized development plan at Takoma Junction. And yet, our City approved a plan that has required multiple redesigns because it did not meet zoning and historic preservation standards. Meanwhile, our Mayor and City Manager continue to do [everything in their power](#) to help the developer, including pushing for a taxpayer–subsidized reconfiguration of roads at the Junction so this oversized project could be squeezed in.

The TPSS Co-op continues to be in great jeopardy. If the current plan goes forward, there is a very real possibility that our beloved community pillar will have to shut down or relocate. While other towns offer incentives to attract grocery stores, our elected officials and City Manager are doing the opposite - giving a sweetheart deal and 99-year lease to a developer who has [faced protests from Black Lives Matter](#).

The agreement negotiated between the developer and the Co-op does not allow the Co-op to speak out about the Junction plan. So, it is up to us, the community, to speak out to the County and State, now.

The State Highway Administration (SHA) will release the Junction Vision Study soon. Sometime thereafter the SHA’s District Engineer will review and subsequently announce the SHA’s position on the developer’s plan, which seems to be predicated on re-configuring the intersection with public funds and building the lay-by. Other County agencies are already on record but are likely reviewing the revised NDC plan right now. **We are at a pivotal moment when we urgently need your help!** The lay-by can only accommodate one large or two small trucks at a time, yet there are often up to four or five trucks including waste removal trucks arriving simultaneously at the Co-op. This plan ignores this reality. Further, placing a lay-by in the middle of this Junction will cause a traffic nightmare and endanger pedestrians and cyclists. We can still save our Co-op and get right-sized development at the Junction...but only if we speak up now for what we really value about our community.

TWO KEY ACTION STEPS:

1) Write to the SHA. Voice your distress over traffic and safety issues at the Junction, and urge them not to approve the proposed design. Please use your own words, choose the issues that mean most to you, tell your own stories. Below are some points as reminders:

E mail to: Kwesi Woodroffe, KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov, and Scott Pomento,

SPomento@sha.state.md.us ; send copies to:
SBiddle@mdot.state.md.us; KHolford@mdot.maryland.gov;
AFutrell@mdot.maryland.gov; JPilarski@mdot.maryland.gov;
DBean@mdot.maryland.gov

- The Vision Study process has not provided citizens with an opportunity to talk about how traffic will be backed up due to Junction deliveries, now planned smack in the middle of the Junction via a lay-by. Currently four trucks typically come at the same time to deliver goods to just one store. Only one will fit into the proposed lay-by. Effectively, this will shut down traffic at this junction. Why weren't citizens permitted to discuss this as part of the Vision Study?
- The exit from the planned underground garage onto Carroll Avenue is on a dangerous, near-blind curve that violates state standards.
- Junction traffic cannot handle a new development of this size. We already face enormous backups especially during rush hour in the morning and evening.
- Reconfiguration to speed up traffic will create induced demand and ultimately new congestion with more vehicles. Global warming emissions will rise and air quality will decrease.
- We oppose spending limited local, County and State transportation dollars for a reconfiguration project that will cause more problems than it solves. A different development plan, not a different road design, is the right answer.
- Construction and/or road reconfiguration would cause years of delays on 410, a major commuter route.
- Lengthy construction is likely to have severe consequences for the small businesses along Carroll Ave and leave them with fewer customer parking options.
- The current development plan erases our bike hub, bus stop, any potential for a bike lane, and the Grant Ave crosswalk. Why spend tax dollars to help a private developer make public transit and pedestrian options worse?
- Our fire chief said in public testimony that the lay-by and the egress would hamper their emergency vehicles. That's equally true today since design revisions haven't changed the lay-by or egress.
- A lay-by for deliveries and garbage pickup in the middle of the Junction will

be dangerous for all pedestrians, including children who walk to school — plus, it will be smelly, unsightly, and negatively affect residents, commuters, and local businesses.

- Truck drivers have testified that when parked in the lay-by, they would not be able to see small children nearby.
- The Junction is already backed up and there is a lot of cut-through traffic in our residential neighborhoods. A lay-by will make things much worse.

2) ALSO, please write or email the Montgomery County Planning Board and their Development Review Committee today and copy your County Council representatives to let them know of your opposition to the current design. Again, please use your own words and stories. The bullets below are just topic reminders.

Email to:

Director: Gwen Wright. Gwen.Wright@montgomeryplanning.org

Chair: Casey Anderson. Casey.Anderson@montgomeryplanning.org

Vice Chair: Natali Fani-Gonzales. Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@montgomeryplanning.org

Board member: Gerald Cichy. Gerald.Cichy@montgomeryplanning.org

Board member: Tina Patterson. Tina.Patterson@montgomeryplanning.org

Board member: Partap Verma. Partap.Verma@montgomeryplanning.org
Elza.Hisel-McCoy@montgomeryplanning.org (lead reviewer of the NDC plan)

Stephanie Dickel. Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org

Matt Folden. matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org

Please send copies to:

Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov

Councilmember.Rierner@montgomerycountymd.gov

Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov

Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov

Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov

Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov

- The development plan is too big for the location, and will loom over neighboring structures. Invite County officials to come stand at the Junction and try to imagine it.
- The development would have a direct impact on racial equity in our community, in all likelihood forcing the Co-op, one of the largest retail employers in the City, to close down or relocate. The Co-op is an oasis of diversity in terms of both customers and employees, with union jobs and

benefits for people from over a dozen countries.

- With restricted delivery access and reduction of customer and staff surface parking, the Co-op is directly threatened.
- The proposed rent at the development is twice that being paid at other Junction businesses. This will likely lead to rising rents for businesses (many minority-owned) across the street. Several have raised concerns about the impact of paid parking and rising congestion as threats to their customer base.
- Opponents of this Junction plan were the clear majority in public testimony, emails to the City, and in over 1500 petition signatures. The City refused to alter direction or call a referendum.
- The development sacrifices public space – a critical need and a strong community demand that was expressed repeatedly during the review process at the city level.
- The development would make climate impacts worse by inserting a lay-by that will cause major back-ups from delivery trucks, increasing congestion at a failing intersection, and worsening air quality in an area with many children and seniors. Road reconfiguration would not solve this undeniable reality.
- The development would take out mature healthy trees and exacerbate storm water issues. Invite officials to come look at the embankment behind the site to see how trees will come down, water will be unleashed, and erosion will impact homes.
- The Co-op serves many nearby renters and seniors who depend on public transit. Loss of the Co-op threatens their access to a walkable grocery store with healthy and international foods.
- This is public land, and the community wants it to be used for the public good. There are ample alternative development options that would allow the Co-op to flourish, provide for public space, and not overburden the Junction with additional traffic.

Thank you for taking action now!

What else can you do? Join us at an upcoming action event. Bring your smart phone or laptop.

ACTION EVENT: Save the Junction (and Co-op)

Get up to speed. Ask questions. Take action. Hug a neighbor.

Monday Dec 9th

7 - 9pm

Firehouse basement room (enter from the back)

7201 Carroll Ave (park in the City lot)

Refreshments Provided

See you there!

Community Vision for Takoma

Visit our website at cvtakomajunction.com

Visit our facebook page [Community Vision for Takoma](https://www.facebook.com/CommunityVisionforTakoma)

Email us at tjcommunityvision@gmail.com

To unsubscribe, please reply to this email with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

From: [Folden, Matthew](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Concerns about the Takoma Junction project
Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 8:41:27 AM

Elza, Do you want to respond to this email?

Matt

Matthew Folden, AICP | Planner Coordinator
 301.495.4539 | matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org

From: Dennis Huffman <dehuffman9@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 11:57 AM
To: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Concerns about the Takoma Junction project

Dear Mr. Folden,

I am writing to the Planning Board out of deep concern over the Takoma Junction project.

I am concerned about the transfer of public land into the hands of a developer without a clear and obvious public good as the primary outcome. Can it be that in Takoma Park we have somehow conflated the right to make a reservation at a linen tablecloth restaurant with notions of inclusion and equity?

- I am concerned about the clearly deleterious impact the current design will have on not only the TPSS Co-op, but also the other legacy small businesses in the area by reducing parking, severely constraining deliveries, and dramatically increasing rents.
- I am particularly shocked by the obviously wrongheaded insistence of the developer that a lay-by on 410 is somehow the answer to all concerns about delivery and trash pick-up for both the Co-op and the new development.
- I am very concerned about safety and the impact that adding a large and poorly conceived facility (adding the garage adds left turns off of and onto 410) will have on what is already a chaotic and congested stretch of road with a heavy pedestrian presence and a firehouse. Not to mention the significant problems we already have with traffic cutting through residential neighborhoods.
- Finally, I am concerned about the process. As one might expect in Takoma Park, there have been hearings accompanied by a great deal of discussion. But distressingly, none of that appears to have mattered. This project has rolled forward seemingly unstopably. The city staff are eagerly telling all reviewing bodies that community meetings were held, but, incredibly, their story stops there, failing to mention the overwhelming opposition to the plans expressed at those meetings. This is rather like telling the story of Purdue Pharma without mentioning the opioid crisis.

As the Planning Board and the Development Review Committee consider Takoma Junction, I ask that the above concerns be taken into consideration and that you act in accordance with the public good, public safety, and the unique character of the special place I call home.

Thank you.

Dennis Huffman
9 Montgomery Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

From: [Folden, Matthew](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: My expressed concern for the Junction Project in Takoma Park
Date: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 8:16:59 AM

Elza,

Would you like to reply to this email?

Matt

Matthew Folden, AICP | Planner Coordinator
 301.495.4539 | matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org

From: Susan Rogers <susanjoanrogers72@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 3:57 PM
To: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: My expressed concern for the Junction Project in Takoma Park

Hello Matthew--

I am a resident of Takoma Park and I am writing to you to voice my concern over traffic and safety issues at the Junction and am asking you to NOT approve the proposed design of the city's Junction project. In my opinion this development would make climate impacts worse by inserting a lay-by that will cause major back-ups from delivery trucks, increasing congestion at a failing intersection, and worsening air quality in an area with many children and seniors. I feel strongly that road reconfiguration would not solve this undeniable reality. Please also note that our fire chief said in public testimony that the lay-by and the egress would hamper their emergency vehicles. That's equally true today since design revisions haven't changed the lay-by or egress.

In addition, the exit from the planned underground garage onto Carroll Avenue is on a dangerous, near-blind curve that I understand violates state standards. Further, I oppose spending limited local, County and State transportation dollars for a reconfiguration project that will cause more problems than it solves. In general, I feel a different development plan of a much smaller scale, not a different road design, is what our city should be seeking.

Thank you for considering my concerns in your decisions concerning the Junction.

Regards,

Susan Rogers
416 Lincoln Ave., Takoma Park, MD

From: [Dickel, Stephanie](#)
To: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Please Oppose Proposed Takoma Junction Project
Date: Monday, December 16, 2019 10:40:55 AM

Stephanie Marsnick Dickel

Regulatory Supervisor, Area 1
 Montgomery County Planning Department
 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring MD, 20910
 301.495.4527
stephanie.dickel@montgomeryplanning.org

From: Dickel, Stephanie
Sent: Monday, December 16, 2019 10:40 AM
To: Jimmy Daukas <jimmydaukas@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Please Oppose Proposed Takoma Junction Project

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. Elza Hisel-McCoy is the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and he is out of the office until January 6, 2020. I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page

(www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please contact Elza if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,
Stephanie

Stephanie Marsnick Dickel

Regulatory Supervisor, Area 1
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring MD, 20910
301.495.4527
stephanie.dickel@montgomeryplanning.org

From: Jimmy Daukas <jimmydaukas@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 15, 2019 10:05 PM
To: Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Please Oppose Proposed Takoma Junction Project

I ask that you oppose the proposed Takoma Junction development project

as presently designed. It will cause significant traffic problems and undermine safety at this troubled intersection. In particular, the proposed lay-by *in the middle of the intersection* to handle delivery including large tractor trailer trucks will lead to congestion and be dangerous for pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars. In 2019 what leading developer would make a proposal that plan eliminates the existing bike hub, bus stop, crosswalk recently installed for school kids and any potential for a bike lane? The development is too large and the proposal really is an amazingly ineffective plan proposed by the developer demonstrating a lack of innovation, imagination and commitment to safety. As planners you must see that this is not a solution; it is a dangerous plan.

In addition, the development will undermine racial equity rather than help it in Takoma Park. It will adversely affect the Coop, which offers its large, racially diverse employees one of the most generous job opportunities in the area, while at the same time undermining the other businesses at the Junction by driving up rents and increasing the cost of parking. Some have mentioned that the increased tax revenue the city will receive (unclear how much or when since net tax receipts to the City appear not to start for at least 20 years) would be used for affordable housing. I ask you as planning professionals if that is the most effective way to address this critical issue—increase rents, offer no new housing, undermine generous existing jobs.

I live one block from the Junction intersection and throughout all the public meetings that I have attended over the past 4-5 years, concerned citizens have raised the traffic issues. But they always were put off to be dealt with in the future. I am surprised the proposed development has proceeded so far along without resolving these issues. I ask that you reject this plan that does not work.

I fear that the Junction, already a problem intersection—both dangerous and backed up, will not be able to handle the additional traffic and the dramatic increase in vehicles entering and existing. This is not simply an issue of managing more through traffic: 1) there will be trucks entering and exiting the lay-by (which only works in one direction and exits directly into the intersection); 2) there will be cars attempting to exist an underground parking lot, cross the sidewalk and enter traffic within 50 feet of the intersection without a traffic light; 3) there will be cars backed up attempting to entering into the parking lot while traveling west bound on Rt 410 backing up traffic into the intersection. It will be a mess.

Please take the time to do a time and motion study or a simulation to imagine 200 vehicles passing through the intersection with 5 different streets, a semi-truck lay-by, 3 parking lots, bike lanes, bus stops, street crossings, and sidewalks. It will be dangerous. It will cause diversion traffic. It will cause congestion. And this will increase greenhouse gas emissions.

I ask that you oppose the proposed Takoma Junction development project as presently designed. It is not a good plan.

Thank you for your attention to this dangerous proposal.

Jimmy Daukas
7005 Woodland Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912

From: [Folden, Matthew](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Please Oppose the Takoma Junction Development Project
Date: Monday, December 16, 2019 9:58:26 AM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)
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[image012.png](#)



Matthew Folden

Planner Coordinator

Montgomery County Planning Department
 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org
 o: 301.495.4539



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From: Jimmy Daukas <jimmydaukas@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 15, 2019 10:08 PM
To: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Please Oppose the Takoma Junction Development Project

I ask that you oppose the proposed Takoma Junction development project as presently designed. It will cause significant traffic problems and undermine safety at this troubled intersection. In particular, the proposed lay-by *in the middle of the intersection* to handle delivery including large tractor trailer trucks will lead to congestion and be dangerous for pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars. In 2019 what leading developer would make a proposal that plan eliminates the existing bike hub, bus stop, crosswalk recently installed for school kids and any potential for a bike lane? The development is too large and the proposal really is an amazingly ineffective plan proposed by the developer demonstrating a lack of innovation, imagination and commitment to safety. As planners you must see that this is not a solution; it is a dangerous plan.

In addition, the development will undermine racial equity rather than help it in Takoma Park. It will adversely affect the Coop, which offers its large, racially diverse employees one of the most generous job opportunities in the area, while at the same time undermining the other businesses at the Junction by driving up rents and increasing the cost of parking. Some have

mentioned that the increased tax revenue the city will receive (unclear how much or when since net tax receipts to the City appear not to start for at least 20 years) would be used for affordable housing. I ask you as planning professionals if that is the most effective way to address this critical issue— increase rents, offer no new housing, undermine generous existing jobs.

I live one block from the Junction intersection and throughout all the public meetings that I have attended over the past 4-5 years, concerned citizens have raised the traffic issues. But they always were put off to be dealt with in the future. I am surprised the proposed development has proceeded so far along without resolving these issues. I ask that you reject this plan that does not work.

I fear that the Junction, already a problem intersection—both dangerous and backed up, will not be able to handle the additional traffic and the dramatic increase in vehicles entering and existing. This is not simply an issue of managing more through traffic: 1) there will be trucks entering and exiting the lay-by (which only works in one direction and exits directly into the intersection); 2) there will be cars attempting to exist an underground parking lot, cross the sidewalk and enter traffic within 50 feet of the intersection without a traffic light; 3) there will be cars backed up attempting to entering into the parking lot while traveling west bound on Rt 410 backing up traffic into the intersection. It will be a mess.

Please take the time to do a time and motion study or a simulation to imagine 200 vehicles passing through the intersection with 5 different streets, a semi-truck lay-by, 3 parking lots, bike lanes, bus stops, street crossings, and sidewalks. It will be dangerous. It will cause diversion traffic. It will cause congestion. And this will increase greenhouse gas emissions.

I ask that you oppose the proposed Takoma Junction development project as presently designed. It is not a good plan.

Thank you for your attention to this dangerous proposal.

Jimmy Daukas
7005 Woodland Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:56:28 PM

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
 Chief
 Area One
 Montgomery County Planning Department
 M-NCPPC
 8787 Georgia Avenue
 Silver Spring, MD 20910
 301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:55 PM
To: Linda R <lrabben@verizon.net>; Marc.Elrigh@montgomerycountymd.gov
Cc: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <Tina.Patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: RE: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan

Dear Ms. Rabben,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of

representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 90 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

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From: Linda R <lrabben@verizon.net>

Sent: Monday, December 2, 2019 8:01 PM

To: Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov

Cc: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan

Dear Commission and County Council members:

For several years numerous Takoma Park residents, including me, have been pointing out the serious deficiencies in NDC's development plan for Takoma Junction. Despite our efforts, which included statements at Takoma Park city council meetings and a petition signed by about 1,500 residents, NDC's plan seems to be going forward.

In this message I would like to point out the many problems with this plan.

1. The development is too large for the location, and will loom over neighboring structures and destroy the historic character of the neighborhood.
2. It could lead to the closing of the Takoma Park Co-op, one of the largest retail employers in the city and a beacon of diversity in customers and employees, with union jobs and benefits for people from many countries.
3. The Co-op's delivery and parking areas would be drastically reduced, making shopping there very inconvenient.
4. NDC's proposed rent is double the rent paid by existing Junction businesses. This could lead to rising rents for minority-owned businesses nearby. Several business owners have raised concerns

about the impact of paid parking and increasing congestion on their customer base.

5. Opponents of this plan were in the clear majority in public hearings, emails and petition signatures. Yet the City refused to listen to our repeated concerns. In fact, they treated us with condescension and even contempt, despite the testimony of experts who live in Takoma Park.

6. The development sacrifices public space, a community need that residents stressed repeatedly during the review process.

7. The development would worsen climate impacts by inserting a lay-by that would cause major back-ups from delivery trucks, increasing congestion at a severely congested intersection, and worsening air quality in an area where many children and seniors live and walk. Road reconfiguration would not solve these serious problems.

8. The development would remove mature healthy trees and exacerbate erosion and storm water issues.

9. The site is on public land, and the community wants it to be used for the public good. There are many alternative development options that would allow the Co-op to flourish, provide for public space, protect local businesses and not lead to additional traffic congestion.

Please listen to and address Takoma Park residents' concerns about this ill-conceived project. Please stop it before it goes any further.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Linda Rabben

Takoma Park resident since 1989

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:42:33 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
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 8787 Georgia Avenue
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 301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2019 9:22 AM
To: Kronenberg, Robert <robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: FW: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan

FYI

Gwen Marcus Wright
 Planning Director | Montgomery County Planning Department
 8787 Georgia Avenue | Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org
 301-495-4500 office | 571-329-3053 cell



From: Linda R <lrabben@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, December 2, 2019 8:01 PM
To: Marc.Elrigh@montgomerycountymd.gov
Cc: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey

<Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Rierner@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan

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5. Opponents of this plan were in the clear majority in public hearings, emails and petition signatures. Yet the City refused to listen to our repeated concerns. In fact, they treated us with condescension and even contempt, despite the testimony of experts who live in Takoma Park.
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Please listen to and address Takoma Park residents' concerns about this ill-conceived project. Please stop it before it goes any further.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Linda Rabben

Takoma Park resident since 1989

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Safety concerns at Takoma Junction
Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 10:21:02 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
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From: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 12:12 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Kronenberg, Robert <robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: FW: Safety concerns at Takoma Junction

FYI...

Gwen Marcus Wright
 Planning Director | Montgomery County Planning Department
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gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org
 301-495-4500 office | 571-329-3053 cell



From: Marty Anderson <mwanderson@consultant.com>
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 2:16 PM
To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Safety concerns at Takoma Junction

Dear Ms Wright,

As a Takoma Park resident who lives two streets from Takoma Junction, I have a number of concerns about the proposed development there. For significant safety reasons, it should not be approved as planned.

Traffic safety is a major issue that seems to have been addressed only in a limited fashion. The Chief of the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department has given public testimony to the City Council at a council meeting stating that a proposed lay-by, for delivery trucks and trash collection, would impact emergency services and public safety. His concerns ranged from emergency vehicles being impeded by traffic to the safety of school children, other pedestrians and bicyclists not being seen by drivers in large delivery trucks pulling out of a lay-by directly into a crosswalk. The traffic at the Carroll Avenue/Grant Avenue/Philadelphia Avenue/Sycamore Avenue intersection is already difficult for pedestrians, with cars routinely illegally going around stopped buses. A truck coming out of a lay-by could appear without warning directly into the path of these cars, creating opportunities for accidents.

The ramp down to and up from the proposed underground parking garage is less than 100 feet from the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department. The Montgomery County Department of Public Works, Department of Permitting Services, states in their [Sight Distance Evaluation](#) that the line-of-sight to the west from the anticipated underground garage parking lot exit (in the direction of the fire house) is inadequate. While highway requirements mandate a 325-foot line-of-sight, the actual distance was measured to be only 188 feet. This distance is 50 to 60 feet closer to the fire house than the current driveway (which is completely above ground). Moving an ingress/egress point closer, with limited visibility coming up a ramp to a wholly insufficient line-of-sight to the west, presents a significant danger for accidents. Emergency vehicles and other vehicles racing to beat the Route 410-Carroll intersection traffic light in front of the firehouse would have even less time to see someone turning into and leaving from the proposed underground garage. It is incumbent upon all government agencies to not create a danger through inadequate design.

These traffic issues are even a greater concern for many of the drivers who would utilize a development. For instance, older drivers may very well be at increased risk driving out of the underground lot (due to slower reflexes, visual and auditory impairments, etc.), especially with the nonconforming line-of-sight. [Any driver distracted](#) in some way (cell phone, kids arguing in the back seat, package falling off the seat, etc.) would also present an increased risk due to the inadequacy of the line of sight and the reduced time to react to other vehicles. This poorly-planned development driveway, with less than 60% of the required line of sight, would present a continual imminent danger to those entering and leaving.

Pedestrians would also be at greater risk from vehicles coming up a ramp from an underground garage. Older citizens and handicapped individuals (in wheelchairs, with canes or walkers, with visual impairments) often have decreased mobility, making it more difficult for them to dodge traffic coming out of the underground lot as they walk across the driveway. [Distracted pedestrians](#) present increased risks as well. Pedestrian safety is of particular

concern since drivers will not have the full view of the exit until some point at which they are sufficiently up the angled ramp, and depending upon the speed of the car, the pedestrians may not have sufficient warning that a car is coming.

This pedestrian issue is also present with cars entering the driveway from both directions: cars coming from the west, a direction with a deficient line of sight, as well as cars from the east making a speedy left turn across two lanes of traffic (i.e., across the same two lanes with a deficient line of sight). The development's proposed "public space", an area for groups and families to gather, is bounded by this driveway, and that amplifies the danger to stray children and others near the driveway. A simple review of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [Walkability Checklist](#) will highlight the inadequacy, and induced danger, of this configuration. [Notes from a meeting](#) with SHA and residents at Victory Tower, a senior living apartment building about a quarter mile away, mirror some of these same concerns about the proposed development.

A final issue is that of trash and garbage pick up. The proposal puts the pickup area at the east side of the lay-by, at the major intersection. In the vast majority of developments, garbage disposal is appropriately restricted to the rear of a property, away from the public view. In this case, however, the proposal is that transfer from dumpster to truck will be completed in the lay-by, between the street and the sidewalk public gathering space. Supposedly, this garbage will be housed in a room in the development and will be wheeled out just in time for each trash pickup during the 99-year term of the lease. Given the developer's plans for a restaurant and a café (in the latest plans), the potential for a robust garbage problem is substantial. In addition, the potential for both noise and exhaust pollution is great, especially if trucks have to sit (perhaps in travel lanes) awaiting the exit of delivery trucks already in the lay-by and right next to folks in the public space.

Listserv discussions already confirm that our neighborhood, two blocks from the proposed development, has had an influx of rats and mice. Emptying garbage dumpsters into a garbage truck will obviously create some spillage; just look at any area around any garbage dumpster. Such waste will draw rodents and perhaps other pests into the main street area, where school children walk and shoppers gather, and sweeping it up can never completely rid the street of that spillage (especially fluid overflow). Combine schoolchildren crossing the street while dodging a rat with trucks coming in and out of a lay-by, and anyone supporting the development as planned will be supporting the creation of a vastly more dangerous intersection than we now have.

I urge the Planning Board and Council to reject the plan as designed and not create a dangerous condition for both drivers and pedestrians.

Sincerely,
Martha Anderson
7120 Woodland Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Takoma Junction and the Food Coop
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:13:16 PM

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
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montgomeryplanning.org

From: wolfgang mergner <wolfgang.mergner@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:01 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction and the Food Coop

Dear Board Member Elza Hisel-McCoy

In the Junction Development, our COOP is in danger of being eliminated by taking away parking and access for delivery and waste removal. The Coop is a vital supplier of food in Takoma Park. I am 78 and my husband is 86 years old and in past snow emergencies being able to walk to the COOP was essential for us. The existence of the COOP should not be endangered by an oversized project. The COOP is a vital part of our community. When other small communities try to entice grocery stores to move into their city, our City of Takoma Park is favoring a scrupulous developer. There will be no subsidized housing and no diversity in this project. The majority of the citizens is for development of this available space next to the COOP, but in a more environmentally and socially acceptable way.

Best regards

Gertrud W. Mergner M.D.

Wolfgang J. Mergner M.D., Ph.D.

From: [Folden, Matthew](#)
To: [Balmer, Emily](#); [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Subject: FW: Takoma Junction Concerns
Date: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 11:13:54 AM

From: Esther Siegel <esiegel2@igc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 10:05 AM
To: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction Concerns

Dear Mr. Folden,

We are writing to express our many concerns about the proposed development at Takoma Junction. We live in Takoma Park and also deliver local fruit and vegetables from our farm, to the TPSS Food Co-op.

In this holiday season, one can turn to any Hallmark channel and watch a sappy Christmas movie. The theme many of the movies (except the ones about princes and princesses in small made up countries!) is about small town spirit and a developer who wants to “improve” the town by bringing in what ultimately becomes inappropriate and unwanted development. The lesson is always that the residents love their community, their local stores and Inns and while they don’t oppose improvements, fight hard to preserve the spirit and intimacy of their town.

If the current development goes forward with the lay-by, we fear we simply will not be able to continue our business relationship with the Co-op grocery store – unloading of goods in a timely and safe manner will become too difficult. This distresses us deeply from our business perspective but also from our long-held dedication to a thriving local food cooperative for our community. We have been delivering to the Co-op since it’s beginning! Other distributors, especially those with tractor trailers, have testified that they might not continue to deliver to the Co-op, thus making it hard for the Co-op to survive in its current location. Communities around the country would love to have a Co-op like ours in their communities and communities that do, like in Vermont, support their Co-op to ensure that they thrive.

It is no accident that these heartwarming movie themes touch us during this holiday of good cheer, compassion and community.

Takoma Park has come “off screen” over these last years, struggling with tension between some of our elected officials who seem to have lost sight of the value of the uniqueness and diversity of our community in favor of the “developer” coming in from the outside to bring their profit oriented vision for Takoma Junction. It is also disturbing that this for profit development is on public land.

During these years, several disturbing issues starkly show that this development concept is just wrong. Too many revisions demonstrate that this development just won’t work. The concerns include traffic, exit plans from various streets, the small size of the Junction that will not support a large development, failed traffic reconfigurations, concerns from Takoma Park’s Fire Chief, the

absurd lay-by delivery and garbage plan, and so on. Every time NDC submits yet another “revision”, it feels like constantly trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. Their vision is just not compatible with the Junction and to reconfigure it would mean a total reconfigure of everything there, including the traffic paths. At some point, it must be recognized that changing everything, is just not practical or wanted.

Additionally, a development of this sort will impact the racial equity in our community, and threaten to displace the Takoma Park Food Co-op that is a shining example of a business with a diverse staff, that provides a living wage and health insurance to all its employees and is the only grocery store in Takoma Park that is used by all incomes (it supports SNAP, WIC and other government supplemental food programs);

ignoring the need for public space for public use and good; having a detrimental environmental impact by, among other concerns, displacing trees and creating water runoffs and erosion.

Many alternative plans have been proposed that would avoid the concerns mentioned above. They come from community residents who value and want to preserve the uniqueness and integrity of Takoma Park.

A more practical plan will make your job easier because it will factor in the concerns already raised by HDC that unanimously said that the current design is incompatible with the historic district.

HDC’s report said:

- The building is “way too big,” “too tall,” “too long” and “too massive.” It reads as a “very large office building.” It needs both to be made lower, and to be broken up either into two separate buildings (a one-story building was suggested as part of this), or into a design that presents as two separate buildings.

- In terms of the façade design, the developer was told “you’ve made a mess of things.” Overall, the design was described as “slick” and therefore “incompatible with the historic character of this part of Takoma Park.”

- The developer’s claim that the first story has to be 20 feet high to attract businesses is “false,” given the “thriving commercial district” down the street in “small, contextual buildings.”

- The glass elevator tower is “too contemporary,” “truly terrible,” “completely out of place,” “unnecessary,” and “has to go.”

- The canopy is too high to be functional.

- The historic art deco structure in BY Morrison Park should remain, and the roads should not be reconfigured because they have historic context.

- Wider sidewalks and more public space are needed. A Commissioner noted that public space is “very, very important for the community.”

- A Commissioner lamented the planned removal of 9 out of the 12 existing American Elms, a species “in short supply.” This Commissioner noted that it is “highly ironic” to cut down trees to put in a garage with a green roof.

- A loading area at the front is not consistent with Takoma Park’s historical context, and is not “conducive” for pedestrian areas. The Chair of the Commission stated, “the lay-by is an abomination.”

We implore you to reject the current development plan before you presented by NDC and recommend that a new vision be thoughtfully explored that truly reflects the preservation of our unique and so special town. Watch one of the sappy Hallmark Christmas movies that reflects where small-town America’s heart is.

Thank you,

Esther Siegel
Michael Tabor
Takoma Park
301 587-2248

--

Michael and Esther share this email.
Please check the signature to determine who it comes from.
Thanks.

From: [Eliza Hiseel-McCoy, Eliza](#)
To: [Baltzer, Emily](#)
Subject: Pk: Takoma Junction
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:49:08 AM

Eliza Hiseel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
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8787 Georgia Avenue
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301.495.2115, eliza.hiseel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

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

From: arlene Montemurro <mikad@starpower.net>

Sent: Friday, December 6, 2019 9:02 PM

To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Parup <Parup.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hiseel-McCoy, Eliza <eliza.hiseel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Follen, Matthew <matthew.follen@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: Councilmember Haucker<haucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>; HANS REIMER <councilmember.reimer@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Jawando<jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Glass<councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Albertson<councilmember.albertson@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Hirsch, Marc <marc.hirsch@montgomerycountymd.gov>

Subject: Takoma Junction

Please don't approve the current plan. It is a plan not well thought out in terms of safety and traffic. We do not want to have Takoma Park diminished by mistakes made by thoughtless design, as we have seen happen in other areas.

We can do better.

--

Arlene Montemurro, 240-260-8691

<https://nam03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvimeo.com%2F311318253&data=02%7C01%7Cemily.baltzer%40montgomeryplanning.org%7C995F7ce9752d4d0239608d77cb6f18a%7C906160c24c4c1cbeff0398b8c05816%7C0%7C0%7C637114997480900354&data=7&Uy4yDA4d3Wk1%2BkGm698g%2F6GASagCg7IMbqnV4UIMU%3D&reserved=0>

Member of Citizens Against Beltway Expansion, cabe495.com

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Takoma Junction
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:43:31 AM

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
 Chief
 Area One
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 Sent: Friday, December 6, 2019 11:22 AM
 To: Kronenberg, Robert <robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Subject: FW: Takoma Junction

FYI

Gwen Marcus Wright
 Planning Director | Montgomery County Planning Department
 8787 Georgia Avenue | Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org
 301-495-4500 office | 571-329-3053 cell

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

From: Susan Strasser <sustras@me.com>
 Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2019 5:25 PM
 To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov
 Subject: Takoma Junction

Dear Montgomery County planners —

I wrote to express my opposition to the development plan for Takoma Junction, a few blocks away from my house.

The planned development is too big; the layby presents too much of a difficulty for the Coop, where I have shopped for many years. The development sacrifices public space, and has considerable climate and storm water issues.

Please do what you can to prevent this plan from being executed.

Best wishes,
Susan Strasser
Willow Avenue, Takoma Park

From: [Folden, Matthew](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Takoma Junction
Date: Monday, December 16, 2019 9:57:55 AM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)



Matthew Folden
Planner Coordinator

Montgomery County Planning Department
 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org
 o: 301.495.4539



Let's Plan Our Future. Together. **THRIVE**
 THRIVEMONTGOMERY.COM MONTGOMERY 2050

From: Jimmy Daukas <jdaukas@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 15, 2019 9:32 PM
To: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction

Matthew,

For 26 years I have lived on Woodland Ave. in Takoma Park. I am writing to you because I am opposed to the NDCs proposed development of Takoma Junction.

The Junction is full of small minority owned businesses. Due to NDC's current proposal rents in the Junction are rising and threatening the existing businesses.

The loss of delivery space and parking is threatening our one walkable grocery store TPSS coop. The coop pays living wages and full benefits to its diverse staff plus providing a thriving fabulous grocery store that increases the quality of all our lives.

This is public land that should be for public good not another expensive restaurant that the majority of residence cannot afford.

The development will also impact climate change with increase exhaust, soil erosion and run off on to Columbia with the removal of trees for the development.

The traffic and congestion on 410 has been a problem for years. It is dangerous for walkers, bikers, children and the elderly as it is. However if NDC creates a Lay-by on 410, an exit from their proposed parking garage onto 410 at a blind corner and removing the Grant Ave crosswalk pedestrians and bikers will suffer.

The Fire Chief spoke at a city counsel meeting and stated that the lay-by will endanger public safety

because if a semi is parked the fire trucks will be delayed in answering an emergency.
This development is too large on too small a space next to an already dangerous and congested highway 410.

Please oppose this proposal as designed.

Thank you for your attention,

Meg Royce

From: [Folden, Matthew](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: FW: Takoma Park Junction Development Plan
Date: Thursday, December 12, 2019 3:20:49 PM

Matt

Matthew Folden, AICP | Planner Coordinator
 301.495.4539 | matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org

From: MARGUERITE CYR <mhcyr@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 10:44 AM
To: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Park Junction Development Plan

Dear Mr. Folden

I am a long time resident of Takoma Park. I am writing to share my concerns about the proposed NDC development of the City of Takoma Park's parking lot next to the TP Coop at the junction of 410 and Carroll Ave. Unbelievably, the Coop is not able to discuss its own issues due to some sort of gag order/agreement so I am speaking on their behalf and as a concerned citizen. The Coop, of which I am a member and therefore an owner, anchored this community by bringing its business and good paying union jobs w benefits to TP. We cheered its arrival. It is our only walkable grocery store. Over the years, the development surrounding the Junction has prospered and expanded as has the Coop. The Coop generated foot traffic which then attracted other small businesses to the area and now a once-dead intersection is thriving. We now have a bakery, an electric vehicle fueling station, a dry cleaners, restaurant, laundromat, veterinarian, Historic Takoma Headquarters, audio-shop, and a postal/Fed-Ex/UPS drop off business along Carroll Ave. The City Parking lot provides parking spaces for all these businesses, the selling of Christmas trees by the Fire Department around the corner, the Green Festival, food trucks, and musical performances. It is our best central, open and large community space.

There is a bus stop and a bike shares station there as well. The parking lot is backed by healthy chestnut oaks that would be taken down if the development goes through at a time when the oaks in are area are being devastated by the ambrosia beetle. These trees perform a valuable service in storm water management to the neighborhood below. Their removal will be devastating.

The Coop survives because they receive their deliveries by multiple huge trucks that

need space to do so. The contract between NDC and the City of TP was to include a viable delivery plan but instead the design proposes a lay-by that will not meet its needs and it will cause increasing back ups on Carroll and 410. The traffic at the Junction is legendary and it creates overflow through the neighborhood off New Hampshire Ave., Carroll Ave. and 410. I know because I live just 2 blocks away from the Junction. Jamming up the Junction with truck deliveries will just make it worse.

There will be more congestion, more global warming emissions and a subsequent decrease in air quality will result. Ironically, the bike shares station, a crosswalk and the bus station will go away. Cars entering and exiting the proposed parking garage will add to congestion and cause delays. Emergency vehicles will be hampered.

Pedestrians will not be able to easily negotiate past the lay-by. The truck drivers will not be able to see the walking children. As most communities attempt to decrease dependency on cars, it does does not make any sense to impede pedestrians, take away bus stops, bike shares and crosswalks.

The NDC building design is huge and out of scale with the neighborhood. It would improve New Hampshire Ave., but it will be an eyesore at the Junction. Expensive parking, a failed delivery plan, a failed traffic junction and a City Council that does not listen to the majority of its residents who have made it clear through testimony and petitions that they oppose this development have all conspired to create a plan that is a disaster for Takoma Park. I can't believe that it has gotten this far. I pray that common sense will prevail in the coming months as this plan moves forward to what I hope will be termination of this development plan by NDC.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider my perspective.

Sincerely,

Marguerite Cyr
403 Boyd Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301 801 0750

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Folden, Matthew](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Concerns about the Takoma Junction project
Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 10:19:09 AM

Hello Matt,

Yes please I will respond to all of them.

Thanks!

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
 Chief
 Area One
 Montgomery County Planning Department
 M-NCPPC
 8787 Georgia Avenue
 Silver Spring, MD 20910
 301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 8:41 AM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Balmer, Emily <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: FW: Concerns about the Takoma Junction project

Elza, Do you want to respond to this email?

Matt

Matthew Folden, AICP | Planner Coordinator
 301.495.4539 | matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org

From: Dennis Huffman <dehuffman9@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 11:57 AM
To: Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Concerns about the Takoma Junction project

Dear Mr. Folden,

I am writing to the Planning Board out of deep concern over the Takoma Junction project.

I am concerned about the transfer of public land into the hands of a developer without a clear and obvious public good as the primary outcome. Can it be that in Takoma Park we have somehow conflated the right to make a reservation at a linen tablecloth restaurant with notions of inclusion and equity?

- I am concerned about the clearly deleterious impact the current design will have on not only the TPSS Co-op, but also the other legacy small businesses in the area by reducing parking, severely constraining deliveries, and dramatically increasing rents.
- I am particularly shocked by the obviously wrongheaded insistence of the developer that a lay-by on 410 is somehow the answer to all concerns about delivery and trash pick-up for both the Co-op and the new development.
- I am very concerned about safety and the impact that adding a large and poorly conceived facility (adding the garage adds left turns off of and onto 410) will have on what is already a chaotic and congested stretch of road with a heavy pedestrian presence and a firehouse. Not to mention the significant problems we already have with traffic cutting through residential neighborhoods.
- Finally, I am concerned about the process. As one might expect in Takoma Park, there have been hearings accompanied by a great deal of discussion. But distressingly, none of that appears to have mattered. This project has rolled forward seemingly unstopably. The city staff are eagerly telling all reviewing bodies that community meetings were held, but, incredibly, their story stops there, failing to mention the overwhelming opposition to the plans expressed at those meetings. This is rather like telling the story of Purdue Pharma without mentioning the opioid crisis.

As the Planning Board and the Development Review Committee consider Takoma Junction, I ask that the above concerns be taken into consideration and that you act in accordance with the public good, public safety, and the unique character of the special place I call home.

Thank you.

Dennis Huffman
9 Montgomery Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Susan Rogers](#)
Cc: [Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Marc.Elich@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: My expressed concern for the proposed Junction Project in Takoma Park
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 4:00:42 PM

Hello Ms. Rogers,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Susan Rogers <susanjoanrogers72@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 3:54 PM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: My expressed concern for the proposed Junction Project in Takoma Park

Hello Elza--

I am a resident of Takoma Park and I am writing to you to voice my concern over traffic and safety issues at the Junction and am asking you to NOT approve the proposed design of the city's Junction project. In my opinion this development would make climate impacts worse by inserting a lay-by that will cause major back-ups from delivery trucks, increasing congestion at a failing intersection, and worsening air quality in an area with many children and seniors. I feel strongly that road reconfiguration would not solve this undeniable reality. Please also note that our fire chief said in public testimony that the lay-by and the egress would hamper their emergency vehicles. That's equally true today since design revisions haven't changed the lay-by or egress.

In addition, the exit from the planned underground garage onto Carroll Avenue is on a dangerous, near-blind curve that I understand violates state standards. Further, I oppose spending limited local, County and State transportation dollars for a reconfiguration project that will cause more problems than it solves. In general, I feel a different development plan of a much smaller scale, not a different road design, is what our city should be seeking.

Thank you for considering my concerns in your decisions concerning the Junction.

Regards,
Susan Rogers
416 Lincoln Ave., Takoma Park, MD

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Lea Chartock](#); [Wright, Gwen](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Fani-Gonzalez, Natali](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Folden, Matthew](#)
Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:51:44 AM

Dear Lea,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may

over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Lea Chartock <xwriter@verizon.net>

Sent: Sunday, December 8, 2019 4:00 PM

To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Rierner@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

To the Montgomery County Planning Board and Development Review Committee:

I am writing to you today to express my opposition to the proposed NDC development at the Junction and to urge you not to approve the project as planned.

- The development plan is too big for the location.
- The proposed rent at the development is twice that being paid at other Junction businesses. If **this new market reality leads** to rising rents for **existing** businesses (many minority-owned) across the street, **these businesses may be in jeopardy**. Several have raised concerns about the impact of paid parking and rising congestion as threats to their customer base.
- **As proposed, the** development would likely force the **Takoma Park** Co-op, one of the largest retail employers in the City, to close down or relocate, **given the restricted delivery access and reduction of customer and staff surface parking**.
- The Co-op is an oasis of diversity in terms of both customers and employees, with union jobs and benefits for people from over a dozen countries.
- The Co-op serves many nearby renters and seniors who depend on public transit. Loss of the Co-op threatens their access to a walkable grocery store with healthy foods.
- The development calls for a lay-by **for truck delivery** that will cause major back-ups, increase congestion at a failing intersection, and worsen air quality. Road reconfiguration would not solve this **problem**.
- The development would take out mature healthy trees and exacerbate storm water issues.

The **site of the proposed development** is public land, and the community wants it

to be used for the public good. Many alternative development options would allow the Co-op to flourish, provide for public space, and not overburden the Junction with additional traffic.

If you have not already done so, I Invite you to come look at the site, imagine a 14-wheeler idling alongside Highway 410, note the embankment behind the site and consider how, with trees removed, water will be unleashed, and erosion will impact homes below. Note how traffic backs up during the morning and evening rush hours, and think about how a sizable new development will worsen congestion. Think about the disruption to Takoma Park businesses, residents and all people to drive through the city on 410 during construction of such a sizable project in a small area. Think about how these impacts would be worsened if the state also decided to reconfigure the roadway. And think about the fact that opponents of this Junction plan are the clear majority in public testimony, emails to the City of Takoma Park, and in over 1,500 petition signatures.

For all these reasons, I urge the Planning Board not to approve the current NDC plan.

Thank you,

Lea Chartock
6414 Sligo Mill Road
Takoma Park, MD 20912

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Lea Chartock](#); [Wright, Gwen](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Fani-Gonzalez, Natali](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Folden, Matthew](#); [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development
Date: Friday, December 13, 2019 11:02:17 AM

Hello Lea,

I will include your comments regarding the extension in my staff recommendation report for the extension. To be fair, as I mentioned, the applicant has not yet submitted plans revised to reflect the DRC comments all agencies except SHA provided in March. I would expect those after the SHA comments come in.

FYI, I will be out of the office for the next 3 weeks, but our Regulatory Team Supervisor, Stephanie Dickel, will do her best to answer any questions you might have until I return on January 6.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
 Chief
 Area One
 Montgomery County Planning Department
 M-NCPPC
 8787 Georgia Avenue
 Silver Spring, MD 20910
 301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Lea Chartock <xwriter@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 9:44 AM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov;
 Balmer, Emily <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>

Subject: Re: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

Dear Elza:

Thank you very much for your detailed response and all the links to related material. I will contact you if I have any questions. Meantime, I appreciate being added to the parties of record.

At this point, however, I would like to add that I find the developer's request for another extension unreasonable. The original development agreement was sign by the City of Takoma Park and NDC in 2016. The City's interests and the interests of the community have been clear from the beginning, but the developer continues to stonewall, with small modifications to the plan that don't meet any of the objections raised. If the developer hasn't shown a willingness to work with the community in three years, why should anyone believe that the company will suddenly see the light in the next six months?

I urge the planning board not to grant an extension without firm conditions being attached, including a final deadline after which, if the plan still doesn't meet all the criteria, the permits will be denied.

Thank you,

Lea Chartock

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

From: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 To: Lea Chartock <xwriter@verizon.net>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov <Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Marc.Erich@montgomerycountymd.gov <Marc.Erich@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Balmer, Emily <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: Mon, Dec 9, 2019 9:51 am
 Subject: RE: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

Dear Lea,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Lea Chartock <xwriter@verizon.net>

Sent: Sunday, December 8, 2019 4:00 PM

To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

To the Montgomery County Planning Board and Development Review Committee:

I am writing to you today to express my opposition to the proposed NDC development at the Junction and to urge you not to approve the project as planned.

- The development plan is too big for the location.
- The proposed rent at the development is twice that being paid at other Junction businesses. If this new market reality leads to rising rents for existing businesses (many minority-owned) across the street, these businesses may be in jeopardy. Several have raised concerns about the impact of paid parking and rising congestion as threats to their customer base.
- As proposed, the development would likely force the Takoma Park Co-op, one of the largest retail employers in the City, to close down or relocate, given the restricted delivery access and reduction of customer and staff surface parking.
- The Co-op is an oasis of diversity in terms of both customers and employees, with union jobs and benefits for people from over a dozen countries.
- The Co-op serves many nearby renters and seniors who depend on public transit. Loss of the Co-op threatens their access to a walkable grocery store with healthy foods.
- The development calls for a lay-by for truck delivery that will cause major back-ups, increase congestion at a failing intersection, and worsen air quality. Road reconfiguration would not solve this problem.
- The development would take out mature healthy trees and exacerbate storm water issues.

The site of the proposed development is public land, and the community wants it to be used for the public good. Many alternative development options would allow the Co-op to flourish, provide for public space, and not overburden the Junction with additional traffic.

If you have not already done so, I Invite you to come look at the site, imagine a 14-wheeler idling alongside Highway 410, note the embankment behind the site and consider how, with trees removed, water will be unleashed, and erosion will impact homes below. Note how traffic backs up during the morning and evening rush hours, and think about how a sizable new development will worsen congestion. Think about the disruption to Takoma Park businesses, residents and all people to drive through the city on 410 during construction of such a sizable project in a small area. Think about how these impacts would be worsened if the state also decided to reconfigure the roadway. And think about the fact that opponents of this Junction plan are the clear majority in public testimony, emails to the City of Takoma Park, and in over 1,500 petition signatures.

For all these reasons, I urge the Planning Board not to approve the current NDC plan.

Thank you,

Lea Chartock
6414 Sligo Mill Road
Takoma Park, MD 20912

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Megan Keister](#); [Wright, Gwen](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Fani-Gonzalez, Natali](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Folden, Matthew](#)
Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elich@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Please reconsider the development plan for Takoma Junction!
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 2:40:23 PM

Dear Ms. Keister,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

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When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Megan Keister <mekk9@verizon.net>

Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 2:28 PM

To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Please reconsider the development plan for Takoma Junction!

I'm writing to let you know that I am adamantly opposed to the current development plan for Takoma Junction.

The land targeted in the Tacoma Junction development plan is public and the local community rightly wants it to be used for public good. There are alternative development options that would allow for the Co-op flourish, provide for public space, and not overburden the junction with additional traffic. These alternative development Popsations must be re-examined and re-considered.

Sincerely,

Megan Keister
9902 Woodland Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20902

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Ted Jacobson](#); [Wright, Gwen](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Fani-Gonzalez, Natali](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Folden, Matthew](#); [Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Rierner@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Marc.Elich@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov](#); [SPomento@sha.state.md.us](#); [SBiddle@mdot.state.md.us](#); [KHolford@mdot.maryland.gov](#); [AFutrell@mdot.maryland.gov](#); [JPilarski@mdot.maryland.gov](#); [DBean@mdot.maryland.gov](#); [byrnehk@starpower.net](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: problems with Takoma Junction plans
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:50:17 AM

Dear Mr. Jacobson,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

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When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Ted Jacobson <tajaco@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, December 7, 2019 6:10 PM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Rierner@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov;
KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov; SPomento@sha.state.md.us; SBiddle@mdot.state.md.us;
KHolford@mdot.maryland.gov; AFutrell@mdot.maryland.gov; JPilarski@mdot.maryland.gov;
DBean@mdot.maryland.gov; byrnehk@starpower.net

Subject: problems with Takoma Junction plans

Dear County officials, staff, and SHA staff,

In a misguided scheme, and despite a huge amount of public opposition, the Takoma Park City Council, Mayor and City Manager have pressed ahead with plans for a development at the awkward junction of Carroll Avenue, Rte 410, Grant Avenue, and Columbia Avenue. This emerged from discussions about how to ameliorate existing traffic and transit problems of the junction, and how to use a City owned lot at the junction.

The current plan is for a development that is too large for the space, given the other priorities and constraints. The plan is driven by the developer's need and/or desire to make money on the development, and the Council, Mayor, and City manager's impatient fixation on seeing it come to fruition, despite very strong public opposition, and no matter what the costs to the use of public space, pedestrian safety, traffic safety, traffic backups, bus and bike transit, and the health of the businesses already present at the junction.

I urge you to be aware of the problems with this plan, and the strong opposition, and to do what you can to prevent this mistake from happening.

Thank you,
Ted Jacobson
Elm Avenue
Takoma Park, MD

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [wolfgang.mergner](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction and the Food Coop
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:52:00 PM

Dear Mr. Mergner,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

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Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be

heard by the Planning Board within 90 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: wolfgang mergner <wolfgang.mergner@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:01 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction and the Food Coop

Dear Board Member Elza Hisel-McCoy

In the Junction Development, our COOP is in danger of being eliminated by taking away parking and access for delivery and waste removal. The Coop is a vital supplier of food in Takoma Park. I am 78 and my husband is 86 years old and in past snow emergencies being able to walk to the COOP was essential for us. The existence of the COOP should not be endangered by an oversized project. The COOP is a vital part of our community. When other small communities try to entice grocery stores to move into their city, our City of Takoma Park is favoring a scrupulous developer. There will be no subsidized housing and no diversity in this project. The majority of the citizens is for development of this available space next to the COOP, but in a more environmentally and socially acceptable way.

Best regards
Gertrud W. Mergner M.D.
Wolfgang J. Mergner M.D., Ph.D.

From: [Dickel, Stephanie](#)
To: [Esther Siegel](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction Concerns
Date: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 11:29:47 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. Elza Hisel-McCoy is the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and he is out of the office until January 6, 2020. I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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Please contact Elza if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,
Stephanie



Stephanie Marsnick Dickel
Regulatory Supervisor, Area 1

Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org
301.495.4527



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From: Esther Siegel <esiegel2@igc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 10:04 AM
To: Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction Concerns

Dear Ms. Dickel,

We are writing to express our many concerns about the proposed development at Takoma Junction. We live in Takoma Park and also deliver local fruit and vegetables from our farm, to the TPSS Food Co-op.

In this holiday season, one can turn to any Hallmark channel and watch a sappy Christmas movie. The

theme many of the movies (except the ones about princes and princesses in small made up countries!) is about small town spirit and a developer who wants to “improve” the town by bringing in what ultimately becomes inappropriate and unwanted development. The lesson is always that the residents love their community, their local stores and Inns and while they don’t oppose improvements, fight hard to preserve the spirit and intimacy of their town.

If the current development goes forward with the lay-by, we fear we simply will not be able to continue our business relationship with the Co-op grocery store – unloading of goods in a timely and safe manner will become too difficult. This distresses us deeply from our business perspective but also from our long-held dedication to a thriving local food cooperative for our community. We have been delivering to the Co-op since it’s beginning! Other distributors, especially those with tractor trailers, have testified that they might not continue to deliver to the Co-op, thus making it hard for the Co-op to survive in its current location. Communities around the country would love to have a Co-op like ours in their communities and communities that do, like in Vermont, support their Co-op to ensure that they thrive.

It is no accident that these heartwarming movie themes touch us during this holiday of good cheer, compassion and community.

Takoma Park has come “off screen” over these last years, struggling with tension between some of our elected officials who seem to have lost sight of the value of the uniqueness and diversity of our community in favor of the “developer” coming in from the outside to bring their profit oriented vision for Takoma Junction. It is also disturbing that this for profit development is on public land.

During these years, several disturbing issues starkly show that this development concept is just wrong. Too many revisions demonstrate that this development just won’t work. The concerns include traffic, exit plans from various streets, the small size of the Junction that will not support a large development, failed traffic reconfigurations, concerns from Takoma Park’s Fire Chief, the absurd lay-by delivery and garbage plan, and so on. Every time NDC submits yet another “revision”, it feels like constantly trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. Their vision is just not compatible with the Junction and to reconfigure it would mean a total reconfigure of everything there, including the traffic paths. At some point, it must be recognized that changing everything, is just not practical or wanted.

Additionally, a development of this sort will impact the racial equity in our community, and threaten to displace the Takoma Park Food Co-op that is a shining example of a business with a diverse staff, that provides a living wage and health insurance to all its employees and is the only grocery store in Takoma Park that is used by all incomes (it supports SNAP, WIC and other government supplemental food programs);

ignoring the need for public space for public use and good; having a detrimental environmental impact by, among other concerns, displacing trees and creating water runoffs and erosion.

Many alternative plans have been proposed that would avoid the concerns mentioned above. They come from community residents who value and want to preserve the uniqueness and integrity of Takoma Park.

A more practical plan will make your job easier because it will factor in the concerns already raised by HDC that unanimously said that the current design is incompatible with the historic district.

HDC’s report said:

- The building is “way too big,” “too tall,” “too long” and “too massive.” It reads as a “very large office building.” It needs both to be made lower, and to be broken up either into two separate buildings (a one-story building was suggested as part of this), or into a design that presents as two separate buildings.

- In terms of the façade design, the developer was told “you’ve made a mess of things.” Overall, the design was described as “slick” and therefore “incompatible with the historic character of this part of Takoma Park.”
- The developer’s claim that the first story has to be 20 feet high to attract businesses is “false,” given the “thriving commercial district” down the street in “small, contextual buildings.”
- The glass elevator tower is “too contemporary,” “truly terrible,” “completely out of place,” “unnecessary,” and “has to go.”
- The canopy is too high to be functional.
- The historic art deco structure in BY Morrison Park should remain, and the roads should not be reconfigured because they have historic context.
- Wider sidewalks and more public space are needed. A Commissioner noted that public space is “very, very important for the community.”
- A Commissioner lamented the planned removal of 9 out of the 12 existing American Elms, a species “in short supply.” This Commissioner noted that it is “highly ironic” to cut down trees to put in a garage with a green roof.
- A loading area at the front is not consistent with Takoma Park’s historical context, and is not “conducive” for pedestrian areas. The Chair of the Commission stated, “the lay-by is an abomination.”

We implore you to reject the current development plan before you presented by NDC and recommend that a new vision be thoughtfully explored that truly reflects the preservation of our unique and so special town. Watch one of the sappy Hallmark Christmas movies that reflects where small-town America’s heart is.

Thank you,

Esther Siegel
Michael Tabor
Takoma Park
301 587-2248

--

Michael and Esther share this email.
Please check the signature to determine who it comes from.
Thanks.

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Larry Himelfarb](#); [Anderson, Casey](#)
Cc: [Tom Hucker](#); councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Balmer, Emily](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction development plan
Date: Friday, December 13, 2019 11:04:38 AM

Dear Mr. Himelfarb,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Larry Himelfarb <lhimelfarb@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 10:28 AM

To: Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: Tom Hucker <tomhucker@gmail.com>; councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Takoma Junction development plan

Good morning,

I live in Takoma Park and am walking distance to the Takoma Junction where NDC is planning a large development that will affect the historic neighborhood and the TP Coop where we shop.

I'm for developing the existing parking lot next to the Coop and fire station, but believe that the current NDC plan due its size would imperil pedestrians (especially children on their way to school

and back), increase traffic in an already congested trifecta of state roads, and negatively impact the Coop and the ability for the fire station to operate efficiently.

One of the issues is the so-called lay-by, which at one point was labeled an "abomination" by the Planning Board. This would cause more traffic backups on the intersection and also affect neighboring streets and worsening our climate by trucks waiting in line to deliver goods to the Coop and other planned stores.

Additionally, the current NDC plan does not provide much public space in a plot that is public land.

Many thanks for your attention to this matter.

Larry Himelfarb
16 Valley View Ave
Takoma Park (Ward One)
301-509-3668

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Thom Wolf](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction Development
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:56:13 PM

Dear Mr. Wolf,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

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At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be

heard by the Planning Board within 90 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

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Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Thom Wolf <wolf.photo.video@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 2, 2019 3:04 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction Development

Elza,

I'm a 30 year resident of Sycamore Ave in Takoma Park. Ever since I have lived here the city has been talking about developing the parking lot next to the CoOp, which they shouldn't have bought in the first place.

Then about 25 years ago the Coop and Mr. Evans the owner of the corner lot made a deal and the Coop moved to its present location. The City had nothing to do with the deal and they have been pissed off ever since.

When the Coop opened and the loading dock was on Sycamore Ave. it didn't work, people were parking on Sycamore and the trucks were a traffic jam entering and leaving Sycamore. Then the city rented parking spaces to the Coop and because of public pressure the loading dock switched to the

parking lot side. Between the garbage dumpsters and the big trucks delivering the parking lot is very busy and now the fireman are selling Christmas trees and the people are parking.

During the year the parking lot is used for parties, food trucks, tiny house demonstrations, 4th of July parade staging and many more community activities.

Now the City Manager wants to build a large development in the parking lot and move the delivery trucks to a cut in the sidewalk on Carroll Ave, with room for one large or two small trucks.

Takoma Junction is already a mess, come and visit any afternoon and watch the bedlam of cars, buses, bikes, walkers, school kids and honestly tell me that Semi-trucks unloading is a safe addition. As a resident of the street adjoining the Coop and the lot my concerns should be taken into account and the safety of the people using the intersection protected.

The neighborhood is not against development but we are against development that threatens our neighbor the Coop. Eliminating parking and loading docks will kill the Coop.

A store or two added to the lot is fine but a 30 ft.high building with a parking lot underground is crazy.

As taxpayers, we say NO to the City's fiasco.

Thanks, Thom Wolf 7011 Sycamore Ave. 301-270-5832

--

Thom Wolf, 301-270-5832, wolf.photo.video@gmail.com

NEW WEBSITE: www.thomwolf.com

Please review me on [Facebook](#)

From: Hisel-McCoy_Elza
To: [Kathie Hart](mailto:Kathie.Hart@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Wright.Gwen](mailto:Wright.Gwen@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Anderson.Casey](mailto:Anderson.Casey@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Fani-Gonzalez.Natali](mailto:Fani-Gonzalez.Natali@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Cichy.Gerald](mailto:Cichy.Gerald@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Patterson.Tina](mailto:Patterson.Tina@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Verma.Partap](mailto:Verma.Partap@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Dickel.Stephanie](mailto:Dickel.Stephanie@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Councilmember.Hucker](mailto:Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Councilmember.Riener](mailto:Councilmember.Riener@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Councilmember.Jawando](mailto:Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov); [Councilmember.Glass](mailto:Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Cc: [Elza.Hisel-McCoy](mailto:Elza.Hisel-McCoy@montgomerycountymd.gov)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction Project
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:49:43 AM

Dear Ms. Hart,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plan. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at <https://nam03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://www.montgomeryplanning.org/%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7Cemily.balmer%40montgomeryplanning.org%7Cd1cb919f9d14a4c773d08d77cb7063a5%7Cc9061e0c2d4c4c1cbef039b68c05816%7C09%7C09%7C637114997829590828&data=FcNam697u5KdIT3ZyOJ6XngloJfgr5CITJLskp0Q%3D&reserved=0> by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (<https://nam03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://www.montgomeryplanning.org/%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7Cemily.balmer%40montgomeryplanning.org%7Cd1cb919f9d14a4c773d08d77cb7063a5%7Cc9061e0c2d4c4c1cbef039b68c05816%7C09%7C09%7C637114997829590828&data=FcNam697u5KdIT3ZyOJ6XngloJfgr5CITJLskp0Q%3D&reserved=0>) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-ride the City Council's recommendation only with a 4-5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
 Chief
 Area One
 Montgomery County Planning Department
 MNCPPC
 8787 Georgia Avenue
 Silver Spring, MD 20910
 301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

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

From: Kathie Hart <kathiehart@gmail.com>
 Sent: Saturday, December 7, 2019 6:10 PM
 To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riener@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albomoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elsch@montgomerycountymd.gov
 Subject: Takoma Junction Project

Hello,

My husband and I have lived in Takoma Park for 32 years. We value the community and support many of the changes that have made our community a more vibrant place to live. And as much as we support construction at the Takoma junction site, we do not and cannot support a building that is too large for the site and the neighborhood. We cannot support a business that doesn't work in co-operation with the Takoma Park Co-op. We cannot support a business that will necessitate major changes to an already overcrowded roadway especially during morning and evening commuting time.

Both the Montgomery County Historical commission, MCDOT and Montgomery County Parks and Planning are all on record voicing serious concerns about the size of the proposed building and the effect of the proposed driveway, and the proposed lay-by on traffic.

I ask that you use your vote and your influence to the conversation and that you insist on a proposal that takes into consideration the needs and concerns of those in the city.

Thanks for your consideration.

Kathie Hart
 Laird Hart
 Willow Ave.
 Takoma Park, Md.

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Carla Perlo](#); [Wright, Gwen](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Fani-Gonzalez, Natali](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elich@montgomerycountymd.gov
Cc: byrnehk@starpower.net; [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:50:52 AM

Dear Ms. Perlo,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Carla Perlo <cperlo@danceplace.org>

Sent: Saturday, December 7, 2019 7:39 PM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Rierner@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov
Cc: byrnehk@starpower.net
Subject: Takoma Junction

Dear Community Leaders,
I have lived at 134 Grant Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912 for 38 years. I cherish our community and want to make sure that we keep it safe and livable. The food co-op is a very important reason why we continue to live in our home. It serves as a great place for us to purchase high quality healthy food in walking distance to our home.

PLEASE be mindful of the amount of traffic and congestion a new development will create in an already very very busy intersection right at the top of our street. Have you ever tried to do East/West/North or South between 8-9 or 4-6 at the intersection of 410 and Carroll. It is already so congested. We can only imagine what will happen with more development at that intersection. We know growth and development is important and inevitable; however please have a solid plan for keeping the co-op running smoothly and how you will deal with the traffic.

thank you!

Carla Perlo

--

Carla Perlo
Growth & Change President & CEO
Dance Place Founding Director Emerita

Cell 240-353-2418

<http://www.danceplace.org/about/staff/carla-perlo-consulting/>

"To Think is to Create"- Hyman M. Perlo

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: susandennis@rcn.com; [Wright, Gwen](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Fani-Gonzalez, Natali](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Folden, Matthew](#); Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Councilmember Riemer](#); [Councilmember Jawando](#); [Councilmember Glass](#); [Councilmember Alborno](#); [Marc Elrich](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction
Date: Monday, December 9, 2019 9:52:30 AM

Dear Ms. Huffman,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: susandennis@rcn.com <susandennis@rcn.com>

Sent: Sunday, December 8, 2019 7:51 PM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; .Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember Riemer <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Jawando <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Glass <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Alborno

<Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Marc Elrich
<Marc.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov>

Subject: Takoma Junction

Dear fellow residents of Montgomery County:

I am writing with regards to the Takoma Junction Development project. I have major concern about the project: concerns about pedestrian and road safety, environmental impact, traffic congestion, the future of the Co-op and the lack of public space in the plans. And I have concerns about Takoma Park's history as a welcoming and diverse community and the fact that this development would be welcoming only to the residents who could afford to shop and purchase items. Lastly I have concerns about the size and height of the proposed structure which in no way reflects other businesses in Takoma Park.

Despite the strong opposition to the project expressed at work sessions, listening sessions, open houses, online surveys and public comments, our city government has gone along with its plans to build a huge retail space with underground parking at a busy intersection. When I attended an open house, listening session and three council meetings opposition to the project far outweighed support, yet here we are.

At this point you are our only hope of getting the city government to reign in this misguided project. I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Susan Huffman, Takoma Park resident

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Michele Puryear](#); [Wright, Gwen](#); [PeterK@takomaparkmd.gov](#)
Cc: [Anderson, Casey](#); [Fani-Gonzalez, Natali](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Folden, Matthew](#); [Mark Puryear](#); [Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov](#); [Marc.Erich@montgomerycountymd.gov](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Park and Proposal from Neighborhood Development Company
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 5:00:23 PM

Dear Ms. Puryear,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

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The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Michele Puryear <mapuryear@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, December 1, 2019 10:31 PM

To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; PeterK@takomaparkmd.gov

Cc: Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Michele Puryear <mapuryear@gmail.com>; Mark Puryear <mpuryear@gmail.com>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elich@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Takoma Park and Proposal from Neighborhood Development Company

December 1, 2019

Dear Director Wright, Chair and Vice Chair and Board Members and Mr. Peter Kovar:

My husband and I have lived in Takoma Park for almost 28 years and began shopping at Takoma Park/Silver Spring Cooperative (TPSS Co-op) upon our move to this area. We visit the Co-op daily, as the current location affords the current residents the ability to walk to an affordable store.

We are concerned about the current proposal from the NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (NDC) for redevelopment at the TPSS Co-op site. The process evaluation has lacked transparency and responsiveness to community needs. Opponents of the NDC proposal are in the clear majority in public testimony, emails to the City, and in over 1500 petition signatures. However, City management has refused to alter direction or call a referendum. There are ample alternative development options that would allow the Co-op to flourish, provide for public space, and not overburden the Junction with additional traffic. In addition:

1. The proposed NDC development plan is too big for the location. Please visit the site to visualize the proposed structures in the proposed NDC development plan in the context of current Takoma Park architecture and highway infrastructure.
2. The Co-op is one of the very few institutions that represent ethnic diversity in our city. Ethnic diversity is an essential aspect of our neighborhood and it is why we chose to buy our home in Takoma Park.
3. The proposed development would have a direct impact on the Co-op: the proposal creates limited space for the Co-op; restricted delivery access; and increases the rent. All of these factors likely would force the Co-op to close. NDC is not known for its respect for neighborhood needs or history or culture.
4. The proposed changes to the highway to accommodate the NDC proposal would cause increased traffic and hinder the flow. There would be significant environmental impact from the highway changes.
5. Finally, the proposal from NDC would be detrimental to the small businesses surrounding the Co-op.

Sincerely, Michele Puryear
7419 Piney Branch Rd
Takoma Park, MD

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [MARGUERITE CYR](#)
Cc: [Kronenberg, Robert](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Park Junction Development Plan
Date: Friday, December 13, 2019 11:05:36 AM

Dear Ms. Cyr,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: MARGUERITE CYR <mhcy@verizon.net>

Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 10:40 AM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>

Subject: Takoma Park Junction Development Plan

Dear Ms. Hisel-McCoy,

I am a long time resident of Takoma Park. I am writing to share my concerns about the proposed NDC development of the City of Takoma Park's parking lot next to the TP Coop at the junction of 410 and Carroll Ave. Unbelievably, the Coop is not able to discuss its own issues due to some sort of gag order/agreement so I am speaking on their behalf and as a concerned citizen. The Coop, of which I am a member and therefore an owner, anchored this community by bringing its business and good paying union jobs w benefits to TP. We cheered its arrival. It is our only walkable

grocery store. Over the years, the development surrounding the Junction has prospered and expanded as has the Coop. The Coop generated foot traffic which then attracted other small businesses to the area and now a once-dead intersection is thriving. We now have a bakery, an electric vehicle fueling station, a dry cleaners, restaurant, laundromat, veterinarian, Historic Takoma Headquarters, audio-shop, and a postal/Fed-Ex/UPS drop off business along Carroll Ave. The City Parking lot provides parking spaces for all these businesses, the selling of Christmas trees by the Fire Department around the corner, the Green Festival, food trucks, and musical performances. It is our best central, open and large community space.

There is a bus stop and a bike shares station there as well. The parking lot is backed by healthy chestnut oaks that would be taken down if the development goes through at a time when the oaks in are area are being devastated by the ambrosia beetle. These trees perform a valuable service in storm water management to the neighborhood below. Their removal will be devastating.

The Coop survives because they receive their deliveries by multiple huge trucks that need space to do so. The contract between NDC and the City of TP was to include a viable delivery plan but instead the design proposes a lay-by that will not meet its needs and it will cause increasing back ups on Carroll and 410. The traffic at the Junction is legendary and it creates overflow through the neighborhood off New Hampshire Ave., Carroll Ave. and 410. I know because I live just 2 blocks away from the Junction. Jamming up the Junction with truck deliveries will just make it worse.

There will be more congestion, more global warming emissions and a subsequent decrease in air quality will result. Ironically, the bike shares station, a crosswalk and the bus station will go away. Cars entering and exiting the proposed parking garage will add to congestion and cause delays. Emergency vehicles will be hampered.

Pedestrians will not be able to easily negotiate past the lay-by. The truck drivers will not be able to see the walking children. As most communities attempt to decrease dependency on cars, it does does not make any sense to impede pedestrians, take away bus stops, bike shares and crosswalks.

The NDC building design is huge and out of scale with the neighborhood. It would improve New Hampshire Ave., but it will be an eyesore at the Junction. Expensive parking, a failed delivery plan, a failed traffic junction and a City Council that does not listen to the majority of its residents who have made it clear through testimony and petitions that they oppose this development have all conspired to create a plan that is a disaster for Takoma Park. I can't believe that it has gotten this far. I pray that common sense will prevail in the coming months as this plan moves forward to what I hope will be termination of this development plan by NDC.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider my perspective.

Sincerely,

Marguerite Cyr
403 Boyd Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912
301 801 0750

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: matthewstarkrubin@gmail.com
Subject: Takoma Junction
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:59:39 PM

Dear Mathew,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

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When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: sgagnon11@yahoo.com
Subject: Takoma Junction
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:58:30 PM

Dear Mr. Gagnon,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: jillgay.rh@gmail.com
Subject: Takoma Junction
Date: Thursday, December 5, 2019 4:57:33 PM

Dear Ms. Gay,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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Sincerely,

Elza

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Chief
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Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: mwanderson@consultant.com
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction
Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 10:20:54 AM

Dear Martha,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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Elza

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Chief
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8787 Georgia Avenue
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301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org



October 21, 2020

Mr. Andre Futrell, District Engineer
State Highway Administration
9300 Kenilworth Avenue
Greenbelt MD 20770

RE: Takoma Junction Traffic Impact Study (TIS)
SHA Tracking # 19-AP-MO-008-xx (Montgomery County)

Dear Mr. Futrell:

Please accept this letter into the record of the above-referenced TIS, which I am submitting on behalf of my client, the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Food Coop located at 201 Ethan Allan Avenue in Takoma Park.

We have become aware of your letter dated August 28, 2020 to Mr. Dorr, and want to briefly address Comment No. 3 on page 2, which reads in full as follows:

For the response to TFAD Comment # 11, it states that the Co-Op's site access will change to be from Sycamore Avenue only. Does space exist on the site to provide circulation for two-way traffic, and how will this change in access be coordinated with the Co-op?

Please be advised that to date, NDC has not discussed its suggested closure of the Co-op's access to MD 410, or any changes to circulation plans within the Co-op's parking lot, with Co-op representatives. The Co-op learned of NDC's suggestion by reviewing NDC's correspondence with SHA.

We also want to note two significant operational concerns that are raised by NDC's suggested change to the Co-op's parking lot. First, eliminating direct and easy access to or from MD 410 can be expected to reduce patronage of the Co-op. Additionally, patronage may be reduced by any change in access or circulation that results in a reduction of the existing number of parking spaces.

These are significant concerns for the Co-op, given that Co-op revenue depends heavily on the accessibility of our parking lot from MD 410 and the availability of free parking. Therefore, we trust that SHA will not entertain NDC's suggestions without involving the Co-op.

Sincerely,

Michele McDaniel Rosenfeld

Cc: Mr. Kwesi Woodroffe, SHA – Access Management
Mr. Scott Holcomb, SHA – TFAD
Mr. Elza Hisel-Mccoy, Montgomery Planning
Ms. Katie Mencarini, Montgomery Planning

301-204-0913 | 1 Research Court Suite 450 Rockville MD 20850 | rosenfeldlaw@mail.com



Michael Tabor and Esther Siegel
 706 Erie Ave.
 Takoma Park, MD 20912
 301 587-2248 * esiegel2@igc.org

December 17, 2019

Elza Hisel-McCoy
 Division Chief, Area 1
 Montgomery County Planning Dept
 8787 Georgia Ave.
 Silver Spring, MD 20912

Dear Division Chief Hisel-McCoy,

We are writing to express our many concerns about the proposed development at Takoma Junction. We live in Takoma Park and also deliver local fruit and vegetables from our farm, to the TPSS Food Co-op.

In this holiday season, one can turn to any Hallmark channel and watch a sappy Christmas movie. The theme many of the movies (except the ones about princes and princesses in small made up countries!) is about small town spirit and a developer who wants to “improve” the town by bringing in what ultimately becomes inappropriate and unwanted development. The lesson is always that the residents love their community, their local stores and Inns and while they don’t oppose improvements, fight hard to preserve the spirit and intimacy of their town.

If the current development goes forward with the lay-by, we fear we simply will not be able to continue our business relationship with the Co-op grocery store – unloading of goods in a timely and safe manner will become too difficult. This distresses us deeply from our business perspective but also from our long-held dedication to a thriving local food cooperative for our community. We have been delivering to the Co-op since it’s beginning! Other distributors, especially those with tractor trailers, have testified that they might not continue to deliver to the Co-op, thus making it hard for the Co-op to survive in its current location. Communities around the country would love to have a Co-op like ours in their communities and communities that do, like in Vermont, support their Co-op to ensure that they thrive.

It is no accident that these heartwarming movie themes touch us during this holiday of good cheer, compassion and community.

Takoma Park has come “off screen” over these last years, struggling with tension between some of their elected officials who seem to have lost sight of the value of the uniqueness and diversity of our community in favor of the “developer” coming in from

E.SIEGEL/M.TABOR TAKOMA JUNCTION CONCERNS 12/17/19

the outside to bring their profit oriented vision for Takoma Junction. It is also disturbing that this development is on public land.

During these years, **several disturbing issues starkly show that this development concept is just wrong.** Too many revisions demonstrate **that this development just won't work.** The concerns include traffic, exit plans from various streets, the small size of the Junction that will not support a large development, failed traffic reconfigurations, concerns from Takoma Park's Fire Chief, the absurd lay-by delivery and garbage plan, and so on.

Additionally, a development of this sort will impact the racial equity in our community, and threaten to displace the Takoma Park Food Co-op that is a shining example of a business with a diverse staff, that provides a living wage and health insurance to all its employees and is the only grocery store in Takoma Park that is used by all incomes (it supports SNAP, WIC and other government supplemental food programs); ignoring the need for public space for public use and good; having a detrimental environmental impact by, among other concerns, displacing trees and creating water runoffs and erosion.

Many alternative plans have been proposed that would avoid the concerns mentioned above. They come from community residents who value and want to preserve the uniqueness and integrity of Takoma Park.

Every time NDC submits yet another "revision", it feels like constantly trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. Their vision is just not compatible with the Junction and to reconfigure it would mean a total reconfigure of everything there, including the traffic paths. At some point, it must be recognized that changing everything, is just not practical or wanted.

A more practical plan will make your job easier because it will factor in the concerns already raised by HDC that unanimously said that the current design is incompatible with the historic district.

HDC's report said:

- The building is "way too big," "too tall," "too long" and "too massive." It reads as a "very large office building." It needs both to be made lower, and to be broken up either into two separate buildings (a one-story building was suggested as part of this), or into a design that presents as two separate buildings.
- In terms of the façade design, the developer was told "you've made a mess of things." Overall, the design was described as "slick" and therefore "incompatible with the historic character of this part of Takoma Park."
- The developer's claim that the first story has to be 20 feet high to attract businesses is "false," given the "thriving commercial district" down the street in "small, contextual buildings."
- The glass elevator tower is "too contemporary," "truly terrible," "completely out of place," "unnecessary," and "has to go."

- The canopy is too high to be functional.
- The historic art deco structure in BY Morrison Park should remain, and the roads should not be reconfigured because they have historic context.
- Wider sidewalks and more public space are needed. A Commissioner noted that public space is “very, very important for the community.”
- A Commissioner lamented the planned removal of 9 out of the 12 existing American Elms, a species “in short supply.” This Commissioner noted that it is “highly ironic” to cut down trees to put in a garage with a green roof.
- A loading area at the front is not consistent with Takoma Park’s historical context, and is not “conducive” for pedestrian areas. The Chair of the Commission stated, “the lay-by is an abomination.”

We implore you to reject the current development plan before you presented by NDC and recommend that a new vision be thoughtfully explored that truly reflects the preservation of our unique and so special town. Watch one of the sappy Hallmark Christmas movies that reflects where small-town America’s heart is.

Thank you,

Esther Siegel
Michael Tabor
Takoma Park
301 587-2248

Eliza,

I am writing to express my
opposition to the Takoma Park

Junction development. It is
a bad proposal that will
increase traffic congestion,
decrease safety. It will
displace minority owned bus-
inesses undermining racial
equity. It also will undercut
efforts to combat climate change.

Pablo Picasso 1881-1973
LE MOULIN LA GALETTE
21 1/2 x 28 in / 54.5 x 71 cm

Please deny this project.
Jimmy DANKAS 7005 Woodland Ave, TP, MD 20912

CAPITAL DISTRICT 200

14 DEC 2015 AM 4 L



Printed in Ireland

PRIERAT CARDS, GREENWICH CT 06830

Eliza Hisel-McCoy, Area 1 Chief
Montgomery County Planning
Department
8787 Georgia Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20910

CAPITAL DISTRICT 208

ATTACHMENT 5.F

03 JAN 2020 PM 4 L

Dear Mr. Hesel-Mc Coy,

Thank you very much
for your work at MCPPC

Please do not grant
yet another extension to
NOC. Please do not

approve the deeply
flawed NOC proposal.

Could you please address
racial equity impacts?

And please reject the

20910-371687

FAWCETT COLUMBINE NEW YORK

Elza Hesel-Mc Coy

Area 1 Chief

MCPPC

8787 Geomin Ave.

Silver Spring, MD

20912

lay-by. It will shut down
down! Elizabeth Taylor



International Labour Organization
Organisation internationale du Travail
Organización Internacional del Trabajo

CAPITAL DISTRICT 208

02 JAN 2020 PM 6 L

Hello Gwen - I'm writing as a
concerned citizen of Takoma Park
about the proposed NOC development
at the Junction. Please do NOT approve
any plan with a 'lag-by' or that
increases vehicle traffic & takes
away crosswalks, bus stops, etc.
We're counting on you to help us,
the concerned public, keep our
communities safe + accessible.

o ILO Geneva

Placing employment at the centre of the fight against poverty

Reconocer el papel primordial del empleo en la lucha contra la pobreza

Placer l'emploi au centre de la lutte contre la pauvreté

5.F - 100 ilo.org/communication

Gwen Wright

MoCo Planning Dept

8787 GA Ave

Silver Spg, MD

Thank you
Gwen Wright
Takoma Park





Dear Ms. Dickel,

American Farmland Trust

I am a resident of Takoma Park Md and have fought for years to assure a safe, socially responsible, and appropriate development plan for our Takoma Junction. The current plan is none of the above. Please consider ~~it~~ these objections, and deny the plan.

Sincerely,
Joanne Royce

2013 Woodland Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

To find out how you can help save America's farmland, call 1.800.431.1499 or visit www.farmland.org.

Stephanie Dickel
Montgomery Co. Planning Dept
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20912

Dear Ms. Wright,

American Farmland Trust

I am a resident of Takoma Park and have been fighting for years to assure a safe and appropriate development for Takoma Junction - in our small, largely residential community. The current plan is neither safe nor appropriate. Please deny it. Sincerely,

Joanne Royce

2013 Woodland Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

To find out how you can help save America's farmland, call 1.800.431.1499 or visit www.farmland.org.

Gwen Wright
Montgomery Co. Planning Dept
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20912

Dear Ms. Hisel-McCoy,

American Farmland Trust

I am a resident of Takoma Park Md and, like many other residents, deeply opposed to the current development plan for our Takoma Junction. It is inappropriate and unsafe for our small, largely residential community. Please consider the plan

5.F-103

1. 11. and 10. 11. it.

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Area/Chief
Montgomery Co. Planning Dept
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20912



September 30, 2020

Elza Hisel-McCoy
Chief, Area 1 Division
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20912

Subject: Takoma Junction Development Project, Takoma Park, Maryland

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy,

I am submitting this letter to add my comments to the body of comments you have received regarding the Takoma Junction development project in Takoma Park, Maryland. First, I would like to say that I strongly support the proposed development proposed for the area known as Takoma Junction in Takoma Park, Maryland. As the Planning Board reviews the latest version of the Neighborhood Development Company's (NDC) design plans for the Takoma Junction project, it should be known that there is strong and solid support for the development at Takoma Junction to take place, both amongst Takoma Park residents, and among Takoma Park's City Council.

This development will act as a catalyst to revive an area that has been very underutilized for a very long time. It is not uncommon for one or more storefronts in the existing commercial buildings along Carroll Avenue to be empty. Currently, one storefront is empty and has been empty for a long time. The proposed development will bring in new businesses to the area that thousands of residents within a one-mile radius will be able to walk to and enjoy. Others will be able to bicycle to this area. The businesses currently located at the Takoma Junction will most likely benefit from the increased foot traffic that the proposed development creates, making this part of Takoma Park more vibrant for all. The new businesses will also create new jobs.

Some residents have concerns about increased traffic if the development proceeds. You probably know that both the City of Takoma Park, and NDC both hired traffic consultants who proposed, and presented multiple options on how to improve the existing configuration of the intersection at Philadelphia and Carroll Avenues. I was present when the two traffic consultants presented their traffic plans to Takoma Park's City Council, and without question, there are options to make the intersection at Takoma Junction much safer and more functional.

Thousands of Takoma Park residents and I look forward to the development and re-vitalization of the Takoma Junction area. I look forward to your moving this project forward, after your review, so the remaining steps required by NDC can be completed in a timely manner.

I thank the Planning Commission for your work.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Reust". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael Reust
227 Park Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

email: msreust.dc@gmail.com

From: [Dickel, Stephanie](#)
To: [Esther Siegel](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction Concerns
Date: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 11:29:47 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. Elza Hisel-McCoy is the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and he is out of the office until January 6, 2020. I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at www.montgomeryplanning.org/development by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may overrule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please contact Elza if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,
Stephanie



Stephanie Marsnick Dickel
Regulatory Supervisor, Area 1

Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org
301.495.4527



Let's Plan Our Future. Together.  **THRIVE**
THRIVEMONTGOMERY.COM MONTGOMERY 2050

From: Esther Siegel <esiegel2@igc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 10:04 AM
To: Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction Concerns

Dear Ms. Dickel,

We are writing to express our many concerns about the proposed development at Takoma Junction. We live in Takoma Park and also deliver local fruit and vegetables from our farm, to the TPSS Food Co-op.

In this holiday season, one can turn to any Hallmark channel and watch a sappy Christmas movie. The

theme many of the movies (except the ones about princes and princesses in small made up countries!) is about small town spirit and a developer who wants to “improve” the town by bringing in what ultimately becomes inappropriate and unwanted development. The lesson is always that the residents love their community, their local stores and Inns and while they don’t oppose improvements, fight hard to preserve the spirit and intimacy of their town.

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During these years, several disturbing issues starkly show that this development concept is just wrong. Too many revisions demonstrate that this development just won’t work. The concerns include traffic, exit plans from various streets, the small size of the Junction that will not support a large development, failed traffic reconfigurations, concerns from Takoma Park’s Fire Chief, the absurd lay-by delivery and garbage plan, and so on. Every time NDC submits yet another “revision”, it feels like constantly trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. Their vision is just not compatible with the Junction and to reconfigure it would mean a total reconfigure of everything there, including the traffic paths. At some point, it must be recognized that changing everything, is just not practical or wanted.

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Thank you,

Esther Siegel
Michael Tabor
Takoma Park
301 587-2248

--

Michael and Esther share this email.
Please check the signature to determine who it comes from.
Thanks.

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Jimmy Daukas](#)
Cc: [Balmer, Emily](#)
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction
Date: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 10:10:27 AM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)

Hello Ms. Royce,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

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When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza



Elza Hisel-McCoy
Chief, Area 1 Division

Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
301.495.2115



Let's Plan Our Future. Together. THRIVEMONTGOMERY.COM

From: Jimmy Daukas <jdaukas@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, December 15, 2019 9:26 PM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>

Subject: Takoma Junction

Elza,

For 26 years I have lived on Woodland Ave. in Takoma Park. I am writing to you because I am opposed to the NDCs proposed development of Takoma Junction.

The Junction is full of small minority owned businesses. Due to NDC's current proposal rents in the

Junction are rising and threatening the existing businesses.

The loss of delivery space and parking is threatening our one walkable grocery store TPSS coop. The coop pays living wages and full benefits to its diverse staff plus providing a thriving fabulous grocery store that increases the quality of all our lives.

This is public land that should be for public good not another expensive restaurant that the majority of residence cannot afford.

The development will also impact climate change with increase exhaust, soil erosion and run off on to Columbia with the removal of trees for the development.

The traffic and congestion on 410 has been a problem for years. It is dangerous for walkers, bikers, children and the elderly as it is. However if NDC creates a Lay-by on 410, an exit from their proposed parking garage onto 410 at a blind corner and removing the Grant Ave crosswalk pedestrians and bikers will suffer.

The Fire Chief spoke at a city counsel meeting and stated that the lay-by will endanger public safety because if a semi is parked the fire trucks will be delayed in answering an emergency.

This development is too large on too small a space next to an already dangerous and congested highway 410.

Please oppose this proposal as designed.

Thank you for your attention,

Meg Royce

From: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
To: [Ballo, Rebecca](#); [Balmer, Emily](#); [Bogdan, Grace](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Gatling, Tsaiquan](#); [Mencarini, Katherine](#)
Subject: FW: Takoma Junction comment
Date: Friday, August 14, 2020 3:01:35 PM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)



Elza Hisel-McCoy

Chief, DownCounty Planning Division

Montgomery County Planning Department
 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
 301.495.2115



WE'RE MOVING!

THE NEW PARK AND PLANNING HEADQUARTERS WILL BE LOCATED AT
 2425 REEDIE DRIVE, WHEATON, MD 20902 IN AUGUST 2020.

From: duvalltm@gmail.com <duvalltm@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2020 1:21 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Takoma Junction comment

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

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy:

Previously I wrote to you with concerns regarding the Columbia Ave. side of the proposed development at Takoma Junction (plans 120190150 and 820190090). The other side of the proposed development concerns me, too.

Do no harm

I would like to suggest that a development on public land should be designed to “do no harm” or at least to offset the harms to individuals with equivalent benefits to the same individuals. This is especially the case with the proposed Takoma Junction development, which will not provide an essential service currently missing from Takoma Park or even from the historic area. Its benefits are lagniappe, and half—the office space—won’t make the area permanently more walkable except in the unlikely case that the offices will provide, in perpetuity, services frequently used by nearby residents. Indeed, the development will replace a parking lot and woods that for decades have “done no harm.” Thus, people line up to live in this area, despite the expense.

In my other letter I listed harms specific to Sycamore, Columbia, and Poplar Avenues—although some also pertain to other residential streets. Here I would like to highlight other problems that the proposed development would create.

Emergency response: more deaths?

The most obvious harm is worse traffic on streets that already are overburdened, as the developer's own study notes. Most seriously: *clogged traffic actually costs lives*. This danger is especially because the fire station next to the development would be greatly affected. A much-cited and influential study of traffic calming in Austin estimated that adding only 30 seconds to an emergency vehicle's trip would mean that 18 percent fewer of the victims of sudden cardiac arrest would survive each year (177 instead of 215).^{*} Seconds matter, and a clogged intersection would add those fatal seconds. The danger would be even greater if the emergency vehicle needed to travel down Sycamore, Columbia, and Poplar.

Tellingly, the developer's statement of justification and traffic do not address the development's effects on emergency response—except for their own property. Surely this issue deserves serious consideration.

Dangers to pedestrians

- My experience as a driver and pedestrian in DC is that pulling out of a below-grade garage onto a busy street is dangerous to pedestrians and even more so to people going faster on bikes and scooters.
- Left turns into the proposed garage also seem dangerous to pedestrians, cyclists, and scooter users because of 1) the number of factors for drivers to consider at that specific point in the street and 2) reduced visibility due to backed-up cars to the west of the garage entrance.

'Ordinary' traffic problems worsened

I noted in my other letter that narrow, crowded residential streets will see more cut-throughs and parking by visitors. Other harms include:

- the increased time that all drivers will spend on Ethan Allen and Carroll
 - increasing noise and air pollution
 - arriving late for appointments, school, and work
- This will reduce the attraction of visiting existing businesses in the historic area.

Lay-by problems

- All trucks except those coming from the west or proceeding to the east will need to somehow turn around on streets not made for this, increasing traffic jams and cut-throughs, including by trucks.
- In actual practice, multiple trucks are likely to arrive simultaneously (for example, due to traffic delays elsewhere). This seems destined to create huge problems periodically.
- Trucks pulling out of the lay-by must somehow work into the line of traffic in a highly congested area, congesting it further and adding complexity to an already confusing scene for drivers to safely navigate.

Undermining neighboring businesses

- Where will the customers of existing businesses park once the existing lot is replaced with a garage sized to be filled to the gills by patrons of the new development?

- How will that affect traffic patterns?
- Visitors to the proposed development will use the co-op's Sycamore lot and any other free lot or street nearby rather than deal with the expense and difficulty of the proposed garage. This will take parking spots from neighboring businesses and make visiting the Junction area a less attractive prospect overall.
- The inclusion of two new eateries in the proposed development would reduce the clientele for the existing restaurants among diners from the surrounding neighborhood. This should at least be acknowledged and assessed.

NDC fails to even acknowledge most of the potential harms from its proposed development at Takoma Junction. Yet they are numerous, massive, and potentially lethal. All this for a discretionary development, a solution to a non-existent problem, that fails to provide compensatory benefits to the many stakeholders it harms. Please do not accept this unbalanced proposal.

Thank you for your attention. Please include this letter and my previous one in the official record.

Sincerely,

Tracy

Tracy Duvall, PhD
7125 Poplar Ave
202-689-7452

* Traffic Calming Programs & Emergency Response: A Competition of Two Public Goods, https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/traffic_calming_programs_and_emergency_response_bunte.pdf, pp. 149-151.

From: [Andrew Strongin](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Cc: egirard@milesstockbridge.com
Subject: Takoma Junction Comments
Date: Monday, November 16, 2020 2:46:24 PM
Attachments: [Takoma Junction Vision Study Report 20200225 \(dragged\) 6.pdf](#)

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

Dear Elza,

There is a glaring misstatement in Ms. Girard's Justification Statement that begs for immediate correction.

Ms. Girard writes at p. 3, "Although the Development Review Committee for the Application was held in March of 2019, the Project was then delayed for over a year pending the results of the State Highway Administration's Takoma Junction Visioning Study, *which study ultimately did not recommend any specific improvements to the intersections surrounding the site.*" (Emphasis added.)

This is patently untrue. As the attached pages show, the Vision Study indeed recommended multiple specific improvements to the intersection surrounding the site. Indeed, the presentation is entitled, "Recommendations."

If the Planning Board will be reading Ms. Girard's Statement, I ask that Ms. Girard be made to correct it.

Best,

Andrew Strongin

From: [Andrew Strongin](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Subject: Public Comment
Date: Thursday, November 19, 2020 1:26:55 PM
Attachments: [Takoma Junction Vision Study Report 20200225 \(dragged\).pdf](#)
[Re Takoma Junction Question.eml.msg](#)

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

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy:

I am writing to request, formally, that the attached Recommendations coming out of the State Highway Administration's Vision Study be included in the record for the Planning Board's consideration. The recommendations for improving the intersection include ALL of the following:

Gateway Treatments at all approaches;
 Don't Block the Box signage and intersection markings;
 High Visibility Crosswalks;
 Addition of Center Medians to narrow the roadway and slow traffic;
 Expansion of sidewalks to slow traffic;
 Consolidation and Reduction of curb cuts;
 Improved bus amenities;
 New Median to discourage unsafe maneuvers at bus stop;
 Expansion of Pedestrian space; and,
 Provision of Bike Corrals.

Traffic and safety has been a paramount concern for many in the neighborhood who oppose this development proposal. The City's political leaders - who lack any professional development experience - will take whatever positions they find politically expedient, but there are thousands of residents in this area who are counting on the technical, professional expertise of the Planning Board to protect our interests.

It is disappointing and distressing that the State Highway Vision Study has been blocked from final issuance, but the fact of the matter is that it was released publicly on February 25, and it was shared with the City of Takoma Park in a private meeting on May 28, 2020 (see attached email). It has not yet been released formally (albeit that appears to be the result of the City's efforts to scuttle it), but it is a fact that State Highway's ongoing review of the proposal expressly is reliant on the Vision Study's recommendations, as NDC's contract traffic engineer acknowledges in its "Point by Point" response, which is a matter of record.

The Junction intersections are at failure. They have been at failure. They remain at failure. The only plan NDC ever put forth - which was unfunded and would not have resolved the problem anyway - has been withdrawn. What we are left with, is a failing intersection to which NDC will bring yet more traffic (that, after all, is the point of its commercial effort), and worsen with a dangerous driveway and absurd layby. Happily, your technical staff knows this to be true, as reflected once again in staff's November 12, 2020 comments.

My point, now, is to show that even as NDC threatens to worsen conditions, State Highway, with the community's assistance through the Vision Study, has many good ideas to improve the intersections, to ensure that all users - not just those in cars - can proceed safely. The intersection can be improved, but if NDC has its way, it will be worsened.

I hope and trust that these views will be reflected in your forthcoming Staff Report, so that the Planning Board, when it is presented with the question whether to approve or reject this project, will have an accurate picture of the Junction, rather than the fanciful one that NDC projects.

Thank you for your attention.

Andrew Strongin

7002 Poplar Ave
Takoma Park, MD 20912

TAKOMA JUNCTION

VISION PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY

- A** Establish Gateway Treatments at All Approaches to the Junction
- B** "Don't Block the Box" Signage & Intersection Markings (Potential Legislation Change)
- C** New High Visibility Crosswalk with Added ADA-Accessible Curb Ramp at South Side
- D** Narrow Roadway: Brick Center Median
- D1** Narrow Roadway: Expand Sidewalk Space
- E** Explore Consolidated and Reduced Curb Openings
- F** Parcel with Potential Redevelopment Plans

- G** Improve Bus Stop Amenities on North and South Side
- H** Prioritize Placemaking and Beautification Treatments Immediately Surrounding the Junction
- I** Install Median Treatment to Discourage Motorists from Passing Buses
- J** Create Pedestrian Amenity Space in Front of Businesses with Expanded Sidewalk
- K** Provide Bike Corral (typical)
- L** Repave Crosswalk as High Visibility Crosswalk (all existing crosswalks)

TAKOMA JUNCTION
VISION PLAN

STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP MEETING
FEBRUARY 25, 2020



CREATING SAFER PLACES TO LIVE



**TAKOMA
JUNCTION**
VISION PLAN

STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP MEETING
FEBRUARY 25, 2020





KEY

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--|----------|---|
| A | Establish Gateway Treatments at All Approaches to the Junction | G | Improve Bus Stop Amenities on North and South Side |
| B | "Don't Block the Box" Signage & Intersection Markings [Potential Legislation Change] | H | Prioritize Placemaking and Beautification Treatments Immediately Surrounding the Junction |
| C | New High Visibility Crosswalk with Added ADA-Accessible Curb Ramp at South Side | I | Install Median Treatment to Discourage Motorists from Passing Buses |
| D₁ | Narrow Roadway: Brick Center Median | J | Create Pedestrian Amenity Space in Front of Businesses with Expanded Sidewalk |
| D₂ | Narrow Roadway: Expand Sidewalk Space | K | Provide Bike Corrals (typical) |
| E | Explore Consolidated and Reduced Curb Openings | L | Repaint Crosswalk as High Visibility Crosswalk (all existing crosswalks) |
| F | Parcel with Potential Redevelopment Plans | | |

**TAKOMA
JUNCTION**

From: [Andrew Strongin](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [Erica Rigby](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction Development
Date: Friday, November 20, 2020 2:50:53 PM

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

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy and Ms. Rigby:

As you know, NDC has just submitted its new TIS, which as I understand it has yet to be finally accepted by SHA for purposes of proceeding to plan review. In the TIS, there is discussion of "Background" traffic, and an indication that the property at 117 Elm Ave, which had been proposed as a daycare facility earlier in the Junction review process, would no longer be counted.

Our City Councilmember, Kacy Kostiuk, has just now advised the neighborhood that the property has been sold, and that the intention is "to use the space for religious, education, and childcare purposes," including "school and/or childcare." The message from Ms. Kostiuk is included, below.

I write to ask, insofar as the TIS has not yet been accepted, that information regarding the sale of the property be gathered and included within NDC's TIS, so that an accurate picture of background traffic is assured.

Thank you for your consideration.

Andrew Strongin

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Kacy Kostiuk kostiukk@gmail.com [bfgilbert]" <bfgilbert-noreply@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: [BF Gilbert] JNA/117 Elm - property purchase
Date: November 20, 2020 at 12:40:35 PM EST
To: undisclosed-recipients;;
Reply-To: bfgilbert-owner@yahoogroups.com

Hi everyone,

The former John Nevins Andrews School at 117 Elm Ave has been sold. I don't have a ton of details at the moment but am trying to connect with the new owners and find out more about their plans.

The purchaser is Centro Evangelistico, which also has a location on George Ave in Petworth. They expect to use the existing building after making renovations to the gym and stage to serve as a worship hall and installing a sprinkler system and upgrades to meet fire code.

This space is envisioned as a second location for members from Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. Their intention seems to be to use the space for religious, education, and childcare purposes, but the exact framework of what that will be is still unclear.

Montgomery County zoning code allows religious institutions in R-60 zoned areas. I'm still trying to figure out the exact parameters of what, if any, zoning allowances would be required for school and/or childcare uses. I'm working to make sure I fully understand the requirements, but it appears they may be allowed to operate an educational/childcare facility without a conditional use permit (which would have been required when CentroNia was looking at a similar use in the space) because they are a religious institution.

I know you will want to get as much information as possible about what the plans are and what to expect for the future of this location. I will continue to work on gathering more information, connecting with the new owners, and working with you and them on questions and concerns you have.

Best,
Kacy

Posted by: Kacy Kostiuk <kostiukk@gmail.com>

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• [Messages in this topic \(1\)](#)

BF Gilbert Citizens Association, Takoma Park, MD

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From: [Andrew Strongin](#)
To: [Folden, Matthew](#)
Cc: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction TIS
Date: Saturday, November 28, 2020 10:58:34 AM

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

Dear Matt,

I am writing to request a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss NDC's TIS (Rev. September 17, 2020).

As I read the revised TIS, NDC has misapplied the Planning Department's Traffic Counts During COVID-19 Pandemic - Policy Update (September 17, 2020); omits notable background traffic; and misrepresents site-traffic as in some cases leading to "total" traffic that is less than background traffic. If I am wrong, I would like to be corrected.

More troubling, even as NDC acknowledges that it is "almost impossible" to meet the 80-second delay standard, it somehow concludes that it can achieve the impossible merely by changing the timing of the lights. This begs for explanation I cannot find in the TIS. Also, if and to the extent the Board might take seriously NDC's request that the Junction service standard be increased to that of the Bethesda CBD, I would like to better understand that process.

Of course, there is additional concern regarding the lack of any study of cut-through traffic, a problem which will be made yet worse if - as MCDOT and SHA both suggest - left-turn movements will be prohibited into and out of the proposed driveway.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Andrew Strongin
7002 Poplar Ave
Takoma Park MD 20912

From: [Tracy Duvall](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Cc: [Kacy Kostiuik](#)
Subject: Technical issues in Takoma Junction proposal
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 9:55:48 AM

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

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy:

I hope you had a good Thanksgiving break. I am writing to raise two issues regarding NDC's proposed development of Takoma Junction.

Major omission from traffic study?

I have searched quite carefully but cannot find evidence that NDC's traffic study (16-TS-820190090-001.pdf) includes the background traffic from the 300-student CentroNia daycare center on Elm (development #5). In Appendix E, on p. 12, the traffic firm is told to include this and the data for background development #4, which they agree to do. Indeed, they list it as included on p. 3 of Appendix E. Yet no part of the analysis seems to mention or include the data for #5, although the analysis for #4 is easy to see. (A 53-student daycare center is listed on p. 16, but it appears to be part of a different background development.)

Given that this large facility was recently purchased by another group to provide daycare and probably other services, and given the heavy use of cars to pick up and drop off kids at daycare, this apparent omission could have severely reduced the anticipated traffic through the Junction and our neighborhood, much to the advantage of NDC's proposal.

I apologize if this is a false alarm; on the other hand, I would greatly appreciate it if you or a colleague could inform me whether my finding is correct. It will help me to discuss the project accurately as this proposal is being debated.

Height from Columbia Ave.

Also, regarding NDC's recurrent claim that the development's height is 33': I reiterate that, from Columbia Ave, the development would rise at least 45' from its base; NDC's drawings vary from 33' to 36' on the Carroll side, so it might rise as high as 48' on the Columbia side. It seems that, at a minimum, this should be the height used to apply standards for screening, buffering, and any other protection for the adjoining

residential neighborhood. Indeed, because the development's base would lie considerably uphill from the roadway and adjacent residences, the building actually would loom much higher than 48' feet, so it seems that the logical standard would be to take the height starting from the roadway.

Thank you,

Tracy

Tracy Duvall, PhD
202-689-7452

Balmer, Emily

From: CountyExecutiveIQ@montgomerycountymd.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 11:14 AM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: RE: Takoma Junction Development

Thank you for contacting the Office of the County Executive. We appreciate hearing from you, and a response will be sent as soon as possible.

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

From: "Hisel-McCoy, Elza" <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: 1/15/2020 11:05:25 AM
 To: "Marcie Stickle/Geo French" <marcipro@aol.com>, "Wright, Gwen" <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Anderson, Casey" <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Fani-Gonzalez, Natali" <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>, "Cichy, Gerald" <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>, "Patterson, Tina" <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Verma, Partap" <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>, "Dickel, Stephanie" <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Folden, Matthew" <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>
 Cc:
 Subject: RE: Takoma Junction Development

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Marcie and George,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at

[https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307232843&sdata=gu3D38fcFrHCT2daof8C9bR%2FikSS%2BLoc24CoJqmSQDo%3D&reserved=0](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307232843&sdata=AoqWoa8iWYqXKzWcNw7K%2FvyF95whspXOZNmvmR0ZnNo%3D&reserved=0) by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not,

pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page

(<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307232843&sdata=rqTEkiWsnN8LP%2F6Utrqvle9un2MtnApeWeEDboOZWS4%3D&reserved=0><<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307232843&sdata=72LhksC6Md0j%2FxdXpnCUNHEBi7Q%2F%2B49NtBfP1CKrUXM%3D&reserved=0>> at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

[cid:image006.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]

Elza Hisel-McCoy
Chief, Area 1 Division

Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910

elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
301.495.2115

[cid:image012.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fmontgomeryplanning&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307232843&sdata=ArMZpjMi1q%2FMtRBq5OhvG91oy92oElXzRkS1SxJwrjY%3D&reserved=0> [cid:image015.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]
<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftwitter.com%2Fmontgomeryplans&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307242802&sdata=7VhB3OVepEgFDfzNM2pksyW5h0byG1fBSjhpgJcd9FY%3D&reserved=0> [cid:image016.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]
<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fuser%2Fmontgomeryplanning&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307242802&sdata=EzQmvKZG7Kfw3hUOdbC1JsXMvmCOi%2FJuQI3%2FJrFSNYU%3D&reserved=0> [cid:image017.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]
<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanning.org%2F&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307242802&sdata=0MvAtF4rbSZMMnDKUkZiFIQjYOOMxYrF%2F6WtIJ6jUYc%3D&reserved=0>

[cid:image018.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmontgomeryplanning.org%2Fplanning%2Fmaster-plan-list%2Fgeneral-plans%2Fthrive-montgomery-2050%2F&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cb1ccc43f3b994fff840c08d799d4bccb%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637147011307242802&sdata=1QMXB%2FMiz0xsxED9WczdNTA1ISCSb8Vbl8WeXnweOX4%3D&reserved=0>

From: Marcie Stickle/Geo French <marcipro@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 12:44 PM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen

<gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali

<Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina

<tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie

<Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>;

Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Takoma Junction Development

TO: County Executive, Legislators and Planners, 1/14/2020

To Whom It May Concern:

We believe it is critically important to protect the Takoma Park Silver Spring COOP, one of the most important businesses in T.P., from certain failure if the proposed NDC development is allowed to proceed in Takoma Junction.

Our main concern is the viability of this very important well-established institution. The COOP is progressive, diverse in all aspects; workers, shoppers, management, Board; and workers are unionized. We do not want to risk losing this marvelous resource.

We are also concerned about impacts to the forested area and the possible reconfiguration of the Takoma Junction

intersection that will, in our estimation, diminish safety and lead to induced traffic demand and more congestion in the Junction area.

A much smaller development is preferred on the surface parking lot; one that will allow for COOP deliveries, trash removal, storage, and hillside tree retention, as is the case now.

The dangerous and unworkable proposed lay-by in front of the intersection will drive the COOP out of business, and all of its long-lived good work will end; its employees will lose their jobs; and residents will lose access to nurturing groceries and products.

Sincerely, George French & Marcie Stickle
510 Albany Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912
8515 Greenwood Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912
301-587-5955, MarciPro@aol.com<mailto:MarciPro@aol.com>

Balmer, Emily

From: CountyExecutiveIQ@montgomerycountymd.gov
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: RE: Takoma Junction Concerns

Thank you for contacting the Office of the County Executive. We appreciate hearing from you, and a response will be sent as soon as possible.

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

From: "Hisel-McCoy, Elza" <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: 1/10/2020 4:50:57 PM
 To: "Esther Siegel" <esiegel2@igc.org>
 Cc: "councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov" <councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov" <councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>
 Subject: RE: Takoma Junction Concerns

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Ms. Siegel,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at <https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C353013d96514444e9fa108d796172e1f%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637142899779191017&sdata=%2BUqgEH81lQpK8unUZxThW5S3Xf5wY%2BISUPgoqAH9KhC%3D&reserved=0> <<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C353013d96514444e9fa108d796172e1f%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637142899779191017&sdata=Q2aPVa88l6%2FVx8uWVM0zPdWY5cmFSgKU95IsOpSkU6E%3D&reserved=0>> by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and

incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page

(<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C353013d96514444e9fa108d796172e1f%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637142899779191017&sdata=piSdesdqBfKsl0Q0OnrF5WCbNJs6lwgocumiQsBozEs%3D&reserved=0><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C353013d96514444e9fa108d796172e1f%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637142899779191017&sdata=tv7xbxFc%2Bd8W16C1SPusKuU4XsJt8Ku8dUpa0Rmplug%3D&reserved=0>) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

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The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

[cid:image006.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]

Elza Hisel-McCoy
Chief, Area 1 Division

Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
301.495.2115

[cid:image012.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]<<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C353013d96514444e9fa108d796172e1f%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637142899779191017&sdata=tv7xbxFc%2Bd8W16C1SPusKuU4XsJt8Ku8dUpa0Rmplug%3D&reserved=0>>

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 <https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanning.org%2F&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C353013d96514444e9fa108d796172e1f%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637142899779191017&sdata=us9ZzNN7o1APeRV3ev9VUWZwTiR9vzglG%2BUqD60FqiM%3D&reserved=0>

[cid:image018.png@01D5C40F.CC9A3770]<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmontgomeryplanning.org%2Fplanning%2Fmaster-plan-list%2Fgeneral-plans%2Fthrive-montgomery-2050%2F&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C353013d96514444e9fa108d796172e1f%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C0%7C637142899779191017&sdata=rF3Jtzqip8ZfAwXPemS3gMAL6YAto%2Bg3OhVK2E8b1AQ%3D&reserved=0>

From: Esther Siegel <esiegel2@igc.org>

Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 9:57 AM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Takoma Junction Concerns

Dear Ms Hisel-McCoy,

We are writing to express our many concerns about the proposed development at Takoma Junction. We live in Takoma Park and also deliver local fruit and vegetables from our farm, to the TPSS Food Co-op.

In this holiday season, one can turn to any Hallmark channel and watch a sappy Christmas movie. The theme many of the movies (except the ones about princes and princesses in small made up countries!) is about small town spirit and a developer who wants to "improve" the town by bringing in what ultimately becomes inappropriate and unwanted development. The lesson is always that the residents love their community, their local stores and Inns and while they don't oppose improvements, fight hard to preserve the spirit and intimacy of their town.

If the current development goes forward with the lay-by, we fear we simply will not be able to continue our business relationship with the Co-op grocery store - unloading of goods in a timely and safe manner will become too difficult. This distresses us deeply from our business perspective but also from our long-held dedication to a thriving local food cooperative for our community. We have been delivering to the Co-op since it's beginning! Other distributors, especially those with tractor trailers, have testified that they might not continue to deliver to the Co-op, thus making it hard for the Co-op to survive in its current location. Communities around the country would love to have a Co-op like ours in their communities and communities that do, like in Vermont, support their Co-op to ensure that they thrive.

It is no accident that these heartwarming movie themes touch us during this holiday of good cheer, compassion and community.

Takoma Park has come "off screen" over these last years, struggling with tension between some of our elected officials who seem to have lost sight of the value of the uniqueness and diversity of our community in favor of the "developer" coming in from the outside to bring their profit oriented vision for Takoma Junction. It is also disturbing that this for profit development is on public land.

During these years, several disturbing issues starkly show that this development concept is just wrong. Too many revisions demonstrate that this development just won't work. The concerns include traffic, exit plans from various streets, the small size of the Junction that will not support a large development, failed traffic re-configurations, concerns from Takoma Park's Fire Chief, the absurd lay-by delivery and garbage plan, and so on. Every time NDC submits yet another "revision", it feels like constantly trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. Their vision is just not compatible with the Junction and to reconfigure it would mean a total reconfigure of everything there, including the traffic paths. At some point, it must be recognized that changing everything, is just not practical or wanted.

Additionally, a development of this sort will impact the racial equity in our community, and threaten to displace the Takoma Park Food Co-op that is a shining example of a business with a diverse staff, that provides a living wage and health insurance to all its employees and is the only grocery store in Takoma Park that is used by all incomes (it supports SNAP, WIC and other government supplemental food programs); ignoring the need for public space for public use and good; having a detrimental environmental impact by, among other concerns, displacing trees and creating water runoffs and erosion.

Many alternative plans have been proposed that would avoid the concerns mentioned above. They come from community residents who value and want to preserve the uniqueness and integrity of Takoma Park.

A more practical plan will make your job easier because it will factor in the concerns already raised by HDC that unanimously said that the current design is incompatible with the historic district.

HDC's report said:

- The building is "way too big," "too tall," "too long" and "too massive." It reads as a "very large office building." It needs both to be made lower, and to be broken up either into two separate buildings (a one-story building was suggested as part of this), or into a design that presents as two separate buildings.
- In terms of the façade design, the developer was told "you've made a mess of things." Overall, the design was described as "slick" and therefore "incompatible with the historic character of this part of Takoma Park."
- The developer's claim that the first story has to be 20 feet high to attract businesses is "false," given the "thriving commercial district" down the street in "small, contextual buildings."
- The glass elevator tower is "too contemporary," "truly terrible," "completely out of place," "unnecessary," and "has to go."
- The canopy is too high to be functional.
- The historic art deco structure in BY Morrison Park should remain, and the roads should not be reconfigured because they have historic context.
- Wider sidewalks and more public space are needed. A Commissioner noted that public space is "very, very important for the community."
- A Commissioner lamented the planned removal of 9 out of the 12 existing American Elms, a species "in short supply."

This Commissioner noted that it is "highly ironic" to cut down trees to put in a garage with a green roof.

· A loading area at the front is not consistent with Takoma Park's historical context, and is not "conducive" for pedestrian areas. The Chair of the Commission stated, "the lay-by is an abomination."

We implore you to reject the current development plan before you presented by NDC and recommend that a new vision be thoughtfully explored that truly reflects the preservation of our unique and so special town. Watch one of the sappy Hallmark Christmas movies that reflects where small-town America's heart is.

Thank you,

Esther Siegel
Michael Tabor
Takoma Park
301 587-2248

--

Michael and Esther share this email.

Please check the signature to determine who it comes from.

Thanks.

Balmer, Emily

From: CountyExecutiveIQ@montgomerycountymd.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2020 10:34 AM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: RE: Takoma Junction development

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

From: "Hisel-McCoy, Elza" <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: 1/7/2020 10:13:35 AM
 To: "Ellen Daniels" <Indan@yahoo.com>, "Wright, Gwen" <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Anderson, Casey" <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Fani-Gonzalez, Natali" <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>, "Cichy, Gerald" <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>, "Patterson, Tina" <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Verma, Partap" <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>, "Dickel, Stephanie" <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Balmer, Emily" <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Cc: "Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>
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Elza Hisel-McCoy
Chief, Area 1 Division

Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910

elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
301.495.2115

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From: Ellen Daniels <Indan@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, December 16, 2019 10:24 AM

To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen

<gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>

Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;

Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elich@montgomerycountymd.gov

Subject: Takoma Junction development

To the Montgomery County Planning Board -

I am writing to you with serious concern about the proposed development at Takoma Junction and its impact on local traffic as well as on the local community. I live on Boyd Avenue, close to the Junction, so my family and I are personally affected by the traffic and safety issues related to this proposed development. I am strongly opposed to the current plans and hope that you can evaluate this proposal taking into mind the input of the various constituents who would be affected by this development.

First of all, regardless of the final product, the process of construction would be a huge disruption in this area. The intersection at the junction is already a traffic bottleneck. During times with high volume, cars need to wait through several light cycles before being able to pass through the intersection. Very importantly, the Takoma Park Fire Station is right next to the proposed development. The construction process would seriously and adversely affect the ability of

emergency equipment to travel to and from the fire station in an effective manner.

Although the current level of traffic is difficult at particular times of day, I do not believe that the situation warrants the proposed reconfiguration of the intersection. First, I believe that the disruption during the phase of construction would cause more harm than the final product would justify. Second, having route 410 as a narrow road currently limits the volume of traffic through the area. Reconfiguring route 410 would increase the traffic volume through the neighborhood and negatively impact safety.

This intersection is a major crossing point for local school children. Currently, we have an excellent staff of crossing guards who help young people navigate the intersection on their way to Takoma Park Elementary School, Piney Branch Elementary School, and Takoma Park Middle School. Having a major construction area in this intersection for months, or longer, would create unnecessary safety concerns for these young pedestrian commuters.

Importantly, Takoma Junction is currently the site of several thriving small locally-owned businesses, including Seoul Food, MAD Fitness, Spring Mills Bakery and the TPSS Coop. These businesses are all popular destinations and are regularly frequented by people in the neighborhood. They are all currently thriving. If there were to be construction for a new development, these local businesses would suffer. Additionally, the higher rent being proposed for businesses in the new development could result in driving out the current businesses. The current businesses have shown themselves to be an asset to the community. We should be doing all that we can to ensure their continued success.

The Coop is a special case, and we are fortunate as a community to have this local grocery store. The Coop has been an important part of Takoma Park as long as I've lived here. The Coop supports conscientious consumption, supports local farmers, educates the community on various food-related issues, provides wholesome food, stays open in bad weather, and is a destination for many shoppers in walking distance - such as myself. If it weren't for the Coop, many people in Takoma Park would have to drive to another source of food, increasing the use of cars and increasing traffic. The Coop is at risk not only because of the concerns stated above which relate to the construction at the Junction, but also because their delivery system has been part of the negotiation of the design. The current lay-by compromise is not realistic. The Coop often gets deliveries from various sources at one time, which would not fit into the proposed lay-by. There is a real possibility of frequent traffic back-ups due to the lay-by - notably right next to the fire station.

Regarding the idea that more businesses are needed at the Junction, there are currently spaces where small businesses could move in. There is no need for a huge development in order to attract a reasonable and sustainable amount of new business to that area.

I simply don't understand the drive to develop this area, and am especially disappointed in my local government for signing on to a plan that has already had to be redone several times because aspects related to traffic and size weren't considered from the start. At this point, the plans show little resemblance to what was promised at the outset. The amount of traffic disruption during construction, the threat to safety related to the fire station, and the negative impact on local businesses make this project a risky endeavor at best, with little guarantee for positive payoff at the end.

I urge you not to approve the current design because these serious concerns.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Ellen Daniels
408 Boyd Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland

Balmer, Emily

From: CountyExecutiveIQ@montgomerycountymd.gov
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 11:04 AM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: RE: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

Thank you for contacting the Office of the County Executive. We appreciate hearing from you, and a response will be sent as soon as possible.

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

From: "Hisel-McCoy, Elza" <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: 12/13/2019 11:02:12 AM
 To: "Lea Chartock" <xwriter@verizon.net>, "Wright, Gwen" <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Anderson, Casey" <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Fani-Gonzalez, Natali" <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>, "Cichy, Gerald" <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>, "Patterson, Tina" <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Verma, Partap" <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>, "Dickel, Stephanie" <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Folden, Matthew" <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>, "MCP-Chair" <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>
 Cc: "Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Balmer, Emily" <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Subject: RE: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hello Lea,

I will include your comments regarding the extension in my staff recommendation report for the extension. To be fair, as I mentioned, the applicant has not yet submitted plans revised to reflect the DRC comments all agencies except SHA provided in March. I would expect those after the SHA comments come in.

FYI, I will be out of the office for the next 3 weeks, but our Regulatory Team Supervisor, Stephanie Dickel, will do her best to answer any questions you might have until I return on January 6.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
 Chief
 Area One
 Montgomery County Planning Department
 M-NCPPC
 8787 Georgia Avenue
 Silver Spring, MD 20910
 301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 montgomeryplanning.org

From: Lea Chartock <xwriter@verizon.net>
 Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 9:44 AM
 To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov; Balmer, Emily <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Subject: Re: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

Dear Elza:

Thank you very much for your detailed response and all the links to related material. I will contact you if I have any questions. Meantime, I appreciate being added to the parties of record.

At this point, however, I would like to add that I find the developer's request for another extension unreasonable. The original development agreement was sign by the City of Takoma Park and NDC in 2016. The City's interests and the interests of the community have been clear from the beginning, but the developer continues to stonewall, with small modifications to the plan that don't meet any of the objections raised. If the developer hasn't shown a willingness to work with the community in three years, why should anyone believe that the company will suddenly see the light in the next six months?

I urge the planning board not to grant an extension without firm conditions being attached, including a final deadline after which, if the plan still doesn't meet all the criteria, the permits will be denied.

Thank you,

Lea Chartock

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

From: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>>
 To: Lea Chartock <xwriter@verizon.net<mailto:xwriter@verizon.net>>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org<mailto:Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org<mailto:Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org<mailto:Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org<mailto:tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org<mailto:Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>>
 Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>

<Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov> <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>> >; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov> <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov<mailto:Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>> >; Balmer, Emily <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>>

Sent: Mon, Dec 9, 2019 9:51 am

Subject: RE: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

Dear Lea,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at <https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C58e7b528b2e640c0423108d77fe5d24a%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637118497376128853&sdata=kvwlzdQGw8P5%2FH8O0GvQmOcB5jd0OoteSeQMbVFgr8g%3D&reserved=0> <<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C58e7b528b2e640c0423108d77fe5d24a%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637118497376138847&sdata=WSmdM76yjSgCoxXHSUlxfgvPrIBf30M8suBv5b%2FCihE%3D&reserved=0>> by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page (<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C58e7b528b2e640c0423108d77fe5d24a%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637118497376138847&sdata=IU9KbL0s6b2zyONYBa5OcXBWIXCfdNMSMatOBcKb80%3D&reserved=0> <<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C58e7b528b2e640c0423108d77fe5d24a%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637118497376138847&sdata=Y3Y%2Bmyl2FZQwD1i0dEvJpzaz9t1uPBACxnR01gIT%2Ffk%3D&reserved=0>>) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Lea Chartock <xwriter@verizon.net<<mailto:xwriter@verizon.net>>>
Sent: Sunday, December 8, 2019 4:00 PM
To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org<<mailto:gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>>>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org<<mailto:Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>>>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org<<mailto:Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>>>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org<<mailto:Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>>>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org<<mailto:tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>>>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org<<mailto:Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>>>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org<<mailto:elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>>>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org<<mailto:Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>>>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org<<mailto:matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>>>
Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov<<mailto:Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov<<mailto:Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov<<mailto:Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov<<mailto:Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov<<mailto:Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>>; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov<<mailto:Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>>

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Takoma Junction Development

To the Montgomery County Planning Board and Development Review Committee:

I am writing to you today to express my opposition to the proposed NDC development at the Junction and to urge you not to approve the project as planned.

- * The development plan is too big for the location.
- * The proposed rent at the development is twice that being paid at other Junction businesses. If this new market reality leads to rising rents for existing businesses (many minority-owned) across the street, these businesses may be in jeopardy. Several have raised concerns about the impact of paid parking and rising congestion as threats to their customer base.
- * As proposed, the development would likely force the Takoma Park Co-op, one of the largest retail employers in the City, to close down or relocate, given the restricted delivery access and reduction of customer and staff surface parking.
- * The Co-op is an oasis of diversity in terms of both customers and employees, with union jobs and benefits for people from over a dozen countries.
- * The Co-op serves many nearby renters and seniors who depend on public transit. Loss of the Co-op threatens their access to a walkable grocery store with healthy foods.
- * The development calls for a lay-by for truck delivery that will cause major back-ups, increase congestion at a failing intersection, and worsen air quality. Road reconfiguration would not solve this problem.
- * The development would take out mature healthy trees and exacerbate storm water issues.

The site of the proposed development is public land, and the community wants it to be used for the public good. Many alternative development options would allow the Co-op to flourish, provide for public space, and not overburden the Junction with additional traffic.

If you have not already done so, I invite you to come look at the site, imagine a 14-wheeler idling alongside Highway 410, note the embankment behind the site and consider how, with trees removed, water will be unleashed, and erosion will impact homes below. Note how traffic backs up during the morning and evening rush hours, and think about how a sizable new development will worsen congestion. Think about the disruption to Takoma Park businesses, residents and all people to drive through the city on 410 during construction of such a sizable project in a small area. Think about how these impacts would be worsened if the state also decided to reconfigure the roadway. And think about the fact that opponents of this Junction plan are the clear majority in public testimony, emails to the City of Takoma Park, and in over 1,500 petition signatures.

For all these reasons, I urge the Planning Board not to approve the current NDC plan.

Thank you,

Lea Chartock
6414 Sligo Mill Road
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Balmer, Emily

From: CountyExecutiveIQ@montgomerycountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 4:04 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: RE: My expressed concern for the proposed Junction Project in Takoma Park

Thank you for contacting the Office of the County Executive. We appreciate hearing from you, and a response will be sent as soon as possible.

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

From: "Hisel-McCoy, Elza" <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: 12/9/2019 4:00:40 PM
 To: "Susan Rogers" <susanjoanrogers72@gmail.com>
 Cc: "Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Balmer, Emily" <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Subject: RE: My expressed concern for the proposed Junction Project in Takoma Park

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hello Ms. Rogers,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at <https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C584cb78ac1e34945e76908d77ceada16%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637115220477234977&sdata=tMDS%2FddJOG3IrEt9dht2W%2FwwwApPKV5Q9P6%2Fw7bqY36Y%3D&reserved=0> <<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C584cb78ac1e34945e76908d77ceada16%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637115220477234977&sdata=llLlyOhtjnl%2Fo6atvfuaKKEFOfiLMvfHzy%2BTR5LZA6s%3D&reserved=0>> by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

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The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency

staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page

(<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C584cb78ac1e34945e76908d77ceada16%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637115220477234977&sdata=Jr%2B8UalleMEB8AjiGT%2BsS%2Bvm16gv0JKU2j2BVijp%2F%2FM%3D&reserved=0><<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C584cb78ac1e34945e76908d77ceada16%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637115220477234977&sdata=k1Vjz5Hjf7oZeylbZzjELmzRhZ6CHYuxrleWWhoFWHo%3D&reserved=0>> at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

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The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org<<mailto:elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>>
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Susan Rogers <susanjoanrogers72@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrch@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: My expressed concern for the proposed Junction Project in Takoma Park

Hello Elza--

I am a resident of Takoma Park and I am writing to you to voice my concern over traffic and safety issues at the Junction and am asking you to NOT approve the proposed design of the city's Junction project. In my opinion this development would make climate impacts worse by inserting a lay-by that will cause major back-ups from delivery trucks, increasing congestion at a failing intersection, and worsening air quality in an area with many children and seniors. I feel strongly that road reconfiguration would not solve this undeniable reality. Please also note that our fire chief said in public testimony that the lay-by and the egress would hamper their emergency vehicles. That's equally true today since design revisions haven't changed the lay-by or egress.

In addition, the exit from the planned underground garage onto Carroll Avenue is on a dangerous, near-blind curve that I understand violates state standards. Further, I oppose spending limited local, County and State transportation dollars for a reconfiguration project that will cause more problems than it solves. In general, I feel a different development plan of a much smaller scale, not a different road design, is what our city should be seeking.

Thank you for considering my concerns in your decisions concerning the Junction.

Regards,
Susan Rogers
416 Lincoln Ave., Takoma Park, MD

Balmer, Emily

From: CountyExecutiveIQ@montgomerycountymd.gov
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 2:44 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: RE: Please reconsider the development plan for Takoma Junction!

Thank you for contacting the Office of the County Executive. We appreciate hearing from you, and a response will be sent as soon as possible.

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

From: "Hisel-McCoy, Elza" <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: 12/9/2019 2:40:21 PM
 To: "Megan Keister" <mekek9@verizon.net>, "Wright, Gwen" <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Anderson, Casey" <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Fani-Gonzalez, Natali" <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>, "Cichy, Gerald" <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>, "Patterson, Tina" <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Verma, Partap" <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>, "Dickel, Stephanie" <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Folden, Matthew" <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Cc: "Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Balmer, Emily" <emily.balmer@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Subject: RE: Please reconsider the development plan for Takoma Junction!

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Ms. Keister,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at <https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cf25235d70778435925dc08d77cdfa1f8%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637115172254599367&sdata=O%2BNB0VGREoERJ1qQer2q25WUIK8FFJB3%2Bmp5QyZy6XM%3D&reserved=0> by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page

(<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cf25235d70778435925dc08d77cdfa1f8%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637115172254599367&sdata=%2B%2FvfYrmOp%2FtPduB%2BS0jxpLpFdsTlPayU1lRMddUhlk%3D&reserved=0><<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7Cf25235d70778435925dc08d77cdfa1f8%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637115172254599367&sdata=IWC2IJ4ZsE8x5uYgtgiulf443beffdn9LpAPz5PGumY%3D&reserved=0>>)) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 120 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Megan Keister <mekk9@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019 2:28 PM
To: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov; Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: Please reconsider the development plan for Takoma Junction!

I'm writing to let you know that I am adamantly opposed to the current development plan for Takoma Junction.

The land targeted in the Tacoma Junction development plan is public and the local community rightly wants it to be used for public good. There are alternative development options that would allow for the Co-op flourish, provide for public space, and not overburden the junction with additional traffic. These alternative development Popsations must be re-examined and re-considered.

Sincerely,

Megan Keister

9902 Woodland Drive

Silver Spring, MD 20902

Balmer, Emily

From: CountyExecutiveIQ@montgomerycountymd.gov
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2019 5:14 PM
To: Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: RE: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan

Thank you for contacting the Office of the County Executive. We appreciate hearing from you, and a response will be sent as soon as possible.

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

From: "Hisel-McCoy, Elza" <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
 Sent: 12/5/2019 4:55:01 PM
 To: "Linda R" <lrabben@verizon.net>, "Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Marc.Elrach@montgomerycountymd.gov>
 Cc: "Wright, Gwen" <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Anderson, Casey" <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Fani-Gonzalez, Natali" <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>, "Cichy, Gerald" <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>, "Patterson, Tina" <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>, "Verma, Partap" <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>, "Dickel, Stephanie" <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Folden, Matthew" <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>, "Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>, "Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov" <Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov>
 Subject: RE: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Ms. Rabben,

Thank you for your email regarding the proposed Takoma Junction redevelopment project. Each of the concerns you raised will be evaluated as part of the technical review of the revised preliminary and site plan application drawings/plans. I am the lead reviewer of these applications for the Planning Department and I would like to take a few moments to explain where we are in our application review process.

The Planning Department accepted the complete applications for this site, Preliminary Plan application no. 120190150 and Site Plan application no. 820190090, on February 14, 2019. Staff from our department and other reviewing agencies, including the City of Takoma Park staff, reviewed the applications and provided written comments to the applicant team in advance of the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from the reviewing agencies. Copies of these comments, and all of the submitted application materials, are available online at

<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C390567004c804a9d5d5a08d779cdc88d%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637111797067848214&sdata=IZOCsTePkSOTD1UFp1RXHfdRIW78aEllqm4M1kKxHcw%3D&reserved=0><https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanning.org%2Fdevelopment&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C390567004c804a9d5d5a08d779cdc88d%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637111797067848214&sdata=Hegxy%2FFtTrkRw5%2B0r3jIFrJYMX%2B%2B4SxMJb5WQ4oOTDg%3D&reserved=0> by searching under the project name or application numbers provided above.

At the March DRC meeting, the State Highway Administration did not provide review comments, and still has not, pending completion, we understand, of their Takoma Junction Visioning study.

The development application review process is iterative. Applicants provide drawings which are reviewed by agency staff who provide written comments. Public comments received by staff are shared with the applicant team and incorporated into the staff review. The applicant team then works with staff of the appropriate agency to address the comments and revise their drawings as necessary. The applicant then resubmits the drawings for further review. This process can repeat as required. Upon completion of the review, Planning Staff will prepare a written analysis of the application and a recommendation for either approval with conditions or denial, for presentation to the Planning Board for their vote. This Staff Report will include and discuss all correspondence received on the applications, and will be posted on the Planning Board's agenda page

(<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=www.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C390567004c804a9d5d5a08d779cdc88d%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637111797067858166&sdata=R54ftsIKTdGe9jLSom1vVy%2FkpuZml2QodXKCcs2m6xQA%3D&reserved=0<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.montgomeryplanningboard.org%2Fagenda&data=02%7C01%7CCounty.ExecutiveIQ%40montgomerycountymd.gov%7C390567004c804a9d5d5a08d779cdc88d%7C6e01b1f9b1e54073ac97778069a0ad64%7C0%7C1%7C637111797067858166&sdata=cm4SkGt56GuWKDxD719vTMvql%2BXs753ArCNDv4k0%3D&reserved=0>>) at least 10 days prior to the public hearing.

At this time, the applicant has not submitted revised plans in response to the previously issued technical comments from the March 2019 DRC. Staff review cannot recommence until the applicant submits revised plans.

Additionally, as the site is located within the City of Takoma Park, the City Council may elect to vote to recommend approval or denial of the applications, along with any conditions. The Planning Board will take this recommendation into consideration in their deliberation on the applications, and may over-rule the City Council's recommendation only with a 4/5 majority vote.

Finally, the Zoning Code stipulates that applications for Preliminary Plans and Site Plans must be heard by the Planning Board within 90 days of the acceptance as complete. The Planning Director and the Planning Board may, however, extend this review period. The applicant has requested, and the Planning Board has granted, review extensions currently through January 9, 2019. The applicant has recently requested an additional extension through July 30, 2020. This extension will go to the Planning Board on January 9, 2020.

The Planning Board hearing will be publicly noticed by postcard at least 10 days before the hearing to all parties of record, adjoining and confronting property owners, and condominium and homeowner associations near the site. We will add your name to the parties of record so that you will be sure to receive this notice.

When the applicant submits revised drawings, they will be available online at the above website.

Please let me know if you have further questions, or if you would like to meet to discuss the applications or the process.

Sincerely,

Elza

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Assoc. AIA, LEED-AP
Chief
Area One
Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

301.495.2115, elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>
montgomeryplanning.org

From: Linda R <lrabben@verizon.net>

Sent: Monday, December 2, 2019 8:01 PM

To: Marc.Elrch@montgomerycountymd.gov

Cc: Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Fani-Gonzalez, Natali <Natali.Fani-Gonzalez@mncppc-mc.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Folden, Matthew <matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org>; Councilmember.Hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: Please stop NDC's ill-conceived Takoma Junction plan

Dear Commission and County Council members:

For several years numerous Takoma Park residents, including me, have been pointing out the serious deficiencies in NDC's development plan for Takoma Junction. Despite our efforts, which included statements at Takoma Park city council meetings and a petition signed by about 1,500 residents, NDC's plan seems to be going forward.

In this message I would like to point out the many problems with this plan.

1. The development is too large for the location, and will loom over neighboring structures and destroy the historic character of the neighborhood.
2. It could lead to the closing of the Takoma Park Co-op, one of the largest retail employers in the city and a beacon of diversity in customers and employees, with union jobs and benefits for people from many countries.
3. The Co-op's delivery and parking areas would be drastically reduced, making shopping there very inconvenient.
4. NDC's proposed rent is double the rent paid by existing Junction businesses. This could lead to rising rents for minority-owned businesses nearby. Several business owners have raised concerns about the impact of paid parking and increasing congestion on their customer base.
5. Opponents of this plan were in the clear majority in public hearings, emails and petition signatures. Yet the City refused to listen to our repeated concerns. In fact, they treated us with condescension and even contempt, despite the testimony of experts who live in Takoma Park.
6. The development sacrifices public space, a community need that residents stressed repeatedly during the review process.
7. The development would worsen climate impacts by inserting a lay-by that would cause major back-ups from delivery trucks, increasing congestion at a severely congested intersection, and worsening air quality in an area where many children and seniors live and walk. Road reconfiguration would not solve these serious problems.
8. The development would remove mature healthy trees and exacerbate erosion and storm water issues.
9. The site is on public land, and the community wants it to be used for the public good. There are many alternative development options that would allow the Co-op to flourish, provide for public space, protect local businesses and not lead to additional traffic congestion.

Please listen to and address Takoma Park residents' concerns about this ill-conceived project. Please stop it before it goes any further.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Linda Rabben

Takoma Park resident since 1989

desired direction of travel, free from the potential for conflicts to appear suddenly, and consistent in design with the portions of the roadway just traveled.

The combination of vertical and horizontal curvature should allow adequate sight distance at an intersection. As discussed in Section 3.5, “Combinations of Horizontal and Vertical Alignment,” a sharp horizontal curve following a crest vertical curve is undesirable, particularly on intersection approaches.

9.5 INTERSECTION SIGHT DISTANCE

9.5.1 General Considerations

Each intersection has the potential for several different types of vehicular conflicts. The possibility of these conflicts actually occurring can be greatly reduced through the provision of proper sight distances and appropriate traffic controls. The avoidance of conflicts and the efficiency of traffic operations still depend on the judgment, capabilities, and response of each individual driver.

Stopping sight distance is provided continuously along each roadway so that drivers have a view of the roadway ahead that is sufficient to allow drivers to stop. The provision of stopping sight distance at all locations along each roadway, including intersection approaches, is fundamental to intersection operation.

Vehicles are assigned the right-of-way at intersections by traffic-control devices or, where no traffic-control devices are present, by the rules of the road. A basic rule of the road, at an intersection where no traffic-control devices are present, requires the vehicle on the left to yield to the vehicle on the right if they arrive at approximately the same time. Sight distance is provided at intersections to allow drivers to perceive the presence of potentially conflicting vehicles. This should occur in sufficient time for a motorist to stop or adjust their speed, as appropriate, to avoid colliding in the intersection. The methods for determining the sight distances needed by drivers approaching intersections are based on the same principles as stopping sight distance, but incorporate modified assumptions based on observed driver behavior at intersections.

The driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection should have an unobstructed view of the entire intersection, including any traffic-control devices. At uncontrolled or minor approach stop controlled intersections, sight distance along the intersecting roadway should be sufficient to permit the driver on the minor road to anticipate and avoid potential collisions. If the available sight distance for an entering or crossing vehicle is at least equal to the appropriate stopping sight distance for the major road, then drivers have sufficient sight distance to anticipate and avoid collisions. However, in some cases, a major-road vehicle may need to slow or stop to accommodate the maneuver by a minor-road vehicle. To enhance traffic operations, intersection sight distances that exceed stopping sight distances are desirable along the major road. Specific

April 26, 2021

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Mr. Casey Anderson, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reddie Drive, 14th Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902
MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

**Subject: Takoma Junction, Preliminary Plan 120190150 and Site Plan 820190090 –
Regulatory Extension Request #4**

Dear Chairman Anderson and Fellow Members:

We write in opposition to the Fourth Extension Request, sought by planning board staff on behalf of the applicant Neighborhood Development Company, who is acting as agent for the City of Takoma Park, the actual property owner.

We note that it is *planning staff* rather than the applicant who makes the request. There is no indication that the applicant joins in it. By Mr. Hisel-McCoy's own evaluation, there is little hope that a simple design revision can solve the problems identified by a key reviewing agency. In requesting the extension of time, Mr. Hisel-McCoy writes:

On April 13, 2021, SHA issued a letter rejecting as designed a key element of the proposal. The same day, the [Takoma Park] City Manager announced that the City Council was indefinitely postponing their review. The Applicant is pursuing a revised design to address SHA's concerns. At this time, there is no clear expectation that the design issues can be successfully addressed with SHA, or the timing if they can, and therefore no clear expectation of when the City Council might conclude their review and vote.

We share Mr. Hisel-McCoy's assessment that a key element of the proposal is not approvable, and that there is no clear expectation that it ever will be. We note that the length of extension sought is 150 days, significantly longer than the original 120-day review period, already extended three times. Clearly, this project is not ready for review and may never be.

Reasons for the delay in review timeframes that he cites are irrelevant: State Highway has rejected the developer's proposed loading facility design as unsafe, there is nothing now pending before State Highway for review, and there is no indication that the developer can correct this deficiency short of a major redesign of its proposal, which will necessitate a new review process.

It is burdensome and costly for community members with concerns about this project's design continually to monitor developments, examine documents, and respond to

proposals; if no viable project is actually on the horizon, then it would reduce our burden, as well as the County staff's, to remove the project from the roster. If the applicant believes otherwise, it ought to be their burden, and not that of the Planning Board's staff, to make the case for still another lengthy extension of time. Accordingly, we urge you to deny this *fourth* request for an extension.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jessica Landman
232 Park Ave.
Takoma Park MD 20912

Andrew Strongin
7002 Poplar Ave.
Takoma Park MD 20912

cc: Gwen Wright, Planning Director
Elsa Hisel-McCoy, Chief, Down County Planning

Balmer, Emily

From: Derek Gunn <DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 4:49 PM
To: Andrew Strongin; Erica Rigby
Cc: Andre Futrell; Gregory Slater; Tim Smith; Wright, Gwen; Hisel-McCoy, Elza; Kate Stewart; suzannel@takomaparkmd.gov; Kacy Kostiuk; Jessica Landman
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction development - SHA Tracking #19-AP-MO-008-xx

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

Hello Mr. Strongin:

Thank you for your email and for sharing these points.

Our MDOT SHA internal reviewers are currently reviewing the developer's recent point-by-point responses to our May 17, 2021 letter. As standard, the review will be performed comprehensively, guided by engineering standards, such as AASHTO, and local requirements for development standards and with the utmost concern being safety at this location. While we anticipate that our comment response letter should be available no later than June 21, 2021, we are making all attempts to return comments sooner.

Sincerely,

Derek L. Gunn, P.E.
 Acting Deputy District Engineer

From: Andrew Strongin <astrongin@adrmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 10:41 AM
To: Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>
Cc: Andre Futrell <AFutrell@mdot.maryland.gov>; Gregory Slater <GSlater@mdot.maryland.gov>; Tim Smith <TSmith2@mdot.maryland.gov>; Gwen Wright <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Elza Hisel-McCoy <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Kate Stewart <kates@takomaparkmd.gov>; Suzanne Ludlow <SuzanneL@takomaparkmd.gov>; Kacy Kostiuk <kacyk@takomaparkmd.gov>; Derek Gunn <DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov>; Jessica Landman <jlandman@mulland.net>
Subject: Takoma Junction development - SHA Tracking #19-AP-MO-008-xx

Dear Ms. Rigby,

We have read with interest and alarm NDC's letter dated May 19, 2021. We write in support of SHA's findings that the proposed layby is unsafe, and to address certain factual statements by NDC about this project, with which we have great familiarity, having followed it with great interest from the start. We address, too, additional reasons for SHA to adhere to its rejection of the proposed layby.

1. NDC is Responsible for the Delay in Development Review

It is incorrect to attribute delays in this development review to SHA; the delay is attributable to NDC and its development partner, the City of Takoma Park.

a. NDC Delayed Submission and Acceptance of its Traffic Impact Study

NDC's first Traffic Impact Study ("TIS"), dated December 17, 2018, was rejected without review by Planning staff in March 2019 because NDC's traffic counts were too old. NDC did not resubmit its revised TIS until September 17, 2020. Planning staff and the SHA actively assisted NDC in revising its TIS, which finally was accepted on March 8, 2021. There is no public evidence to suggest that any agency delayed or impaired NDC's opportunity to submit and/or perfect its TIS earlier.

b. City Leadership Requested the Vision Study and then Worked to Scuttle It

It is true that development review was placed on hold in March 2019 due to SHA's decision to conduct a Vision Study. What NDC fails to state is that the City of Takoma Park – NDC's development partner – requested that Vision Study. The Vision Study was released to the public in draft form in February 2020. The study was held for almost a year before its final release on December 31, 2020. There is strong evidence that the Mayor and City Manager privately worked to discredit the Vision Study, displeased apparently that it did not support reconfiguration of the highways – for which there is no plan or funding – which perhaps explains the delay in its release.

c. NDC Ignored Early Indications of Deficiencies in its Layby Proposal

Even as SHA's review proceeded, NDC ignored the opportunity to remediate deficiencies publicly noted by other agencies, notably including the layby. Expert reviews dating back to March 2019 from at least five departments of the County and M-NCPPC presage SHA's determination that the layby is unsafe, including Montgomery County's Department of Transportation and Department of Permitting Services, and the M-NCPPC's offices of Functional Planning & Policy, Area Transportation, and Site Plan review. Memorably, the Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission denigrated the layby proposal as an "abomination." Yet, NDC recently admitted in a letter to the Planning Board that, "Its key elements ... have remained fundamentally unchanged throughout the review process." That is a striking admission. It reflects NDC's failure to revise its plans in ways that address reviewers' concerns – which itself has slowed the overall review process.

d. NDC Has Not Completed Steps Necessary for Development Review

Meanwhile, NDC has not met all steps necessary for completion of development review, quite apart from its interactions with SHA. For example, although NDC engaged in a partial preliminary consultation of its project with the Historic Preservation Commission, it *still* has not completed that process: HPC continues to await a preliminary consultation on the rear of the project, never reviewed.

e. NDC's Development Partner Still Has Not Conducted its Own Review

Further delay is attributable – to this day and continuing – to the City's own failure to conduct necessary public hearings on the plan; as NDC well knows, the City *never* has reviewed, much less approved, the plan filed with the Planning Board in January 2019. The City first began that process on April 12, 2021. Prior to April 2021, the City's last formal action on NDC's proposal came in July 2018, months before M-NCPPC ever saw it. When SHA rejected the layby on April 13, 2021, the City quickly scrubbed its plan review and has not rescheduled it. It is no answer that the City must await SHA's ruling; the City owns the property, is partnering with NDC, and could have reviewed and approved this plan at any time.

Based on all of the foregoing, it appears that virtually *all* of the delay in development review lies at the feet of NDC and/or its development partner, the City of Takoma Park, for stubbornly pressing and refusing to remediate an ill-conceived, unsafe plan that they have known to be deficient since at least March 2019 when the DRC first met. In any case, any delay in processing this proposal is hardly a basis for approving an unsafe plan.

2. NDC Lacks Authorization to Limit the Layby Use to Small Trucks Using Hand Carts

Notwithstanding the foregoing, NDC sought in its April 23, 2021, request for reconsideration to limit use of the layby to smaller trucks using hand carts, to the exclusion of deliveries by semi-trucks using pallet jacks. NDC holds to those limits in its May 19, 2021, submission (which includes a May 18, 2021, letter from The Traffic Group). NDC's Development Agreement with the City of Takoma Park – which is the basis of its authority to seek SHA's approval of the proposed layby – requires accommodation of deliveries by semi-trucks and pallet jacks before, during, and after any construction of the proposed development. NDC's recent effort to disrupt that delivery requirement led to entry of a temporary injunction against NDC by the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, which remains in place. The City of Takoma Park publicly supports the court's ruling, reflecting its ongoing support for deliveries by semi-trucks using pallet jacks. So far as the public record shows, NDC lacks authorization to restrict use of the proposed layby to smaller trucks using hand carts.

3. *The Trash Removal Plan is Unsafe*

There is yet another reason to reject the layby, which bears emphasis: By design, it is meant to accommodate also waste collection via four-yard dumpsters. The proposal is to push/pull these dumpsters across a sidewalk, down a five-foot wide ramp, which is only six inches wider than typical four-yard dumpsters. The dumpsters are to travel down this nearly 8% slope, unbelievably, to its terminus at the existing Grant Ave crosswalk, where there is an ADA ramp to the highway surface. If the dumpsters somehow can navigate those dangers without running free into the roadway or, worse, over a schoolchild or other pedestrian waiting to cross the highway at that very location, we are left to wonder how the dumpsters are to be emptied. A frontloader in the layby seemingly is impossible: The egress from the layby looks to feature a 45-degree curb bordered by vegetation and there are no planned curb-cuts. Is the plan really to have the dumpsters pushed out into the travel lane, into the crosswalk, where a frontloader will lift and empty them?

Conclusion

To support an overly large development, NDC seeks an exception to the normal safety-related requirement of on-site delivery, to construct a layby that multiple departments and agencies find will impair public safety and which is obviously unsafe. The layby – which is proposed only because NDC insists on a development so large that it requires multiple waivers of applicable zoning requirements – should have been a non-starter even *before* appropriate consideration was given to its supremely difficult location, adjacent as it is to crosswalks, intersections, traffic signals, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

In closing, we ask that SHA adhere to its well-founded and well-documented rejection of the layby, supported as it is by all of the other expert reviews. There is no good reason and no good time for SHA to provide any letter of support for NDC's ill-conceived, unsafe Site Plan and Preliminary Plan. NDC's request of May 19, 2021, should be rejected.

Sincerely,

Andrew Strongin
 Jessica Landman
 Martha Anderson
 Nadine Bloch
 Paul Chrostowski
 Kathryn Desmond
 Karen Elrich
 Robert Goo
 Paul Huebner
 Dennis Huffman
 Susan Katz Miller
 Byrne Kelly

Joseph Klockner
Bruce Kozarsky Cynthia Mariel
Roger Schlegel
Susan Schreiber
Megan Scribner
Betsy Taylor

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/II.A-7221-Carroll-Avenue-Takoma-Park.pdf>. See, e.g., p. 3 (“Rear elevations and perspectives from Columbia Avenue should be provided for the next preliminary consultation.”).

<https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/19017/61411/Takoma%20Junction%20Staff%20Comments%20Preliminary%20Plan%20120190150%2020200814.pdf/Takoma%20Junction%20Staff%20Comments%20Preliminary%20Plan%20120190150%2020200814.pdf>. See also, <https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/19017/61411/32-DRC-120190150.pdf/32-DRC-120190150.pdf>.

Balmer, Emily

From: Derek Gunn <DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 8:38 AM
To: Andrew Strongin; Erica Rigby
Cc: Wright, Gwen; Hisel-McCoy, Elza
Subject: Re: Junction Update

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

Hello Mr. Strongin:

Thank you for your email and for sharing these considerations. We will ask our access management leads to confirm, to the extent possible, planned activity or any limitations.

Sincerely,

Derek L. Gunn, P.E.
 Acting Deputy District Engineer

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From: Andrew Strongin <astrongin@adrmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 2:04 PM
To: Derek Gunn; Erica Rigby
Cc: Gwen Wright; Elza Hisel-McCoy
Subject: Re: Junction Update

Mr. Gunn,

Thank you. We were able to obtain the letter from MNCPPC staff.

In the meantime, we see that NDC has filed yet another Plan Review document. I wonder whether you might share it with the public as it is not yet posted (at last check) on MNCPPC's DAIC website.

The reason for this particular request is because the last round of review included two interesting pieces of information: (1) NDC offered to prohibit semis from using the layby and (2) it appears that any truck using the layby - if built - would be unloaded using only "hand carts," rather than forklifts. As you may not be aware, NDC's right to seek this access is predicated on a development agreement providing for use of the layby by semis, which as I'm sure you know depend on the use of pallet jacks, not hand carts, to transport full pallets of product along the sidewalk. Of course, you already have indicated that such proposal is unsafe, albeit perhaps not in this specific way. More importantly, though, it is not clear that the City is aware of NDC's willingness to limit the use of the proposed layby in this way, and the request is unauthorized so far as the public record is concerned. If the City privately has indicated its agreement to this limitation, that would be good to know. Thus, we would appreciate it very much if you would speak with the City of Takoma Park to find whether NDC is authorized to limit the layby in that way.

Further, we wonder at the use of the layby for trash and recycling purposes. There has been much talk about a 10'-wide service corridor for moving the 4-yard receptacles, but (1) little mention of the fact that those receptacles are to reach the street via a 4'-wide ramp shared by pedestrians and (2) no mention of how the receptacles are to be emptied into the waste management trucks. If they are to be lifted with forks and dumped into a front-loader, for example, it would

be good to know how that can be performed in the area at the front of the proposed layby, much less safely. As I'm sure you will recall, that area is the location of plantings and the crosswalk to Grant Ave, immediately adjacent to a planned bike lane.

Thank you for your consideration and continuing attention to detail.

Andrew Strongin

On May 21, 2021, at 8:03 PM, Derek Gunn <DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov> wrote:

Hello Mr. Strongin:

Thank you for your email and request. We anticipate the plan review comment letter should be available shortly for review.

Sincerely,

Derek L. Gunn, P.E.
Acting Deputy District Engineer

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From: Andrew Strongin <astrongin@adrmail.com>

Sent: Friday, May 21, 2021 5:26 PM

To: Erica Rigby; Derek Gunn

Subject: Junction Update

Dear Erica and Derek,

I just checked the SHA website and saw that the NDC plan was rejected on May 18. Any chance I could see the letter in order to understand where we are?

Thank you,

Andrew
Strongin



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

Dear Ms. Wright:

We write to follow up on our recent discussion about Takoma Junction, to formally request that you retract and revise the Preliminary Interim Draft Staff Report, created by Mr. Hisel-McCoy for use by the Takoma Park City Council to aid in their deliberations, and to remove Mr. Hisel-McCoy from his role as Lead Reviewer on this project.

The interim report is misleading, inaccurate and premature, and does not adhere to M-NCPPC rules in that:

- (1) It omits mention of the many negative staff reviews submitted during the development review process, all of which are a matter of public record;
- (2) It fails to address the negative public comments also submitted in large number during the review process;
- (3) It was issued before the submission of the SHA's review that rejected a crucial design element, whereas Mr. Hisel-McCoy knew their submission would be a linchpin; and,
- (4) It was issued without the required HPC preliminary consultation on the rear façade, a problem exacerbated by the fact that, notwithstanding the lack of such review by the Agency charged with conducting it, Mr. Hisel-McCoy finds the building to be 'compatible' with the Historic District.

As you know, staff reports are subject to Rule 50/59.00.01.06. Sec. A.1 addresses the Lead Reviewer's role. It provides:

1. Lead Reviewer. For each plan application, the appropriate chief or supervisor must assign a Planning Department lead reviewer. The lead reviewer ensures that the following steps are coordinated and occur in a timely manner.

(a) Comments and recommendations from the reviewers are included in the application file and conveyed to the applicant team.

* * *

(c) Potential conflicting comments are identified.

* * *

(e) The adopted protocol for resolving any agency conflicts is applied when necessary.

Once review is complete, Sec. D.1 governs preparation of the staff report. In addition to other elements, the staff report should include, “(d) a summary of the major issues and concerns related to the application and staff’s proposed resolution.”

The interim report meets none of these conditions. In the interest of brevity, we will not recount the many specific deficiencies here; they are self-evident from any review of the 32 pages of DRC comments, attached, which were ignored in creating this report. The many deficiencies of the report are underscored, in fact, by the applicant’s recent admission that, notwithstanding all of the negative staff reviews compiled by Mr. Hisel-McCoy, “Its key elements ... have remained fundamentally unchanged throughout the review process.” It stands to reason: if the plan is fundamentally unchanged from the initial submission, no reviewer reasonably could recommend approval without addressing the 32 pages of compiled staff comments. In the end, the deficiency of the interim report is laid bare by one unassailable fact: the linchpin of the project, as Mr. Hisel-McCoy notes, is the proposed layby, which State Highway rejected within 24 hours of his submission of his report to the City of Takoma Park.

We recognize that the interim report is not final for purposes of the ultimate Planning Board review. Critically, however, the interim report expressly is intended for use by the City of Takoma Park for its project review *now*. In that sense it is final; the City opened its long-awaited public hearings on the proposal with a presentation by Mr. Hisel-McCoy, during which he gave City officials every indication that the project is approvable, without noting in any significant way – either in his oral presentation or written report – any of the negative reviews by the DRC’s constituent agencies or the affected community residents or businesses. The City could resume public hearings on the design at any point, so it is imperative that the interim report be retracted and rescinded with a clear statement that it will be reviewed and its deficiencies corrected before reissuance. Otherwise, there is a real chance that the City will rely on misleading, incomplete, and premature recommendations that do not meet the Department’s published standards.

The foregoing deficiencies compel us to raise a related, aggravating circumstance, on which basis we further request appointment of a new Lead Reviewer for this project. Mr. Hisel-McCoy, who is a resident of the City of Takoma Park, appears to have placed his thumb on the scale in favor of the combined interests of the City and its development partner, which is harmful to the residents affected by the proposed development. The one-sided Interim Report sowed the seeds of distrust, and understanding that he has been meeting privately with the applicant and other interested parties, we requested the minutes of each of those meetings so that we could learn what has been happening behind closed doors. He has informed us that he has no notes to share. This is a clear violation of Rule 50/59.00.01.06.A.3, and it is especially noteworthy because the absence of any such notes precludes the Board and the public from assessing the objectivity of his review and undermines public trust in the process. That should be remediated by placing someone else in the position of Lead Reviewer.

In sum, we ask that (1) the Preliminary Interim Draft Staff Report be retracted and revised, with provision of clear public notice to the City of Takoma Park of that retraction and the reasons therefor; and (2) a new Lead Reviewer be assigned.

Thank you very much for your attention to these requests. We look forward to hearing your decision and we very much appreciate your careful oversight of this project.

Andrew Strongin

Jessica Landman

From: jlandman@mulland.net
To: [Wright, Gwen](#)
Cc: [Andrew Strongin](#)
Subject: Status of Takoma Junction
Date: Saturday, August 21, 2021 11:55:35 AM
Attachments: [Critique of NDC's July 2021 altered layby plan in response to SHA safety concerns - Google Docs.pdf](#)

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Dear Gwen,

I am writing to check in with respect to the status of the Takoma Junction project. Since we last spoke there have been several developments:

(1) Apparently, the project has now been tentatively scheduled for the Planning Board for September 16th (which incidentally is Yom Kippur, a problem for many interested community members).

(2) SHA has listed on their website a note that they have returned for revision the NDC's latest revised plan – but we have not been able to access the SHA's written comments on the revised plan.

As you know, community members continue to be concerned about the contents of the proposed design (including the most recent iteration – see attached critique by Roger Schlegel) but also about the procedures being followed.

We can infer from the phrase 'returned for revision' that additional changes are required, and the project is not yet approvable from SHA's perspective; so far, that is all we know. Scheduling the project for Planning Board review at this time, with SHA's latest comments not yet even shared with the public or presumably with the development partner City, much less evaluated or voted on by the City Council, is inappropriate and in and of itself offers additional grounds for rejecting it.

We would very much appreciate your assistance in (1) obtaining a copy of the SHA review document, and (2) obtaining a copy of your staff's recommendation to the planning board as soon as it is available for review, which I understand is no less than ten business days before the hearing date.

If you are available for a quick telephone conversation to offer any insights into the current situation, we would very much appreciate the chance to speak.

Many thanks for your help in navigating this complex and often frustrating and opaque process; I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jessica Landman
 301-312-4193 (mobile/text)

From: [Keith Kozloff](#)
To: [Bogdan, Grace](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: comments on Takoma Junction Development Project for September 15 hearing
Date: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:10:56 PM

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

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board and staff,

I live on Sycamore Avenue in Takoma Park. As you may know, my block would be among the most affected by the proposed NDC development. From what I understand about the status of the process, the project is effectively dead. This is a major disappointment to me because the status quo parking lot underuses valuable urban infill space and poses effluent run off problems. More importantly, shutting down this project represents a lost opportunity to revitalize Takoma Junction because no sane developer would subject themselves to the risk, time and expense to propose something on an intrinsically difficult piece of property. And without the project as an impetus for improvement, we will likely never see a reconfiguration of the problematic intersection at the Junction. Given that many urban retail stores make use of laybys, I am confused why this issue was not resolvable. All in all, I am disappointed that the end result of the lengthy and expensive permitting process at all levels of government merely maintains the unsatisfactory status quo at Takoma Junction in perpetuity. Thank you for your consideration.

Kind Regards
Keith Kozloff
MS Urban Planning

From: [Bogdan, Grace](#)
To: [Keith Kozloff](#); [Dickel, Stephanie](#); [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: RE: comments on Takoma Junction Development Project for September 15 hearing
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 12:14:01 PM
Attachments: [image013.png](#)
[image014.png](#)
[image015.png](#)
[image016.png](#)
[image017.png](#)

Thank you for your comments, they will be included in the packet to the Planning Board.

You can watch the Planning Board live online and also sign up to testify in the links below.

Watch online: <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/watch-online/>

Sign up to testify: <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/>

Thanks,

Grace



Grace Bogdan, AICP

Planner Coordinator, DownCounty Planning Division

Montgomery County Planning Department
 2425 Reddie Drive, 13th Floor, Wheaton, MD 20902
grace.bogdan@montgomeryplanning.org
 o: 301.495.4533



WE'VE MOVED!

THE NEW PARK AND PLANNING HEADQUARTERS IS NOW LOCATED AT
 2425 REEDIE DRIVE, WHEATON, MD 20902

From: Keith Kozloff <keith.kozloff@verizon.net>

Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:11 PM

To: Bogdan, Grace <grace.bogdan@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>

Subject: comments on Takoma Junction Development Project for September 15 hearing

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

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board and staff,

I live on Sycamore Avenue in Takoma Park. As you may know, my block would be among the most affected by the proposed NDC development. From what I understand about the status of the process, the project is effectively dead. This is a major disappointment to me because the status quo parking lot underuses valuable urban infill space and poses effluent run off problems. More importantly, shutting down this project represents a lost opportunity to revitalize Takoma Junction because no sane developer would subject themselves to the risk, time and expense to propose something on an intrinsically difficult piece of property. And without the project as an impetus for improvement, we will likely never see a reconfiguration of the problematic intersection at the Junction. Given that many urban retail stores make use of laybys, I am confused why this issue was not resolvable. All in all, I am disappointed that the end result of the lengthy and expensive permitting process at all levels of government merely maintains the unsatisfactory status quo at Takoma Junction in perpetuity. Thank you for your consideration.

Kind Regards
Keith Kozloff
MS Urban Planning

From: [Bogdan, Grace](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: FW: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter
Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 1:28:50 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[2021-09-07_19APMO008XX-Concept Review.pdf](#)

Hi Catherine-

Please see the attached letter from SHA for the September 15th Planning Board, item 4B, Takoma Junction.

Thanks!

Grace

From: Mencarini, Katherine <katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 9:12 AM
To: Bogdan, Grace <grace.bogdan@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Fwd: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter

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From: Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 7:57:24 AM
To: Michaela Kelinsky <mkelinsky@neighborhooddevelopment.com>
Cc: Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>; Tania Brown <TBrown13@mdot.maryland.gov>; Jingjing Liu <jliu@neighborhooddevelopment.com>; Glenn Cook <gcook@trafficgroup.com>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Girard, Erin E. <egirard@milesstockbridge.com>; Mencarini, Katherine <katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org>; Alvin Powell <apowell@primeeng.com>; Joel Bonder <jbonder@jfbonder.com>; Paul Dorr <pdorr@trafficgroup.com>; Tim Smith <TSmith2@mdot.maryland.gov>; Derek Gunn <DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov>
Subject: RE: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter

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

Good morning Ms. Kelinsky.

My apologies for the delay. The final letter is attached.

Thanks, Kwesi

Kwesi Woodroffe
Regional Engineer
District 3 Access Management
MDOT State Highway Administration
KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov
301-513-7347 (Direct)
1-888-228-5003 – toll free
Office Hours
M-Thurs.: 6:30a-3:30p
Fr: 6:30a-10:30a
9300 Kenilworth Avenue,
Greenbelt, MD 20770
<http://www.roads.maryland.gov>



From: Michaela Kelinsky <mkelinsky@neighborhooddevelopment.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 5:15 PM
To: Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>
Cc: Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>; Tania Brown <TBrown13@mdot.maryland.gov>; Jingjing Liu <jliu@neighborhooddevelopment.com>; Glenn Cook <gcook@trafficgroup.com>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <Elza.Hisel-McCoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Girard, Erin E. <egirard@milesstockbridge.com>; Mencarini, Katherine <katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org>; Alvin Powell <apowell@primeeng.com>; Joel Bonder <jbonder@jfbonder.com>; Paul Dorr <pdorr@trafficgroup.com>; Tim Smith <TSmith2@mdot.maryland.gov>; Derek Gunn <DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov>
Subject: Re: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter

Kwesi,

We still have not seen the rest of the comments nor received the final letter. Can you please provide this to us? We are well out of the 28 days that SHA has stated is their comment period.

MICHAELA KELINSKY, PMP

Vice President | Neighborhood Development Company

O: (202) 567-3216 | M: (202) 656-1413

3232 Georgia Ave NW, Suite 100 | Washington, DC 20010

neighborhooddevelopment.com

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

On Fri, Aug 20, 2021 at 11:26 AM Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov> wrote:

Ms. Kelinsky,

An agreement with the neighbor's giving authority to clear the trees is not a guarantee that a design waiver will be granted. Additionally, due to unforeseen circumstances, we have not yet received comments from our Traffic reviewers. We will need some more time to coordinate with them before issuing the final letter.

We will make every effort to complete this coordination expeditiously and follow up with you as soon as possible.

Thanks, Kwesi

Kwesi Woodroffe
Regional Engineer
District 3 Access Management
MDOT State Highway Administration
KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov

301-513-7347 (Direct)
 1-888-228-5003 – toll free

Office Hours

M-Thurs.: 6:30a-3:30p

Fr: 6:30a-10:30a

**9300 Kenilworth Avenue,
 Greenbelt, MD 20770**

<http://www.roads.maryland.gov>



From: Michaela Kelinsky <mkelinsky@neighborhooddevelopment.com>

Sent: Friday, August 20, 2021 9:04 AM

To: Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>; Tania Brown <TBrown13@mdot.maryland.gov>
Cc: Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>; Jingjing Liu <jliu@neighborhooddevelopment.com>; Glenn Cook <gcook@trafficgroup.com>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <Elza.Hisel-McCoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Girard, Erin E. <egirard@milesstockbridge.com>; Mencarini, Katherine <katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org>; Alvin Powell <apowell@primeeng.com>; Joel Bonder <jbonder@jfbonder.com>; Paul Dorr <pdorr@trafficgroup.com>; Tim Smith <TSmith2@mdot.maryland.gov>
Subject: Re: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter

Erica,

We are confused by the wording of this letter. Is MDOT stating that if we provide an agreement with the neighbor's stating that we have the authority to clear the trees, that SHA will provide the Urban Design Waiver requested and will approve the layby?

MICHAELA KELINSKY, PMP

Vice President | Neighborhood Development Company

O: (202) 567-3216 | **M:** (202) 656-1413

3232 Georgia Ave NW, Suite 100 | Washington, DC 20010

neighborhooddevelopment.com

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

On Thu, Aug 19, 2021 at 6:28 PM Tania Brown <TBrown13@mdot.maryland.gov> wrote:

Good evening,

Please see the attached draft letter.

From: Michaela Kelinsky <mkelinsky@neighborhooddevelopment.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2021 4:52 PM
To: Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>
Cc: Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>; Jingjing Liu <jliu@neighborhooddevelopment.com>; Glenn Cook <gcook@trafficgroup.com>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <Elza.Hisel-McCoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Girard, Erin E. <egirard@milesstockbridge.com>; Tania Brown <TBrown13@mdot.maryland.gov>; Mencarini, Katherine <katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org>; Alvin Powell <apowell@primeeng.com>; Joel Bonder <jbonder@jfbonder.com>; Paul Dorr <pdorr@trafficgroup.com>
Subject: Re: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter

Good Afternoon Tania,

can you please advise?

MICHAELA KELINSKY, PMP

Vice President | Neighborhood Development Company

O: (202) 567-3216 | M: (202) 656-1413

3232 Georgia Ave NW, Suite 100 | Washington, DC 20010

neighborhooddevelopment.com

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

On Tue, Aug 17, 2021 at 11:24 AM Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov> wrote:

Tania,

Please provide an update to Ms. Kelinsky.

Thanks, Kwesi

Kwesi Woodroffe
Regional Engineer
District 3 Access Management
MDOT State Highway Administration
KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov

301-513-7347 (Direct)

1-888-228-5003 – toll free

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M-Thurs.: 6:30a-3:30p

Fr: 6:30a-10:30a

9300 Kenilworth Avenue,

Greenbelt, MD 20770

<http://www.roads.maryland.gov>



From: Michaela Kelinsky <mkelinsky@neighborhooddevelopment.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 11:11 AM

To: Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>

Cc: Jingjing Liu <jliu@neighborhooddevelopment.com>; Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>; Glenn Cook <gcook@trafficgroup.com>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <Elza.Hisel-McCoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Girard, Erin E. <egirard@milesstockbridge.com>; Tania Brown <TBrown13@mdot.maryland.gov>; Mencarini, Katherine <katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org>; Alvin Powell <apowell@primeeng.com>; Joel Bonder <jbonder@jfbonder.com>; Paul Dorr <pdorr@trafficgroup.com>

Subject: Re: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter

Erica,

I wanted to check in on SHA's response as it has been over the 28 day review period.

Regards,

MICHAELA KELINSKY, PMP

Vice President | Neighborhood Development Company

O: (202) 567-3216 | **M:** (202) 656-1413

3232 Georgia Ave NW, Suite 100 | Washington, DC 20010

neighborhooddevelopment.com

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On Tue, Jul 20, 2021 at 2:17 PM Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov> wrote:

Jingjing,

Thank you for the submission. Kwesi's team has them under review.

Erica

From: Jingjing Liu <jliu@neighborhooddevelopment.com>

Sent: Friday, July 16, 2021 3:39 PM

To: Erica Rigby <ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov>; Kwesi Woodroffe <KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov>

Cc: Glenn Cook <gcook@trafficgroup.com>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <Elza.Hisel-McCoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Derek Gunn <DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov>; Girard, Erin E. <egirard@milesstockbridge.com>; Tania Brown <TBrown13@mdot.maryland.gov>; Mencarini, Katherine <katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org>; Alvin Powell <apowell@primeeng.com>; Michaela Kelinsky <mkelinsky@neighborhooddevelopment.com>; Joel Bonder <jbonder@jfbonder.com>;

Paul Dorr <pdorr@trafficgroup.com>

Subject: Takoma Junction (19apmo008xx) - NDC Response letter

Good Afternoon Erica and Kwesi,

Thanks for your review comments. Please see attached response letter with Exhibits and sight distance profile. Feel free to let me know if you have any questions. Looking forward to hearing back from you soon.

Thanks,
Jingjing

--

Jingjing Liu

Senior Development Associate | Neighborhood Development Company

office: (202) 567-3205

cell: (305) 778-5829

3232 Georgia Ave NW, Suite 100 | Washington, DC 20010

neighborhooddevelopment.com

September 7, 2021

Mr. Paul Dorr
The Traffic Group, Inc.
9900 Franklin Square Dr. - Suite H
Baltimore, MD 21236

Dear Mr. Dorr:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the concept plan, for the (Takoma Junction development – SHA Tracking #19-AP-MO-008-xx) in Montgomery County, Maryland. The State Highway Administration (SHA) review is complete and we are pleased to respond.

Based on the information provided, please address the following comments in a point-by-point response:

District 3 Traffic Comments (By: Alvin Powell):

1. It is noted that the developer has increased the width of the lay-by lane to provide a single turning maneuver entry. However, based on the turning movements shown in Exhibit A, it appears that the WB-67 wheel path must first encroach/slip partially into the left turn lane and then make a hard right maneuver crossing the through lane and bike lane before entering the layby which creates undesirable driver expectations for drivers and cyclist alike. There are still significant concerns with regards to truck and bicycle lane weaving that remain unaddressed. MDOT SHA District 3 Traffic Office cannot support approval of the plan in its current form.
2. It is noted that the developer proposed to improve the sight distance by removing or trimming trees but there are still other obstructions not captured in the profile or Exhibit D that include parked cars and ornamental fence on private property. In addition, the property owner has expressed concerns and will not support tree trimming and tree removal. MDOT SHA District 3 Traffic Office cannot support approval of the plan in its current form.

Engineering Systems Team (EST) Comments (By: Urooj Zafar):

Acceptance of the layby concept is dependent upon the Developer's ability to acquire two things. 1) Urban Design Waiver and 2) Permission to remove the trees on the adjacent property. We have no further comments until these conditions are met.

Mr. Dorr
SHA Tracking No.: 19-AP-MO-008-xx
Page 2 of 2
September 7, 2021

Innovative Contracting Division (ICD) Comments (By: John Vranish):

The plans reviewed for the subject project are compliant with the *MDOT SHA Accessibility Policy and Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities along State Highways*.

The network cannot support the proposed layby at this location therefore SHA cannot approve it as proposed. Further plan submittals should reflect the above comments. Please upload the plans and all supporting documentation in PDF format, including a point-by-point response to reflect the comments noted above directly to our online database. For electronic submissions create an account with our new online system <https://mdotsha.force.com/accesspermit>. Please reference the SHA tracking number on future submissions. Please keep in mind that you can view the reviewer and project status via the SHA Access Management web page at <http://www.roads.maryland.gov/pages/amd.aspx>. If you have any questions or require additional information please contact Mr. Kwesi Woodroffe at 301-513-7347, by using our toll free number (in Maryland only) at 1-800-749-0737 (x7347), or via email at kwoodroffe@sha.state.md.us or shaamdpermits@sha.state.md.us.

Sincerely,



Erica Rigby,
District Engineer, SHA

ER/ts

cc: Glen Cook, Traffic Group
Jingjing Liu, NDC
Katie Mencarini, Montgomery Planning
Alvin Powell, SHA – District Traffic
Kwesi Woodroffe, SHA – Access Management

From: [Alan Zibel](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); [City Clerk](#) | [City of Takoma Park](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction comment
Date: Thursday, September 9, 2021 8:10:15 AM

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

Greetings planning board members:

I am a nine-year resident of Takoma Park and live on Philadelphia Avenue, just a short walk from the Takoma Junction site. I have long been excited about NDC's proposed investment in our community and looking forward to the new building and the businesses it would bring.

Sadly, this project is now in jeopardy, largely due to the failure of the Maryland State Highway Administration to review the plan in a timely and constructive fashion.

Rather than vote to effectively sink this project, the product of more than a decade of work by Takoma Park elected officials, city staff and the developer, I write to recommend that you grant the developer's request for more time to meet with SHA to discuss the site plan and come up with a solution. I also hope that you will direct planning staff to work actively with SHA and NDC to resolve this dispute.

I have watched this process unfold over the past year with increasing dismay as lengthy delays in evaluating this medium-sized infill project have now threatened to derail the project entirely. The main reason for these delays is the Maryland State Highway Administration's refusal to provide the developer with meaningful feedback on the project until last spring, several years after the project was proposed to the county and city.

Rather than provide a fair process for the developer to evaluate any concerns about loading and unloading for the site, the SHA instead bogged the community down in a meaningless feel-good "visioning" process about modest improvements to the intersection. (The recommended improvements discussed were so modest, one wonders whether SHA's spending on "visioning" staff time and public input consultants could have covered a decent portion of the costs).

On the substance of SHA's concerns, the agency claims that the layby would be unsafe to bikers and pedestrians. In doing so, the agency ignores facts that should be plain to anyone who has viewed Takoma Junction in person.

1) Two crossing guards are stationed at the Junction during school times ensuring that children can traverse this intersection safely. Children walking to Piney Branch Elementary and Takoma Park Middle School generally cross Ethan Allen and Carroll with the help of these crossing guards in the morning, then walk down Grant to school. They don't generally walk in front of the project site.

2) There is negligible bike traffic at the site, and the bikers that do go through the site are presumably going to Metro in the AM, when most deliveries to the site are being made. In the mornings, bikers would be biking on the opposite side of the street from the project site. In the afternoons/evenings cyclists would be biking from Metro on the same side of the street as the

project, encountering plenty of traffic, but little chance from the current conditions at the site.

Cars and trucks are dangerous. As a resident of Philadelphia Avenue, I know this well. Yet this basic fact should not preclude us from improving urban intersections in Montgomery County. Awkward loading and unloading situations exist all over Washington DC. Pedestrians can, and do, walk on the other side of the street if they feel unsafe. Trucks unload at small grocery stores on busy streets that lack a layby. (See the below photo of Adams Morgan for evidence) Life goes on. The concern about pedestrian and biker safety at a largely upscale intersection strikes me as a precious expression of economic privilege and political power. If only there was so much concern from SHA and residents about the low-income pedestrians who routinely face severe danger on stretches of East-West Highway in Hyattsville or at the intersection of New Hampshire and University Avenues.

I am not a technical expert in planning nor traffic nor urban design, but these problems seem solvable if the parties want to solve them.

-Alan Zibel (32 Philadelphia Ave)

PHOTO: Two trucks unloading at a small grocery, sans layby in Washington DC (1864 Columbia Rd, NW)



From: [Tracy Duvall](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction (Agenda items 4a & 4b): please reject extension and proposal
Date: Sunday, September 12, 2021 2:47:19 PM

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

Dear Chair Anderson:

I am writing to support the staff's recommendations and the City of Takoma Park's position regarding Takoma Junction (Agenda Items 4a & 4b). Both the extension and the plan should be rejected.

I live directly across Columbia Ave from the proposed garage, so I have paid close attention to NDC's proposal and to its methods. In general, I would welcome a modest development in the parking lot, if it could meet the good planning standards that the City and County have set. Unfortunately, NDC's proposal does not come close. It:

- relies on a dangerous and traffic-snarling location for truck deliveries and a dangerous driveway location, both of which the SHA has rejected repeatedly
- creates a parking deficit of at least 70 spaces, endangering nearby businesses
- significantly reduces the wooded area and the number of trees
- imposes a parking garage on a residential area – not screened by vegetation, thanks to a fire-access lane
- greatly increases truck and other traffic on residential streets
- worsen delays at an already overburdened intersection, resulting in life-threatening delays to emergency vehicles from the fire station
- exacerbates stormwater-management problems, and
- fails to provide sufficient public gathering space.

Rather than attempting to build a right-sized, workable development, NDC's proposal requires multiple waivers from good planning regulations. NDC's attitude has been to ignore anything but their desire to maximize square-footage while presenting their plan as a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. Moreover, throughout this process, NDC has demonstrated an alarming level of bullying behavior and apparent mendacity.

For all of these reasons, I urge you to reject both NDC's proposal and their request for an extension. It's time to pull the plug.

Thank you for your attention,

Tracy

 Tracy Duvall, PhD
 7125 Poplar Ave

From: [Marcie Stickle/Geo French](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Bogdan, Grace](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction, Item 4B*, French/Stickle, Hearing, 9/15/21, Submitted 9/13/21
Date: Monday, September 13, 2021 5:26:10 PM
Attachments: [Takoma Junction Testimony by French Stickle 9 13 21.docx](#)

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

Testimony of George French & Marcie Stickle
Takoma Junction Hearing, Planning Board, 9/15/21
Reference: "Takoma Junction
Mandatory Referral # MR2021019, Preliminary Plan # 120190150, Site Plan #
820190090,"
Item 4B*

TO: Planning Board Chair Casey Anderson & Planning Board Members, 9/13/21

We are totally opposed to this project by NDC in Takoma Junction.

We support the Planning Staff Report. Planning Staff, Takoma Park City Council & City Manager, several State Highway Administration Offices, and community organizations have all expressed opposition to this ill-conceived project. We join together with them in opposition.

NDC's character is also suspect. They attempted to damage one of the most important and respected Takoma Park long-lived businesses, the Takoma Park Silver Spring Coop [40 years], and community anchor. NDC had to be sued in order to rescind its demand to close the subleased Parking & Delivery Access Lot needed for the Coop to conduct its business.

Ever since the layby was proposed by NDC, it always struck us as being totally unsafe and unworkable. SHA agrees and has repeatedly rejected the layby scenarios floated by NDC.

Other issues not remedied by NDC include tree preservation on the site, and public gathering space not delivered.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you unanimously reject this project. Thank you.

George French, 510 Albany Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, marcipro@aol.com
Marcie Stickle, 8515 Greenwood Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, marcipro@aol.com

Testimony of George French & Marcie Stickle

Takoma Junction Hearing, Planning Board, 9/15/21

Reference: "Takoma Junction

Mandatory Referral # MR2021019, Preliminary Plan # 120190150, Site Plan # 820190090," Item 4B*

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Other issues not remedied by NDC include tree preservation on the site, and public gathering space not delivered.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you unanimously reject this project. Thank you.

George French, 510 Albany Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, marcipro@aol.com

Marcie Stickle, 8515 Greenwood Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912, marcipro@aol.com

From: [Keith Kozloff](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: RE: comments on Takoma Junction Development Project for September 15 hearing
Date: Monday, September 13, 2021 7:24:14 PM

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

I would like to append the following onto my previous comments: Given the recent emergence of improper political interference with the State Highway Administration's determination on this project, I request that the Planning Commission delay further consideration of the project until it holds a public hearing into such interference with SHA's disapproval of the layby.

From: MCP-Chair [mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 2:31 PM
To: Keith Kozloff <keith.kozloff@verizon.net>
Subject: RE: comments on Takoma Junction Development Project for September 15 hearing

Good afternoon,

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

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
www.MontgomeryPlanningBoard.org

From: Keith Kozloff <keith.kozloff@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 9:11 PM
To: Bogdan, Grace <grace.bogdan@montgomeryplanning.org>; Dickel, Stephanie <Stephanie.Dickel@montgomeryplanning.org>; Hisel-McCoy, Elza <elza.hisel-mccoy@montgomeryplanning.org>; MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: comments on Takoma Junction Development Project for September 15 hearing

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

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board and staff,

I live on Sycamore Avenue in Takoma Park. As you may know, my block would be among the most affected by the proposed NDC development. From what I understand about the status of the process, the project is effectively dead. This is a major disappointment to me because the status quo parking lot underuses valuable urban infill space and poses effluent run off problems. More importantly, shutting down this project represents a lost opportunity to revitalize Takoma Junction because no sane developer would subject themselves to the risk, time and expense to propose something on an intrinsically difficult piece of property. And without the project as an impetus for improvement, we will likely never see a reconfiguration of the problematic intersection at the Junction. Given that many urban retail stores make use of laybys, I am confused why this issue was not resolvable. All in all, I am disappointed that the end result of the lengthy and expensive permitting process at all levels of government merely maintains the unsatisfactory status quo at Takoma Junction in perpetuity. Thank you for your consideration.

Kind Regards
Keith Kozloff
MS Urban Planning

From: [Carter Dougherty](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#)
Cc: [Neal S. Cohen](#)
Subject: Comment on consideration of Takoma Junction project and Franchot involvement
Date: Monday, September 13, 2021 9:57:31 PM
Attachments: [Planning Board comment- TJ & Franchot.pdf](#)
[Takoma Junction 4.pdf](#)
[Takoma Junction 2.pdf](#)
[Takoma Junction 1.pdf](#)
[Takoma Junction 3.pdf](#)

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

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

Please find attached a memo regarding your consideration of the Takoma Junction project and the application by the Neighborhood Development Company for an extension of its application. In brief, we document extensive political interference by Maryland Comptroller and gubernatorial candidate Peter Franchot at the city, county, and state level, in particular at the State Highway Administration.

Also attached are four supporting documents obtained via a public records request.

Thank you,
Carter Dougherty & Neal Cohen

Sept. 13, 2021

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
FROM: Carter Dougherty and Neal Cohen/Takoma Park
RE: Sept. 15 meeting re Takoma Junction project

The Montgomery County Planning Board should delay the approval process for the Takoma Junction development. Then, it should investigate and make sure that the key decision -- that of the State Highway Administration, to reject the loading/unloading concept known as a lay-by -- was not tainted by undue political interference and was, in fact, based solely on expert analysis.

The Planning Board is chartered to act independently and that is all we are asking this Board to do: exercise its independent professional judgment. It seems difficult to imagine that grocery stores in cities such as D.C. and NY, can have large semi-trailers offload safely outside their facilities using lay-bys, but that somehow tiny Takoma Park, Maryland cannot make this happen. The reason it is not happening here seems pretty clear: ***Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot.***

All available evidence suggests that Franchot, the second-most powerful official in Maryland, and current gubernatorial candidate, has repeatedly interfered in the Takoma Junction revitalization process for what he perceived to be the benefit of a business located a stone's throw away from his own home. He has leaned on city officials, county reviewers, and state agencies -- all involving a development project that is less than 100 yards from his front door on Sycamore Avenue in Takoma Park.

The approval of the lay-by through the State Highway Administration (SHA) is now the main stumbling block to finally getting actual building done at Takoma Junction. SHA rejected the current iteration of the lay-by (a loading/unloading concept involving a cutout in the road so trucks can stop without backing up traffic) in April, when the Takoma Park City Council was on the verge of approving the revised site plan. From there, it was to go to the Montgomery County Planning Board, whose approval would open the door to building permits and, finally, building.

Now the Planning Board is [considering](#) whether to grant Neighborhood Development Company (NDC), the firm that now has a 99-year lease on the Takoma Junction property, an extension on its application, or whether to deny the extension and reject its application altogether. But before they do any of that, they need to consider Franchot's highly inappropriate role in the whole process.

At a minimum, we need to know more about Franchot's role at the city, county, and state levels before the Planning Board rejects either NDC's application, or its request for an extension. And, SHA needs to reveal more about exactly what Franchot (and his staff) said to them and what they told him. It's time to shine a light on the process involved for a transportation project that was supposed to have a straightforward, expert-level review, not sustained resistance from a powerful state official doing favors for a high-end grocery store near his own home.

Franchot has been a public voice in support of the neighboring Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op, which is officially neutral on the question of the development, even though opponents of it constantly invoke the Co-op's name in their protestations. In 2017, Franchot obtained a [\\$500,000 Maryland state grant](#) for the Co-op (it's a matter of public record), an odd allocation of taxpayer money given the Co-op's steady cash flow and the fact that Takoma Park, far from being a food desert, is surrounded by grocery stores.

Franchot Promised a Fight

In December 2016, Franchot had already [appeared](#) at the store to make a baldly political statement: "I'm not term-limited, and I will be here, and I am going to be someone that you can come to with any problem." In the context of [the moment](#) -- just after Takoma Park signed a development agreement with NDC -- Franchot was clearly promising to use his influence not as a customer but as Maryland comptroller to fight the development. And that's what he did.

Takoma Park City Council members have said publicly that Franchot contacted them during the long city process for approving the site plans for the development. What's less appreciated is that Franchot privately applied pressure to terminate the development outright, while dangling the idea to council members that he would get money from the state so the Co-op could buy the neighboring parcel, instead of a private developer. Former Takoma Park Council member Rizwan Qureshi felt compelled to address Franchot's pressure during an [October 2017 council meeting](#), saying that he was "shocked" to get a call from the Comptroller offering this deal in explicit terms.

That pressure wasn't just odd, like the grant Franchot got; it was absolutely inappropriate. But it didn't stop there.

After securing the grant in 2017, Franchot had a meeting with Casey Anderson, the chairman of the Montgomery County Planning Board in January 2018. From what we've

been able to learn, Franchot waltzed in expecting to throw his weight around and squash the development but was completely unbriefed on any of the details. It ended inconclusively. Mr. Anderson behaved appropriately. Not so Franchot.

Pressured SHA Repeatedly

Franchot continued to pressure other agencies involved in the process, and none appeared to be more vulnerable to his wrath than the State Highway Administration, which was run by Greg Slater until he was promoted to Maryland secretary of transportation in December 2019.

In his call with former Takoma Park council member Qureshi, Franchot [said](#) he'd spoken with people "much higher up" in the state administration, and boasted that he met with someone from the state Department of Transportation "every two weeks," Qureshi reported.

Through a Maryland public records request (see attached), we have obtained documents that indicate Franchot involved himself in SHA's review of the Takoma Junction project at numerous points. Given Qureshi's statement, what we got in writing is probably a fraction of what went on. But consider:

- In December 2017, Franchot demanded a meeting with Slater and the relevant engineer for the Takoma Park region "to discuss the Silver Spring-Takoma Park Co-op."
- In January 2018, Franchot's staff thanked Slater for a recent meeting and asked for a copy of a map Slater had used because "the Comptroller preferred that version to the one we are currently using."
- In August 2019, Franchot demanded a meeting with Slater "to receive an update on the Takoma Park Junction" [*sic*].

The most revealing email was one dated July 1, 2019 in which Len Foxwell, a longtime, now former, adviser to Franchot, writes an email to Slater asking for a time at which he can speak to Franchot "for a question that has NOTHING TO DO [*sic*] with ... the Takoma Junction." The tone was clear: Foxwell was apologetic about having come to Slater *so many times* about this little development in Takoma Park.

Outside Comptroller's Role

Clearly, Franchot had a bit of an obsession. And let's not kid ourselves about what Franchot's *interest* in the subject would have conveyed to state officials. The comptroller

is an influential figure, and Franchot's gubernatorial ambitions were well-known. Any official would have found Franchot's interest intimidating. (When speaking with Takoma Park's Qureshi, Franchot casually mentioned a Maryland mayor "whose political career was ruined" by pushing too hard on a development project.)

Check out the Maryland Comptroller's [website](#) and you won't find anything about a role in private development projects, or transportation; it's an agency concerned with fiscal probity. The Comptroller is also a member of the Maryland Board of Public Works, a fairly unique institution among state agencies [charged](#) with "ensuring that significant State expenditures are necessary and appropriate, fiscally responsible, fair, and lawful." It's hard to see how a half million dollar grant to a grocery store in an extremely gentrified neighborhood falls under any of these responsibilities, to say nothing of Franchot's repeated demands to SHA and Slater.

The Planning Board staff is currently recommending that the board, at its meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 15, reject NDC's application and its request for an extension. The [rationale](#) is the lack of approval by SHA, and, by extension, the lack of approval by the Takoma Park City Council, of NDC's current site plan. The city rejected the NDC plan because SHA had not approved the lay-by. But the staff recommendation is premised on the notion that NDC got a reasonable, expert-driven consideration of its plan at the state level.

However, Franchot interfered repeatedly in the SHA process, as part of a broader campaign to subvert the development.

No Respect for Democracy

Franchot's actions also show a breathtaking lack of respect for the local democratic process in Takoma Park. The City Council voted repeatedly to advance the project. And Mayor Kate Stewart, who has shown endless patience in shepherding the project through years of twists and turns, won the 2020 mayoral election by a nearly two-to-one margin against a Franchot-endorsed candidate whose bid was built around the issue of ending the Takoma Junction project. Still Franchot pushed state agencies privately to do what Takoma Park voters, over 4 different city elections, refused to do: kill the development.

The Planning Board owes not just NDC but the public a delay in the approval process so that we can all learn more about Franchot's role in SHA's decision. And then maybe, just maybe, this small development project on a tiny plot of land, long delayed for so many pointless reasons, can finally get a fair and impartial hearing.

From: [Pfeiffer, Callie](#)
To: gslater@sha.state.md.us
Cc: [Mitch Baldwin](#)
Subject: Takoma Park Junction
Date: Monday, August 5, 2019 11:08:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Good morning Administrator Slater,

Comptroller Franchot would like to request a meeting to receive an update on the Takoma Park Junction. Would it be possible to do so here in the Treasury building on September 9th? If not, we can look into another day!

Cheers,
Callie

Callahan Pfeiffer
Deputy Chief of Staff & Scheduler
Office of the Comptroller
cpfeiffer@comp.state.md.us
410-260-6054



From: [Foxwell, Len](#)
To: gslater@sha.state.md.us
Subject: Greg...do you have 5 minutes...
Date: Monday, July 1, 2019 4:06:00 PM

...for a question that has NOTHING TO DO with either the P3 or the Takoma Junction? But is still important to Peter?

From: [GENTILE, ANGELA](#)
To: gslater@sha.state.md.us
Subject: Takoma Park Junction Map
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 1:59:00 PM

Hi Greg-

Thank you again for meeting with us in Annapolis about the Takoma Park Junction Project. I was wondering if you had a digital copy of the project map that you brought to the meeting. The Comptroller preferred that version to the one we currently are using.

Thanks again!

Angela Gentile, Esq.
External Content Manager
Comptroller of Maryland
Office: [\(410\) 260-7210](tel:(410)260-7210)
Cell: [\(443\) 949-1583](tel:(443)949-1583)

To: shaadmin@sha.state.md.us
Subject: Meeting with Comptroller Peter Franchot
Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 11:25:23 AM

Dear Mr. Slater:

Comptroller Peter Franchot would like to meet with you and the District Engineer who is within the Takoma Park region to discuss the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Food Co-Op, 201 Ethan Allen Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912. Are you two available to meet on either Monday, December 18th at 3:15 p.m. or Wednesday, December 20th at 2:45 p.m. at the Comptroller's Office in Annapolis?

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best wishes,
Craig

Craig J. Zucker
Office of Comptroller Peter Franchot
Cell: (301) 213-6696

From: [Paul Chrostowski](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: stormwater-takoma@googlegroups.com
Subject: September 15 Takoma Junction Proposal Hearing
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 9:27:32 AM
Attachments: [TSS letter on Junction 9-13-21.docx.pdf](#)

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

Dear Mr. Anderson

Please find attached a letter from Takoma Stormwater Solutions regarding the Takoma Junction development proposal. We request Planning Board disapproval due to serious deficiencies in the stormwater management plan for this project. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Paul Chrostowski
Takoma Stormwater Solutions
Takoma Park

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

September 13, 2021

Casey Anderson
 Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
 2425 Reddie Drive
 Wheaton MD 20902

MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Re: Takoma Junction (plans 120190150 and 820190090); Hearing September 15, 2021

Dear Mr Anderson:

Takoma Stormwater Solutions (TSS) appreciates having this opportunity to provide public comment regarding environmental aspects of this proposed development. TSS is a project of the [Takoma Alliance for Local Living Economy \(TALLE\)](#). Although the development plans have gone through several iterations, little attention has been paid to water management (stormwater, surface water, construction dewatering, and groundwater). Although stormwater is ostensibly in the purview of the City of Takoma Park ("City"), the City has abrogated this responsibility and has an inherent conflict of interest regarding stormwater management (SWM) at the development site. Groundwater and surface water are waters of the State and, as such, not within the purview of the City. This site is not suited for this development from a hydrologic standpoint and the proposed development is far too large, exceeding the hydrologic carrying capacity of the underlying soils. Because of site constraints, any analysis of water resources needs to be comprehensive and holistic. This analysis has not, and will not, be undertaken by the City. As a result, TSS requests the Planning Board disapprove this proposed plan in the interests of protecting public safety and welfare.

The current SWM plan is little different from the original plan submitted several years ago. On March 11, 2019, a careful analysis determined that the concept plan was incomplete and inadequate. The immediate downgradient neighborhood, centering on Poplar Avenue, arguably has some of the worst SWM problems in the City. Residents requested that the City require the preparation of detailed geotechnical and hydrogeological studies, retention of an independent engineer, and conduct an open and transparent public process. Local resident environmental professionals offered assistance to the City *pro bono* to implement these recommendations, but no response has ever been received.

As an example, the design documents submitted by NDC to the Planning Board propose to treat only a small fraction of the stormwater falling on the site. Based on NDC's data, about 34% will be treated for a 1-year storm (2.57 inches), 28% for a 2-year storm (3.1 inches), 18% for a 10-year storm (4.77 inches), and 11% for a 100 -year storm (8.23 inches). These calculations do not account for increased stormwater volumes due to climate change. The remainder of the stormwater that is

not being treated will runoff either onto Carroll Ave or down the hill toward Columbia Avenue. This runoff will be exacerbated by the clear-cutting of trees required by the proposal. Currently, 37% of rainwater is potentially controlled by infiltration through permeable soil at the site, therefore, it is apparent that stormwater impacts will worsen if this development is approved.

The authority to manage stormwater in the City is vested in the Stormwater Management Board (City Charter Section 1101). Charter Section 1103 notes, “The Board shall have **full control** over said stormwater systems...” As constituted, the Board consists of the Mayor and City Council. This Board has not met to discuss the Junction development and has not responded to a formal request to meet in open session, despite the significant and controversial nature of the proposed project and the large number of residents that have voiced concern about stormwater and groundwater. In fact, the City has engaged in no public process whatsoever regarding SWM and has not even made its file on this project electronically accessible to the public.

There is also an inherent potential conflict of interest in the City even carrying out the review and approval of a SWM plan. The City, through the City Manager, is listed as the project owner. City representatives including the Mayor and former City Manager have promoted the development plan in public statements. The former City Manager acknowledged publicly that City Staff function as “champions of the project”. The City’s designated representative is an employee of NDC who, through its engineer, prepared the SWM Concept Plan. Thus, the City is moving forward to review and approve a SWM plan that was prepared by its own representative. This review and approval will be performed by City Staff who are subordinate to the City Manager. Given the City’s stated interest in obtaining approval of this plan, it is difficult to believe that any such review would be unbiased and sufficiently rigorous to “protect, maintain, and enhance the public health, safety, and general welfare” against negative impacts of stormwater as called for in Section 16.04.020 of the City Code.

The significance of groundwater cannot be overlooked here. The proposed development and the SWM Concept plan will essentially divert a large amount of stormwater to groundwater through a bioretention facility and a green roof. Although the City has not conducted any geotechnical studies at the site that are publicly available, soil borings advanced through an Environmental Site Assessment show the presence of many clay layers and bedrock under the site¹. These clay layers will trap groundwater that infiltrates through the ESD facilities and it will flow down the natural gradient to potentially impact the basements of residents on Columbia and Poplar Avenue and adjacent properties that already are subject to flooding even without this additional water. This is a known hydrogeological phenomenon in Takoma Park. For example, Montgomery College’s bioretention facility at its Pavilion 3 building in Takoma Park had the overall effect of diverting stormwater to groundwater that impacted downgradient properties. Groundwater is not within the City’s current purview; however, these down-gradient residents deserve protection from potential adverse effects of this development. This could be provided either by the County or by the City convening the Stormwater Board for hearings and drafting of groundwater management regulations.

¹ RK&K 2013. Takoma Junction Redevelopment, Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. May 2013.

Surface water from the site currently flows out onto Carroll Avenue and travels overland to Grant, Ethan Allen, Sycamore, and the continuation of Carroll Avenues from where it is discharged into Sligo Creek via the Maple Avenue outfalls². This fact has been disputed by City Staff despite the observations and photographic documentation provided by residents that this is the case. Based on the current concept plan, any stormwater that is not diverted to groundwater will pass either overland downslope toward Columbia Avenue or through a City conveyance and ultimately be discharged into Sligo Creek after daylighting along the Takoma Branch in Prince George's County. No analysis has been conducted on the potential impacts to Sligo Creek or Takoma Branch. As waters of the state, these too, deserve full protection as do our neighbors across the county line.

There are numerous additional issues with this Concept Plan including the lack of consideration of recent increased storm volumes that are becoming more frequent as a result of climate change. A recent independent study by engineers at Drexel University shows that rainfall in Takoma Park could increase as much as 45% by the year 2040 and 53% by the year 2070 compared to current design parameters³. The City has declared that a climate emergency exists yet fails to undertake even the minimum analysis to protect its residents from the effects of climate change.

All of the aforementioned factors combine to create the conditions that argue for disapproval of this project by the Planning Board.

Sincerely,

Paul Chrostowski, Ph.D., QEP

on behalf of

Takoma Stormwater Solutions

Takoma Park, Maryland

² Note that the City stormwater drainage system is sparse in this part of the City compared to other locations (NPDES Phase II Stormwater Program, 12/27/2018).

³ Drexel University 2020. "Stormwater Planning under Climate Change Report". Prepared for Takoma Park Public Works, September 2, 2020.

August 10, 2020

Elza Hisel-McCoy
Chief, Area 1 Division
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20912

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy,

As the Planning Board reviews the latest version of the Neighborhood Development Company's (NDC) design plans for the Takoma Junction project, we residents of Takoma Park and neighboring communities in Montgomery County remain concerned about the equity implications of the planned development. We respectfully request that the Board include the critical concept of racial equity in your review and discussion of the project. Consistent with Montgomery County's growing support for racial equity and social justice as factors in county decision-making **and** the Planning Board's unanimous and strong support for the new County legislation, we ask that you do what the City of Takoma Park has not: cast a critical eye on a proposal that threatens the destruction of a racial minority-majority business community in order to fund an over-sized development that will generate the highest rents in the City and inexorably lead to increased gentrification.

The issue of racial equity is of paramount importance in this particular development decision for two significant reasons: one, the current Junction business community, successful and diverse, proudly exhibits the very combination of businesses sought by the County's racial equity goals; and second, at the same time, the most basic features of the proposed NDC development threaten the survival of this unique business community. We greatly appreciate your serious attention to these concerns.

First, we urge you to consider the uniqueness of the Takoma Junction business community in terms of racial diversity. Based on our best estimate, 14 of the 25 businesses currently in operation at the Junction are owned by people of color, including six by African-Americans. These Black and Brown-owned businesses include an automobile repair/electric refueling station that was the first in the country to completely convert over from fossil fuels; a music school with over 250 students; a veterinarian's clinic, a daycare center, a naturopathic doctor, and a beauty salon that just celebrated 31 years in business at the Junction, among others. These businesses have emerged largely on their own, through the vision and dedication of their owners, and they represent *exactly* the type of resilient, locally-owned businesses that the city claims it wants to foster in its new development. It is worth noting that several of these business leaders testified or submitted comments with concerns about the proposed development and that the city failed to engage the business leaders of color in their plans for the development until very late in the process.

Then we have the thriving Takoma Park-Silver Spring Food Co-op, a natural foods store with many thousands of members that features one of the most diverse workforces within the city confines of Takoma Park: 42 of 50 employees of the Co-op identify as people of color, and those 50 workers come from 30 different countries. These largely Black and Brown and unionized workers are paid a living wage with full health benefits, features all too rare in today's economy. What's more, the Co-op offers unique indigenous food, and health and wellness products that draw a diverse clientele of loyal customers from throughout the metropolitan area. Even a random visit to this business during working hours would reveal that a significant percentage of Co-op shoppers are people of color. Also, the Co-op contributes substantially to local and county-wide initiatives focused on ensuring food security for low income residents, many of whom are people of color.

Additionally, the public transportation and parking options currently available at the Junction facilitate access to the Junction's businesses and products for a diverse body of customers. The eastbound buses stop

directly in front of the City parking lot, the site of the proposed development, and give easy access to Junction customers bound to and from a multiplicity of lower-income and affordable apartment buildings in the eastern part of the county. WMATA statistics on the F4 line, which were presented by city staff to the council on January 15, 2020, show that over 95% of riders on these lines are people of color. A long-fought-for crosswalk at Grant Avenue offers a convenient pedestrian crossing to apartment-dwellers on Maple Avenue and adjoining streets. And the parking at the city-owned lot has become essential to the thriving minority businesses located across Carroll and Ethan Allen Avenues.

What has emerged at the Junction over the years is a business community with a strong appeal to people of color, one that has *revitalized itself* largely on its own - not a community in desperate need of revitalization.

In fact, the greatest threat to racial progress demonstrated by the Junction today is the NDC development plan, which we believe threatens the racial equity of the Junction on multiple fronts, notably these:

- **The projected high rents proposed in the current NDC plan represent a dramatic escalation of prevailing rents at the Junction and threaten to swamp the existing small businesses in a wave of gentrification.** In the figures we have been able to obtain, NDC's projected base rental rates of \$45 per square foot far exceed the rents paid by existing Junction businesses. These businesses rent at much closer to a \$30 per square foot range. As you know, rent differentials of this scope inexorably force existing rents upward. Spring Mill Bakery, one of our Takoma Junction businesses, closed its Bethesda location due to such escalating costs, and the development here could lead to closure of this, and other Junction businesses. This threat has intensified as nearly all local businesses are struggling in the wake of COVID-19. Any boost in the cost of their leases could be terminal. Disturbingly, the Takoma Park City Manager on July 22 in a statement about the Junction, said that business lease rates won't be affected because many businesses own their properties. We implore you to examine this carefully. In most cases, it is the White-owned businesses that own and the Black and Brown-owned ones that are leased. This is not absolute, but it is the dominant trend. To focus exclusively on predominantly White owners is precisely our concern about racial equity at the Junction.
- **The proposed elimination of the major eastbound bus stop deprives shoppers and transit passengers – disproportionately people of color based on local and national studies – of easy access to an important source of food and transportation.** There has been no suggested alternative placement of this east bound bus stop on either Ethan Allen or Carroll Avenue. There is no alternative proposed by the developer or the city, or any that we can envision, that would provide comparable access to the area businesses; customers with laundry or bags of food or other goods would be forced to carry them unreasonable distances to gain eastbound bus access.
- **Relegating all large loading and unloading operations for the entire development to a layby on Ethan Allen Avenue presents a serious if not fatal obstacle to the survivability of the Co-op.** The Co-op currently relies heavily on the city-owned lot that it rents for daily loading and unloading of its food trucks. To throw all major loading and unloading activity –including trash and recycling pickup for the entire development – into a small, contained space immediately adjacent to a congested state highway and pedestrian crosswalks is a recipe for hazardous gridlock. Add to the layby mix the inevitable profusion of Uber and Lyft vehicles, passenger car and taxi drop-offs, and the frustration of truck drivers waiting for loading space, and you have a built-in dysfunctionality almost certain to damage the Co-op's need for loading and unloading. The layby is thus a huge threat to the Co-op, a bastion of racial diversity in Takoma Park.

To statements that the Co-op has actually endorsed the layby concept and the proposed development, some context is necessary. It is obvious to us as long-time Co-op supporters and observers of the

business there that the Co-op is totally dependent on the current Junction parking lot for the unloading of food and other goods to keep itself in operation. If the city, or the city's chosen developer, decides at any moment to deny the Co-op access to the lot, the Co-op is likely finished as a viable business in that location. Our sense is that the Co-op is simply not free - especially under the gag order imposed by the City and NDC - to articulate its real needs and preferences in regards to loading and unloading. To us, Co-op acceptance of the layby concept was forced on the Co-op and does not in any real way reflect on the true business reality of the situation. We are not party to the inside information on all this, but our belief is that the poorly-conceived layby will kill the Co-op, but the Co-op simply isn't allowed to say this.

- **The parking currently offered in the city-owned lot is vital to many of the small businesses currently thriving at the Junction, many of them Black-owned. The developer's unwillingness to share detailed information about prospective parking fees in the new development heightens concerns about the ongoing affordability of parking in the proposed underground lot.** Will people be willing to pay for parking just to drop off dry-cleaning or pick up a gallon of milk? Add to this the inevitable bottleneck of cars seeking to enter or exit to the development's stores and restaurants onto a busy highway with no traffic light and an inadequate line of sight and you will have effectively removed convenient and affordable parking from a business community that has come to rely on it. While the City of Takoma Park and NDC have no obligation to provide free parking, the Board should not facilitate the undermining of conditions that have allowed Junction businesses to develop and thrive.
- **We were distressed that the City failed to actually meet with the local Black and Brown-owned businesses until City negotiations and planning were over five years in the making.** This only changed when several of the Junction small business owners testified before the City and submitted a [letter](#) raising concerns about the development.
- **With leadership from City Council member Jarrett Smith, the City passed a resolution in April 2017 [Committing the City Council to Systematically and Deliberately Apply a Racial Equity Lens in Decision-Making](#).** Unfortunately, despite this commitment, the City fell far short of its own standards on racial equity and the proposed Junction development, despite efforts by Council Member Smith to raise concerns. The City's [initial impact assessment](#) regarding racial equity and the Junction (September, 2017) indicated no impact and involved minimal if any analysis or consultation with local residents or businesses. It was cursory at best, deeply distressing and dismissive of the racial equity impacts of the proposed development – so much so that the City subsequently elected to revise its position on racial equity and the proposed development twice in the wake of public pressure and well-attended community meetings on racial equity and the Junction. The initial revised racial equity position is [here](#) (May, 2018). Again, this second racial equity impact statement, produced by unnamed staff and by an unknown rubric, was perfunctory and called out as wildly inaccurate by Black residents who testified at City Council. Finally, the City drafted [a resolution](#) (July, 2018) authorizing NDC to submit its proposal to the Montgomery County Planning Department. This resolution downgraded language from racial equity impacts to racial equity considerations regarding the Junction. The City's record is less than stellar and suggests a lack of institutional commitment to racial equity at the Junction.
- **Many residents are disturbed by the selection of a development company that has faced litigation from small displaced businesses as well as protests from Black Lives Matter for their padlocking of four black-owned businesses within twenty-four hours of taking control of a set of properties slated for development.** See <https://archive.org/details/DeveloperAdrienWashingtonHomeDemo1062018540p> and <https://dcindymedia.org/node/2048>

- **The potential removal of the long-fought-for north-south crosswalk across the state highway at Grant Avenue discriminates against pedestrians and Junction customers seeking safe foot access to affordable housing and subsidized housing just blocks to the north.** This is also a “Safe-Route-To-School” zone for over 200 students. One of the two most recent plans includes the crosswalk. One eliminates it.
- **None of the foregoing, of course, speaks to the incredible difficulties to be imposed on existing businesses during the construction of NDC's huge project.** Given the inevitable disturbance, *likely for years*, to the existing transportation network, people will avoid the Junction whenever possible, whether traveling on foot, bicycle, car or bus. Already grid-locked, the Junction will get worse. Even if cars arrive, they will find few places to park to drop off or pick up dry cleaning, unload a sick pet, or leave packages for FedEx or UPS deliveries. In short, patrons will go elsewhere, choosing more convenient commercial venues, and these businesses and their employees, largely minorities, will lose.
- **Construction disturbances, including vibration damage to existing buildings, should be of critical concern, rather than mere inconveniences in the service of the developer.** These buildings are old, and damage could even render some uninhabitable. The cost for rebuilding or significant repair, and the time a business would be closed during such, could very well cause some to be put out of business. Before any proposal is accepted, NDC should be required to put forth a feasible plan for the protection of the current businesses, one which shows a construction-staging plan that will permit existing businesses to continue to operate without being damaged by foreseeable construction issues.

Taken individually, any of the factors listed above would present a threat to the stable, diverse Junction community; taken as a whole, the threat to racial equity and our multicultural business community posed by the plan is substantial and disconcerting. Racial equity, long valued in Montgomery County, continues to be embraced with renewed urgency and new initiatives for the County. We applaud the recent [Racial Equity and Social Justice Act](#), sponsored and passed unanimously by the Council, requiring "each Department and Office to develop a racial equity and social justice action plan, and determine the implications for, and consequences of, County governmental actions." No development should jeopardize these equity goals, especially through predictable disruption to a thriving, vibrant, diverse business community with deep community roots.

We are not anti-development. In fact, we support the reasonable and appropriate development of this city property, and we believe that designs exist that meet that goal. What is mandatory, though, is a development plan that recognizes the value of the unique degree of racial equity currently realized at Takoma Junction. A thoughtful, inclusive plan for development is crucial so that the developer, with the tacit approval of the City, is not allowed to convert publicly-owned property to a privately-owned for-profit development, ostensibly in the name of promoting racial equity, but which ironically would gentrify and weaken the racially diverse business community we seek to protect.

While it may not be the Board's job to resolve political disagreements in our community, it is in accordance with the Board's mandate to disapprove and/or condition its approval of this proposed development with consideration of racial equity and social justice, and we call upon the Board to protect this irreplaceable racially diverse section of our community. We appreciate your careful review of these concerns, factors that remain critical to the ongoing health of the Junction with its unique, diverse character, as well as the City and County as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration, and we respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you to discuss these concerns. We also look forward to discussing these issues in a public forum, whenever a public hearing on the NDC proposal is scheduled. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Very sincerely yours,

Badia AlBanna	Takoma Park	
Matias Altamirano	Silver Spring	
Dr. Nazirahk Amen	Takoma Park	Junction Business Owner
Ethan Amitay	Silver Spring	
Debby Anker	Takoma Park	
Jenny Apostol	Takoma Park	
Marcel Bailly	Hyattsville	
Noahgrace Bauman	Takoma Park	
Isabel Blanco	Takoma Park	
Michael Blau	Takoma Park	
Nadine Bloch	Takoma Park	
Michele Bollinger	Takoma Park	
Vicki B. Booker	Takoma Park	
Robin Broad	Takoma Park	
Andrea Brown	Takoma Park	
Gordon Brown	Takoma Park	
Elise Bryant	Silver Spring	
Dr. Joanne Carey, DVM	Wash., D.C.	Junction Business Owner
Linda Carlson	Takoma Park	
Gaynel Catherine	Takoma Park	
Jesse Broad-Cavanagh	Takoma Park	
John Cavanagh	Takoma Park	
Lois Chalmers	Takoma Park	
Paul Chrostowski	Takoma Park	
Julia Aikmen Cifuentes	Silver Spring	
Joan Clement	Takoma Park	
Susan Comfort	Takoma Park	
Colleen Cordes	Takoma Park	
Marguerite Cyr	Takoma Park	
Ellen Daniels	Takoma Park	
Kerry Danner	Takoma Park	
Jimmy Daukas	Takoma Park	
Kathryn Desmond	Takoma Park	
Nico DiPaul	Takoma Park	
Ashe Durban	Takoma Park	
Karen Elrich	Takoma Park	
James Far	Takoma Park	
Susan Fleck	Takoma Park	
Barbara Francisco	Silver Spring	
Jill Gay	Takoma Park	
Wilbert Glover	Adelphi	
Maria Gonzalez	Takoma Park	
Robert Goo	Takoma Park	
Beth Grupp	Takoma Park	
Mary Beth Hatem	Takoma Park	
Larry Himelfarb	Takoma Park	
Jane Hsaio	Takoma Park	

Paul Huebner	Takoma Park
Susan Huffman	Takoma Park
Jamie Iwugo	Takoma Park
Denise Jones	Takoma Park
Kopal Jha	Takoma Park
Byrne Kelly	Takoma Park
Eleanor Kerlow	Takoma Park
Sally Ours Kern	Takoma Park
Stephen Kern	Takoma Park
Merlyn Kettering	Takoma Park
Una Kettering	Takoma Park
Joe Klockner	Takoma Park
Adrian Kombe	Takoma Park
Emily Kombe	Takoma Park
Bruce Kozarsky	Takoma Park
Jessica Landman	Takoma Park
Bernita Leonard	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Rick Leonard	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Nery D. Licon	Takoma Park
Gimbiya Lim	Takoma Park & Washington, D.C.
Simone de Lima	Takoma Park
Carolyn Lowery	Takoma Park
Katherine McCarthy	Takoma Park
Marianne McNeil	Takoma Park
Amelia Marciano	Silver Spring
Maryam Mashayekhi	Rockville
Maureen Malloy	Silver Spring
Joann Malone	Takoma Park
Cynthia Mariel	Takoma Park
TJ Matthews	Takoma Park
Marc Mauer	Silver Spring
Denny May	Takoma Park
Ben Miller	Takoma Park
Sue Katz Miller	Takoma Park
Jacqueline Moore	Takoma Park
Sterling Mulbry	Takoma Park
Joshua O'Donnell	Takoma Park
Sarah Diamond O'Donnell	Takoma Park
Dara Orenstein	Takoma Park
Maureen O'Shanesy	Hyattsville
Bruce Phillips	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Inan Phillips	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Charles B. Poor	Takoma Park
Linda Rabben	Takoma Park
Ron Resetarits	Takoma Park
Susan Rogers	Takoma Park
Meg Royce	Takoma Park
Paulette Saunders	Adelphi
Jennifer Satlin-Fernandez	Takoma Park
Roger Schlegel	Takoma Park

Susan Schreiber
Megan Scribner
Eric Sepler
Jarrett Smith
Patrick Smith
Olly Swyers
Gabrielle Tayac
Betsy Taylor
Eliza Wapner
Dave Zirin

Takoma Park
Takoma Park
Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Takoma Park City Council Member, Ward 5
Takoma Park
Takoma Park
Takoma Park
Takoma Park
Takoma Park
Takoma Park

From: [Joan Meier](#)
To: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#)
Cc: [Roberta Valente](#)
Subject: comments on NDC proposal at TP Junction
Date: Monday, August 10, 2020 9:05:28 PM

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

Dear Elza

Thank you again for your time and explanations at tonight's zoom meeting about the junction development.

I have a couple pretty basic (and I think, pretty universal) concerns I would like to share with you and your staff.

First, let me say that having SOME kind of SOMETHING at the junction is absolutely desirable. The question is what kind of thing.

I have three over-arching concerns/problems with NDC's proposals/drawings to date.

1. The traffic situation, as I think you know, is ALREADY close to disastrous at this intersection. It's a bit of a nightmare to try to navigate it by car at all, during rush hours. Without some dramatic fixes (and I'm not sure what they would be), it is inconceivable that a substantial development like NDC will not make the traffic situation so much worse that it is a true disaster. I would urge your staff to condition any approval on the traffic situation being handled in a concrete, meaningful, acceptable manner that does not create still more incursions into the neighborhood.
2. The stormwater situation is already pretty close to disastrous (also). If I understood you correctly, however, that is not your staff's concern. Only the city's? If it is within your jurisdiction I hope you will mandate that any additional runoff be piped and kept entirely underground.
3. The rear facade: Right now when we walk up Columbia toward Sycamore, or up Poplar toward Columbia, we see a hill with a lot of trees on it, and we see the corner of the Co-op building (not overly attractive, I might add). The latest NDC drawing seems to portray a huge structure which will essentially overhang that hill, looking like a prison or institution which DOES NOT BELONG in our neighborhood. I have heard Kacy saying the drawing does not show the trees, etc, but my concern is whether the trees will be at the NDC/Carroll Ave level. If they are only on the hill (where they are now), the structure will be so much higher above Columbia and the hill that it will still stick out like a sore thumb. The key question is whether they can create a natural landscaping that actually HIDES that rear facade sufficiently to insulate us from it. We are way below them topographically and that is the core of the problem.

THANK YOU for your consideration of these matters.

Warmly
Joan Meier

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Joan S. Meier, Esq. , Professor of Clinical Law and
Director, National Family Violence Law Center at GW
George Washington University Law School
2000 G St. N.W. , Washington, D.C. 20052 (202) 994-2278
(Founder, Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project)



[Click here](#)

You can access most of my papers on the Social Science Research Network (SSRN) at
Joan Meier, <https://ssrn.com/author=55952>

From: [Bets Taylor](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: written testimony- Takoma Junction
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:32:53 AM
Attachments: [Letter from Community - Racial Equity and Takoma Junction 8-10-20 FINAL.pdf](#)

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

Attention: Casey Anderson, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board, 2425 Reddie Drive, Wheaton, MD 20902

Chair Anderson,

Thank you for taking the time to include a review of the racial equity impacts of the proposed development at Takoma Junction.

We appreciate the Board's commitment to racial equity and your efforts to integrate this concern into your decisions.

This focus may come as a surprise given the developer and his role as a prominent African American developer. I think everyone can appreciate Mr. Washington's skills as a developer and his superb education and communication capabilities. I have met with him personally and recognize his determination to build his company and his projects. I respect and admire him for it. Yet in this case, there are many Black and Brown people in Takoma Park who have voiced concerns about this particular development's potential impact on existing independent Brown and Black owned businesses at the Junction. The attached letter is signed by over 100 concerned citizens, including seven local business owners at the Junction. Business owners of color have repeatedly testified as well before the Takoma Park City Council, including a local veterinarian concerned about traffic congestion impacting her business as well as owners of a local business center, a plant nursery and healing business, hair salon, and auto service center - all repeatedly opposing the proposed NDC development due to concerns about harmful impacts on their enterprises.

In addition to concerns about rising rents and displaced businesses, the attached letter signed by over 100 individuals urges attention to the safety impacts for elderly and lower income people of color who are disproportionately represented among walkers and bus riders near the Junction, including those who must use the laundromat and those who seek ethnic foods and health products at the local food coop. The proposed development has been cited as failing to comply with SHA and Montgomery County transportation regulations, including those focused on safety of pedestrians, bikers and bus riders.

Finally, please do read the letter. It raises many concerns, including several that were not

addressed sufficiently by Mr. Elza Hisel-McCoy.

We appreciate that your staff and board have many things to consider as you weigh this important decision, but please do note that the Takoma Park Food Co-op is overwhelmingly staffed by Black and Brown workers, all of whom are paid a living wage with full health care benefits. When we ponder development and its purposes, surely one of these is to provide economic opportunity and secure jobs for the less advantaged among us. The existing businesses at the Junction are directly threatened by the proposed development and if we lose one or more of these businesses due to the NDC proposal, we will also lose vital jobs that bring economic prosperity to Montgomery County and security to our communities of color.

Thank you and the board for your careful consideration of these important issues. We were sorely disappointed that this letter and Mr. Hisel-McCoy's response were not included in the packet. We thank Ms. Grace Bogdan for rectifying this.

Sincerely,
Betsy Taylor
Dennis May
Isabel Blanco
Susan Schreiber

August 10, 2020

Elza Hisel-McCoy
Chief, Area 1 Division
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20912

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy,

As the Planning Board reviews the latest version of the Neighborhood Development Company's (NDC) design plans for the Takoma Junction project, we residents of Takoma Park and neighboring communities in Montgomery County remain concerned about the equity implications of the planned development. We respectfully request that the Board include the critical concept of racial equity in your review and discussion of the project. Consistent with Montgomery County's growing support for racial equity and social justice as factors in county decision-making **and** the Planning Board's unanimous and strong support for the new County legislation, we ask that you do what the City of Takoma Park has not: cast a critical eye on a proposal that threatens the destruction of a racial minority-majority business community in order to fund an over-sized development that will generate the highest rents in the City and inexorably lead to increased gentrification.

The issue of racial equity is of paramount importance in this particular development decision for two significant reasons: one, the current Junction business community, successful and diverse, proudly exhibits the very combination of businesses sought by the County's racial equity goals; and second, at the same time, the most basic features of the proposed NDC development threaten the survival of this unique business community. We greatly appreciate your serious attention to these concerns.

First, we urge you to consider the uniqueness of the Takoma Junction business community in terms of racial diversity. Based on our best estimate, 14 of the 25 businesses currently in operation at the Junction are owned by people of color, including six by African-Americans. These Black and Brown-owned businesses include an automobile repair/electric refueling station that was the first in the country to completely convert over from fossil fuels; a music school with over 250 students; a veterinarian's clinic, a daycare center, a naturopathic doctor, and a beauty salon that just celebrated 31 years in business at the Junction, among others. These businesses have emerged largely on their own, through the vision and dedication of their owners, and they represent *exactly* the type of resilient, locally-owned businesses that the city claims it wants to foster in its new development. It is worth noting that several of these business leaders testified or submitted comments with concerns about the proposed development and that the city failed to engage the business leaders of color in their plans for the development until very late in the process.

Then we have the thriving Takoma Park-Silver Spring Food Co-op, a natural foods store with many thousands of members that features one of the most diverse workforces within the city confines of Takoma Park: 42 of 50 employees of the Co-op identify as people of color, and those 50 workers come from 30 different countries. These largely Black and Brown and unionized workers are paid a living wage with full health benefits, features all too rare in today's economy. What's more, the Co-op offers unique indigenous food, and health and wellness products that draw a diverse clientele of loyal customers from throughout the metropolitan area. Even a random visit to this business during working hours would reveal that a significant percentage of Co-op shoppers are people of color. Also, the Co-op contributes substantially to local and county-wide initiatives focused on ensuring food security for low income residents, many of whom are people of color.

Additionally, the public transportation and parking options currently available at the Junction facilitate access to the Junction's businesses and products for a diverse body of customers. The eastbound buses stop

directly in front of the City parking lot, the site of the proposed development, and give easy access to Junction customers bound to and from a multiplicity of lower-income and affordable apartment buildings in the eastern part of the county. WMATA statistics on the F4 line, which were presented by city staff to the council on January 15, 2020, show that over 95% of riders on these lines are people of color. A long-fought-for crosswalk at Grant Avenue offers a convenient pedestrian crossing to apartment-dwellers on Maple Avenue and adjoining streets. And the parking at the city-owned lot has become essential to the thriving minority businesses located across Carroll and Ethan Allen Avenues.

What has emerged at the Junction over the years is a business community with a strong appeal to people of color, one that has *revitalized itself* largely on its own - not a community in desperate need of revitalization.

In fact, the greatest threat to racial progress demonstrated by the Junction today is the NDC development plan, which we believe threatens the racial equity of the Junction on multiple fronts, notably these:

- **The projected high rents proposed in the current NDC plan represent a dramatic escalation of prevailing rents at the Junction and threaten to swamp the existing small businesses in a wave of gentrification.** In the figures we have been able to obtain, NDC's projected base rental rates of \$45 per square foot far exceed the rents paid by existing Junction businesses. These businesses rent at much closer to a \$30 per square foot range. As you know, rent differentials of this scope inexorably force existing rents upward. Spring Mill Bakery, one of our Takoma Junction businesses, closed its Bethesda location due to such escalating costs, and the development here could lead to closure of this, and other Junction businesses. This threat has intensified as nearly all local businesses are struggling in the wake of COVID-19. Any boost in the cost of their leases could be terminal. Disturbingly, the Takoma Park City Manager on July 22 in a statement about the Junction, said that business lease rates won't be affected because many businesses own their properties. We implore you to examine this carefully. In most cases, it is the White-owned businesses that own and the Black and Brown-owned ones that are leased. This is not absolute, but it is the dominant trend. To focus exclusively on predominantly White owners is precisely our concern about racial equity at the Junction.
- **The proposed elimination of the major eastbound bus stop deprives shoppers and transit passengers – disproportionately people of color based on local and national studies – of easy access to an important source of food and transportation.** There has been no suggested alternative placement of this east bound bus stop on either Ethan Allen or Carroll Avenue. There is no alternative proposed by the developer or the city, or any that we can envision, that would provide comparable access to the area businesses; customers with laundry or bags of food or other goods would be forced to carry them unreasonable distances to gain eastbound bus access.
- **Relegating all large loading and unloading operations for the entire development to a layby on Ethan Allen Avenue presents a serious if not fatal obstacle to the survivability of the Co-op.** The Co-op currently relies heavily on the city-owned lot that it rents for daily loading and unloading of its food trucks. To throw all major loading and unloading activity –including trash and recycling pickup for the entire development – into a small, contained space immediately adjacent to a congested state highway and pedestrian crosswalks is a recipe for hazardous gridlock. Add to the layby mix the inevitable profusion of Uber and Lyft vehicles, passenger car and taxi drop-offs, and the frustration of truck drivers waiting for loading space, and you have a built-in dysfunctionality almost certain to damage the Co-op's need for loading and unloading. The layby is thus a huge threat to the Co-op, a bastion of racial diversity in Takoma Park.

To statements that the Co-op has actually endorsed the layby concept and the proposed development, some context is necessary. It is obvious to us as long-time Co-op supporters and observers of the

business there that the Co-op is totally dependent on the current Junction parking lot for the unloading of food and other goods to keep itself in operation. If the city, or the city's chosen developer, decides at any moment to deny the Co-op access to the lot, the Co-op is likely finished as a viable business in that location. Our sense is that the Co-op is simply not free - especially under the gag order imposed by the City and NDC - to articulate its real needs and preferences in regards to loading and unloading. To us, Co-op acceptance of the layby concept was forced on the Co-op and does not in any real way reflect on the true business reality of the situation. We are not party to the inside information on all this, but our belief is that the poorly-conceived layby will kill the Co-op, but the Co-op simply isn't allowed to say this.

- **The parking currently offered in the city-owned lot is vital to many of the small businesses currently thriving at the Junction, many of them Black-owned. The developer's unwillingness to share detailed information about prospective parking fees in the new development heightens concerns about the ongoing affordability of parking in the proposed underground lot.** Will people be willing to pay for parking just to drop off dry-cleaning or pick up a gallon of milk? Add to this the inevitable bottleneck of cars seeking to enter or exit to the development's stores and restaurants onto a busy highway with no traffic light and an inadequate line of sight and you will have effectively removed convenient and affordable parking from a business community that has come to rely on it. While the City of Takoma Park and NDC have no obligation to provide free parking, the Board should not facilitate the undermining of conditions that have allowed Junction businesses to develop and thrive.
- **We were distressed that the City failed to actually meet with the local Black and Brown-owned businesses until City negotiations and planning were over five years in the making.** This only changed when several of the Junction small business owners testified before the City and submitted a [letter](#) raising concerns about the development.
- **With leadership from City Council member Jarrett Smith, the City passed a resolution in April 2017 [Committing the City Council to Systematically and Deliberately Apply a Racial Equity Lens in Decision-Making](#).** Unfortunately, despite this commitment, the City fell far short of its own standards on racial equity and the proposed Junction development, despite efforts by Council Member Smith to raise concerns. The City's [initial impact assessment](#) regarding racial equity and the Junction (September, 2017) indicated no impact and involved minimal if any analysis or consultation with local residents or businesses. It was cursory at best, deeply distressing and dismissive of the racial equity impacts of the proposed development – so much so that the City subsequently elected to revise its position on racial equity and the proposed development twice in the wake of public pressure and well-attended community meetings on racial equity and the Junction. The initial revised racial equity position is [here](#) (May, 2018). Again, this second racial equity impact statement, produced by unnamed staff and by an unknown rubric, was perfunctory and called out as wildly inaccurate by Black residents who testified at City Council. Finally, the City drafted [a resolution](#) (July, 2018) authorizing NDC to submit its proposal to the Montgomery County Planning Department. This resolution downgraded language from racial equity impacts to racial equity considerations regarding the Junction. The City's record is less than stellar and suggests a lack of institutional commitment to racial equity at the Junction.
- **Many residents are disturbed by the selection of a development company that has faced litigation from small displaced businesses as well as protests from Black Lives Matter for their padlocking of four black-owned businesses within twenty-four hours of taking control of a set of properties slated for development.** See <https://archive.org/details/DeveloperAdrienWashingtonHomeDemo1062018540p> and <https://dcindymedia.org/node/2048>

- **The potential removal of the long-fought-for north-south crosswalk across the state highway at Grant Avenue discriminates against pedestrians and Junction customers seeking safe foot access to affordable housing and subsidized housing just blocks to the north.** This is also a “Safe-Route-To-School” zone for over 200 students. One of the two most recent plans includes the crosswalk. One eliminates it.
- **None of the foregoing, of course, speaks to the incredible difficulties to be imposed on existing businesses during the construction of NDC's huge project.** Given the inevitable disturbance, *likely for years*, to the existing transportation network, people will avoid the Junction whenever possible, whether traveling on foot, bicycle, car or bus. Already grid-locked, the Junction will get worse. Even if cars arrive, they will find few places to park to drop off or pick up dry cleaning, unload a sick pet, or leave packages for FedEx or UPS deliveries. In short, patrons will go elsewhere, choosing more convenient commercial venues, and these businesses and their employees, largely minorities, will lose.
- **Construction disturbances, including vibration damage to existing buildings, should be of critical concern, rather than mere inconveniences in the service of the developer.** These buildings are old, and damage could even render some uninhabitable. The cost for rebuilding or significant repair, and the time a business would be closed during such, could very well cause some to be put out of business. Before any proposal is accepted, NDC should be required to put forth a feasible plan for the protection of the current businesses, one which shows a construction-staging plan that will permit existing businesses to continue to operate without being damaged by foreseeable construction issues.

Taken individually, any of the factors listed above would present a threat to the stable, diverse Junction community; taken as a whole, the threat to racial equity and our multicultural business community posed by the plan is substantial and disconcerting. Racial equity, long valued in Montgomery County, continues to be embraced with renewed urgency and new initiatives for the County. We applaud the recent [Racial Equity and Social Justice Act](#), sponsored and passed unanimously by the Council, requiring "each Department and Office to develop a racial equity and social justice action plan, and determine the implications for, and consequences of, County governmental actions." No development should jeopardize these equity goals, especially through predictable disruption to a thriving, vibrant, diverse business community with deep community roots.

We are not anti-development. In fact, we support the reasonable and appropriate development of this city property, and we believe that designs exist that meet that goal. What is mandatory, though, is a development plan that recognizes the value of the unique degree of racial equity currently realized at Takoma Junction. A thoughtful, inclusive plan for development is crucial so that the developer, with the tacit approval of the City, is not allowed to convert publicly-owned property to a privately-owned for-profit development, ostensibly in the name of promoting racial equity, but which ironically would gentrify and weaken the racially diverse business community we seek to protect.

While it may not be the Board's job to resolve political disagreements in our community, it is in accordance with the Board's mandate to disapprove and/or condition its approval of this proposed development with consideration of racial equity and social justice, and we call upon the Board to protect this irreplaceable racially diverse section of our community. We appreciate your careful review of these concerns, factors that remain critical to the ongoing health of the Junction with its unique, diverse character, as well as the City and County as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration, and we respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you to discuss these concerns. We also look forward to discussing these issues in a public forum, whenever a public hearing on the NDC proposal is scheduled. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Very sincerely yours,

Badia AlBanna	Takoma Park
Matias Altamirano	Silver Spring
Dr. Nazirahk Amen	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Ethan Amitay	Silver Spring
Debby Anker	Takoma Park
Jenny Apostol	Takoma Park
Marcel Bailly	Hyattsville
Noahgrace Bauman	Takoma Park
Isabel Blanco	Takoma Park
Michael Blau	Takoma Park
Nadine Bloch	Takoma Park
Michele Bollinger	Takoma Park
Vicki B. Booker	Takoma Park
Robin Broad	Takoma Park
Andrea Brown	Takoma Park
Gordon Brown	Takoma Park
Laurel Brown	Takoma Park
Elise Bryant	Silver Spring
Dr. Joanne Carey, DVM	Wash., D.C. Junction Business Owner
Linda Carlson	Takoma Park
Ray Carruthers	Takoma Park
Gaynel Catherine	Takoma Park
Jesse Broad-Cavanagh	Takoma Park
John Cavanagh	Takoma Park
Lois Chalmers	Takoma Park
Megan Christopher	Takoma Park
Paul Chrostowski	Takoma Park
Julia Aikmen Cifuentes	Silver Spring
Joan Clement	Takoma Park
Susan Comfort	Takoma Park
Colleen Cordes	Takoma Park
Marguerite Cyr	Takoma Park
Ellen Daniels	Takoma Park
Kerry Danner	Takoma Park
Jimmy Daukas	Takoma Park
Kathryn Desmond	Takoma Park
Nico DiPaul	Takoma Park
Delia Dreher	Takoma Park
Ashe Durban	Takoma Park
Karen Elrich	Takoma Park
James Far	Takoma Park
Susan Fleck	Takoma Park
Barbara Francisco	Silver Spring
Jill Gay	Takoma Park
Wilbert Glover	Adelphi
Tracey Goldman	Takoma Park
Maria Gonzalez	Takoma Park
Robert Goo	Takoma Park

Beth Grupp	Takoma Park
Mary Beth Hatem	Takoma Park
Larry Himelfarb	Takoma Park
Jane Hsaio	Takoma Park
Paul Huebner	Takoma Park
Susan Huffman	Takoma Park
Jamie Iwugo	Takoma Park
Denise Jones	Takoma Park
Kopal Jha	Takoma Park
Byrne Kelly	Takoma Park
Eleanor Kerlow	Takoma Park
Sally Ours Kern	Takoma Park
Stephen Kern	Takoma Park
Merlyn Kettering	Takoma Park
Una Kettering	Takoma Park
Joe Klockner	Takoma Park
Adrian Kombe	Takoma Park
Emily Kombe	Takoma Park
Bruce Kozarsky	Takoma Park
Jessica Landman	Takoma Park
Bernita Leonard	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Rick Leonard	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Nery D. Licon	Takoma Park
Gimbiya Lim	Takoma Park & Washington, D.C.
Simone de Lima	Takoma Park
Carolyn Lowery	Takoma Park
Katherine McCarthy	Takoma Park
Marianne McNeil	Takoma Park
Amelia Marciano	Silver Spring
Maryam Mashayekhi	Rockville
Maureen Malloy	Silver Spring
Joann Malone	Takoma Park
Cynthia Mariel	Takoma Park
TJ Matthews	Takoma Park
Marc Mauer	Silver Spring
Denny May	Takoma Park
Lena Meyerson	Silver Spring
Ben Miller	Takoma Park
Sue Katz Miller	Takoma Park
Jacqueline Moore	Takoma Park
Sterling Mulbry	Takoma Park
Joshua O'Donnell	Takoma Park
Sarah Diamond O'Donnell	Takoma Park
Dara Orenstein	Takoma Park
Maureen O'Shanesy	Hyattsville
Bruce Phillips	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Inan Phillips	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Charles B. Poor	Takoma Park
Linda Rabben	Takoma Park
Ron Resetarits	Takoma Park

Susan Robb	Takoma Park
Susan Rogers	Takoma Park
Meg Royce	Takoma Park
Paulette Saunders	Adelphi
Jennifer Satlin-Fernandez	Takoma Park
Roger Schlegel	Takoma Park
Susan Schreiber	Takoma Park
Megan Scribner	Takoma Park
Eric Sepler	Takoma Park Junction Business Owner
Chris Sherry	Takoma Park
Jarrett Smith	Takoma Park City Council Member, Ward 5
Patrick Smith	Takoma Park
Rhiannon Smith	Takoma Park
Andrew Strongin	Takoma Park
Olly Swyers	Takoma Park
Seamus Swyers	Takoma Park
Gabrielle Tayac	Takoma Park
Betsy Taylor	Takoma Park
Eliza Wapner	Takoma Park
Dave Zirin	Takoma Park

From: [Bogdan, Grace](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: FW: sign up to testify for 9/15 PB
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:58:58 AM
Attachments: [image005.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

Please see below comments for tomorrow's PB hearing item 4B

From: Paul Huebner <pjhuebner@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:56 AM
To: Bogdan, Grace <grace.bogdan@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Re: sign up to testify for 9/15 PB

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

Hello Grace and Thanks for all your help.

As we discussed, I am attaching my comments in this email.

Dear members of the Planning Board,

County and state traffic safety experts, using industry standards, have continuously and unanimously been unable to support this plan for this development in this fraught intersection due to substantial safety concerns, including non-approvals for a lay-by and concerns over sight distance noncompliance.

1. Almost three years ago, in a [December 11, 2018 evaluation](#), MCDOT determined that the Sight distance to the left is only 188 feet of 325 required by arterial classification. Maryland SHA confirmed an inadequate sight line, with no apparent achievable remedy available, most recently in its September 7, 2021 letter to the developer.
2. A [January 25, 2021 letter to Ms Bogdan](#) from the Montgomery County Development review team stated, "We do not support the location of truck loading layby area but defer to MDSHA and City of Takoma Park for the final decision."
3. MDSHA letters of [April 13, 2021](#), [May 17, 2021](#), [June 16, 2021](#) and [September 7, 2021](#) confirm the evaluations made almost three years ago by our county DOT. Each of these letters from SHA responds to a different iteration of the lay-by and sight distance plan. The SHA responses show that the developer is not getting closer to approval for the lay-by concept; while different in dimension, the lay-by concept continues to create direct and substantial hazards to pedestrians, cyclists, and other vehicles.
4. Based upon the judgment of traffic professionals, the [Takoma Park City Council voted unanimously](#) to recommend disapproval of the project by the Planning Board.
5. In its [October 17, 2017 letter to the City Council](#), NDC said that "We have studied the concept extensively, including the proposal put forth by the Co-op. It [a lay-by] is the only solution -- given all of the constraints and objectives of the project -- that will work for Takoma Junction." (i.e., the plot of land is too small for delivery/garbage to be done on the site itself.)
7. A [May 24, 2021 letter from SHA to the developer](#) states that "The MDOT SHA was first informed that the layby area would also be needed by this development for loading and unloading at our April 23, 2021 meeting."
8. Taken together, these two statements by the developer show that the developer can only build this plan by using a lay-by, and the State Highway Administration has consistently rejected all iterations of a lay-by.
9. For an extension to be granted, it is reasonable to believe that satisfactory progress toward approvals could be made by the developer. Given the consistent and substantial rejections of an element that the

developer has said is essential, it is apparent that this progress is not a reasonable expectation. I urge the Planning Board not to grant an extension and to reject this project outright, as the City Council has recommended.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thanks,
Paul Huebner

On Tuesday, September 14, 2021, 11:35:17 AM EDT, Bogdan, Grace
<grace.bogdan@montgomeryplanning.org> wrote:

Hi Paul-

As requested, please see the link below.

Thanks!

Grace

<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/>



Grace Bogdan, AICP

Planner Coordinator, DownCounty Planning Division

Montgomery County Planning Department

2425 Reddie Drive, 13th Floor, Wheaton, MD 20902

grace.bogdan@montgomeryplanning.org

o: 301.495.4533





WE'VE MOVED!

THE NEW PARK AND PLANNING HEADQUARTERS IS NOW LOCATED AT
2425 REEDIE DRIVE, WHEATON, MD 20902

From: [Karen Collins](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 12:48:20 PM

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

To - Montgomery Co Planning Board

In reference to the Takoma Junction Development Plan, I hope that the Planning Board will do two things :

1. Please deny the Neighborhood Development Company's request for an extension of time for review of the plan.
2. Please vote "No" on the proposed development plan.

Many,many residents in our community oppose this plan due to issues which include the proposed layby (and other safety/traffic issues), storm water management, little public space and destruction of trees in the rear of the lot.

Thank you for your consideration.

Karen Collins

Item 4A - Correspondence

ATTACHMENT 5.F

From: [Kaufman, Connie](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Hisel-McCoy, Elza](#); [Mencarini, Katherine](#); [Girard, Erin E.](#)
Subject: Regulatory Plan Extension Request for Takoma Junction
Date: Friday, August 27, 2021 12:36:37 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[Takoma Junction - NDC Response Ltr. 8-27-2021.pdf](#)
[Takoma Junction - Regulatory Plan Extension Request.pdf](#)

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

Sent on behalf of Erin E. Girard, Esq.

Connie Kaufman

Legal Practice Assistant

11 N. Washington Street | Suite 700 | Rockville, MD 20850-4229
D: +1 301.517.4841 | O: +1 301.762.1600 | F: +1 301.517.4841



[vCard](#) | ckaufman@milesstockbridge.com



For COVID-19 information and resources, please visit our [Coronavirus Task Force page](#).

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[Secure Upload/Download files click here.](#)



Erin E. Girard
 301-517-4804
egirard@milesstockbridge.com

August 27, 2021

Casey Anderson, Chair
 and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board
 Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
 2425 Reddie Drive
 Wheaton, MD 20902

Re: Regulatory Plan Extension Request for Takoma Junction: Site Plan No. 820190090 ("Site Plan") and Preliminary Plan No. 120190150 ("Preliminary Plan")

Dear Chairman Anderson and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board:

On behalf of our client, NDC Takoma, LLC ("NDC"), attached please find a Regulatory Plan Extension Request for the above-referenced Site and Preliminary Plan applications. As explained more fully below, while we understand there may be some fatigue regarding the long pendency of these applications and the extensions necessary to date, especially given the degree of community involvement, the delays and need for the extensions were entirely outside the control of NDC, who has consistently and aggressively pursued a timely review of the applications. To deny the requested extension and trigger a dismissal of the applications at this point in time would therefore be grossly unfair to NDC, who has expended substantial time and money into the project to date, and continues to do so in the hope of resolving all outstanding issues.

At the time the applications were originally submitted on February 14, 2019, NDC had no reason to believe that the review process would span over two and a half years, with the vast majority of the delay being caused by the State Highway Administration ("SHA").¹ Although the plans and traffic study associated with the applications were distributed to SHA in preparation for the March 19, 2019 Development Review Committee meeting, SHA unilaterally suspended its review of all project materials just prior to DRC in order to conduct a "Takoma Junction Vision Study," which study did not conclude until January of this year. Although SHA thereafter approved the traffic study for the project on March 8th, it failed to provide any comments on the proposed lay-by and site design until April 13th. Disappointingly, the comments provided on that date ignored basic information contained in the application materials, made assumptions unsupported by facts, provided half-

¹ For ease of reference, we attach hereto the outline previously prepared by Staff in support of the fourth extension request in April of this year that demonstrates the long delays in SHA's review of the applications.

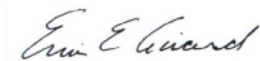
answers, and required another submittal, generating a new 30 days review period. Although NDC attempted to correct SHA's misunderstandings in its resubmission, a second letter from SHA on May 24th continued to rely on incorrect assumptions and misinformation as a basis for its responses. So frustrating and grievous were these responses that NDC then took the extraordinary step of demanding a meeting with Secretary Slater himself to try to establish a more timely and efficient way to discuss and respond to the issues being raised by SHA. Despite all these efforts, and the promises of Secretary Slater and SHA Administrator Smith that review and response timeframes would be timely, however, SHA continues to fail to adhere to its own review timelines, and NDC is still awaiting a full set of comments from SHA on its latest resubmission on July 16, 2021.

NDC continues to believe that the issues identified by SHA can be resolved satisfactorily and the sight distance and proposed layby approved. While we understand that, during the pendency of SHA's review, the City of Takoma Park has issued a negative recommendation on the applications, NDC firmly believes that an SHA approval would warrant the City's reconsideration of its recommendation, which was based in large part on the belief that SHA would not approve the layby. *See City of Takoma Park Resolution No. 2021-19, Lines 34-35* ("Whereas, Council reserves the option to reopen the review of the site plan as new information is provided by NDC or by MDOT-SHA or other reviewing agencies.")

NDC therefore requests that the Board grant NDC the additional time necessary to bring this matter to an appropriate resolution and not compound the prejudice it has experienced through the unprecedented actions of SHA in this matter² by dismissing the applications prematurely simply due to political pressure or project fatigue.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We will be available during your consideration of this request to address any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Erin E. Girard

Encl.

cc: Elza Hisel-McCoy
Katherine Mencarini

² As has been acknowledged by Technical Staff, the review process followed by SHA in this matter has varied wildly from its treatment of all other Montgomery County projects, and its decision to defer review of the proposed lay-by and site design until the very end of the process, when all other agencies had concluded their reviews, has been highly prejudicial.



Montgomery County Planning Department
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Effective: December 5, 2014

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

www.montgomeryplanning.org

Phone 301.495.4550
Fax 301.495.1306

REGULATORY PLAN EXTENSION REQUEST

☐ Request #1 ☐ Request #2 ☒ Request #5

M-NCPPC Staff Use Only			
File Number			
Date Received		MCPB Hearing Date	

Plan Name: Takoma Junction **Plan No.** 120190150; 82C1 90090

This is a request for extension of:

<input type="checkbox"/> Project Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Sketch Plan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Plan

The Plan is tentatively scheduled for a Planning Board public hearing on: 09/16/2021

The Planning Director may postpone the public hearing for up to 30 days without Planning Board approval. Extensions beyond 30 days require approval from the Planning Board.

Person requesting the extension:

☐ Owner, ☒ Owner's Representative, ☐ Staff (check applicable.)

Erin Girard		Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.	
<i>Name</i>		<i>Affiliation/Organization</i>	
11 North Washington Street, Suite 700			
<i>Street Address</i>			
Rockville		MD	20886
<i>City</i>		<i>State</i>	<i>Zip Code</i>
(301) 517-4804	(301) 517-4804	egirard@milesstockbridge.com	
<i>Telephone Number</i>	<i>ext.</i>	<i>Fax Number</i>	<i>E-mail</i>

We are requesting an extension for 4 months until 01/20/2022

Describe the nature of the extension request. Provide a separate sheet if necessary.

The Applicant is continuing to work with the State Highway Administration to address various issues. Although the Applicant had hoped to address and resolve the outstanding issues with SHA in time for a September hearing, the Applicant is still awaiting comments from SHA on its latest submission and will therefore need additional time to review and address any comments received. It is the Applicant's hope that this will be the final extension needed for the applications.

Signature of Person Requesting the Extension

Erin Girard
Signature

8/26/21
Date

Extension Review

Planning Director Review for Extensions 30 days or less

I, the Planning Director, or Director's designee, have the ability to grant extensions of the Planning Board public hearing date of up to 30 days and approve an extension of the Planning Board public hearing date from _____ until _____.

Signature

Date

Planning Board Review for Extensions greater than 30 days

The Montgomery County Planning Board reviewed the extension request on _____ and approved an extension for more than 30 days of the Planning Board public hearing date from _____ until _____.

From: [Tracy Duvall](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction (Agenda items 4a & 4b): please reject extension and proposal
Date: Sunday, September 12, 2021 2:47:19 PM

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

Dear Chair Anderson:

I am writing to support the staff's recommendations and the City of Takoma Park's position regarding Takoma Junction (Agenda Items 4a & 4b). Both the extension and the plan should be rejected.

I live directly across Columbia Ave from the proposed garage, so I have paid close attention to NDC's proposal and to its methods. In general, I would welcome a modest development in the parking lot, if it could meet the good planning standards that the City and County have set. Unfortunately, NDC's proposal does not come close. It:

- relies on a dangerous and traffic-snarling location for truck deliveries and a dangerous driveway location, both of which the SHA has rejected repeatedly
- creates a parking deficit of at least 70 spaces, endangering nearby businesses
- significantly reduces the wooded area and the number of trees
- imposes a parking garage on a residential area – not screened by vegetation, thanks to a fire-access lane
- greatly increases truck and other traffic on residential streets
- worsen delays at an already overburdened intersection, resulting in life-threatening delays to emergency vehicles from the fire station
- exacerbates stormwater-management problems, and
- fails to provide sufficient public gathering space.

Rather than attempting to build a right-sized, workable development, NDC's proposal requires multiple waivers from good planning regulations. NDC's attitude has been to ignore anything but their desire to maximize square-footage while presenting their plan as a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. Moreover, throughout this process, NDC has demonstrated an alarming level of bullying behavior and apparent mendacity.

For all of these reasons, I urge you to reject both NDC's proposal and their request for an extension. It's time to pull the plug.

Thank you for your attention,

Tracy

 Tracy Duvall, PhD
 7125 Poplar Ave

From: jlandman@mulland.net
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Bogdan, Grace](#); [Wright, Gwen](#); ["Jamal Fox"](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 4.a.: Takoma Junction, Preliminary Plan 120190150 and Site Plan 820190090 - Regulatory Extension Request #5
Date: Sunday, September 12, 2021 8:45:51 PM

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To Planning Board Chair and Members:

My name is Jessica Landman, and I reside in Takoma Park, Maryland. These comments are submitted on behalf of myself and Community Vision for Takoma, a local civic association, to oppose the applicant's request for a fifth extension of time to revise their application.

We ask that the Planning Board follow the advice of your staff (and the City of Takoma Park, which has also declined to support the developer's request), and deny both the request for an extension and the request for approval of the Plan.

The applicant has been granted four extensions of time. They have made repeated minor revisions to the plan's basic design, each of which has been rejected by the SHA. There has been no indication that they are willing to make any significant revisions to the overall configuration or footprint of the project. Nor has the SHA shown any sign that the developer's 'tweaks' are bring them closer to an approvable version. To the contrary, additional concerns have emerged in the last two iterations.

The fact that the City Council of the City of Takoma Park has now voted unanimously to recommend that the Planning Board not approve the design of *its own development partner* -- on the basis of not only the delivery and safety design flaws cited by the SHA but also other significant design flaws relating to parking, public space and environmental considerations, demonstrate that granting a few additional months for technical 'tweaks' will do nothing but prolong this process unproductively. We urge you to vote no, to proceed with consideration of the project itself, and to vote no on the project, as well.

Thank you very much.

Jessica Landman
jlandman@mulland.net

From: [Emanuel Wagner](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [Verma, Partap](#); [Cichy, Gerald](#); [Patterson, Tina](#)
Subject: Comment on Item 4A for September 15, 2021 Agenda of the MCPB
Date: Monday, September 13, 2021 9:53:22 PM
Attachments: [MCPB Comment letter TJ.pdf](#)

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Dear Chair Anderson, dear Board Members Patterson, Cichy and Verma,

I am attaching a letter requesting you granting the applicant an extension of the review process, in order to provide more time to continue to work with SHA on the issues related to the layby for the development. As a member of the SHA review group related to this intersection, I believe SHA has egregiously delayed this project and the developer should not be punished for the delays created by a review agency, possibly due to political interference.

Please grant the extension request. Many of my neighbors and I want this project to move forward, and improve our neighborhood over the parking lot that is currently there.

Thank you very much for your consideration!

Best,

Emanuel Wagner
Boyd Ave, Takoma Park

September 13, 2021

Montgomery County Planning Board
 2425 Reedie Drive, 14th Floor
 Wheaton, MD 20902

RE: Letter of Support for Extension of Review Period

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Takoma Junction development project, and I ask you to vote in favor of extending the review period for the reasons below.

I am a resident of Takoma Park, living a short walk from the Junction, and I was a member of the State Highway Administration's (SHA's) Stakeholder Advocacy Group (SAG) assembled to discuss Takoma Junction, as part of the so called "Takoma Junction Vision Study".¹ I therefore have followed this process closely and spent significant time to provide feedback to SHA.

I am requesting that you allow the developer's request for additional time to continue to meet with SHA to resolve the issues related to the layby delivery of the site plan. That request should be granted as it is not due to the developer's mistakes that a resolution for the layby has not been found, but rather because SHA has been delinquent in providing any meaningful feedback on the project and proposed delivery situation for over two years to the developer. SHA started to do so only few months ago. Such extraordinary delay should be considered in the evaluation of the extension request.

Specifically, SHA determined in March 2019 that they will not review the site proposal until the Takoma Junction Vision Study was released.² This study was supposed to be released in the fall of 2019, which did not happen. A draft was shared with SAG members in person in February 2020 that included all the elements found in the final version of the report, yet the final study was not released until January 4, 2021, almost a full year after the draft report was shared. No explanation was ever given for that delay. Furthermore, as a participant of that study, I clearly recall that SHA representatives and consultants emphasized that the vision is not discussing the development. The notes allude to this by stating that "this effort is about a transportation vision. It is a larger geographic study, but MDOT SHA understands that development is proposed and encourages the SAG to talk about different scenarios with different solutions."³ The layby or development were never raised by SHA, and only came up in the context of questions by the SAG members or the public. It is therefore highly confusing that SHA would hold off on the review of the site plan and layby if the site plan or delivery situation was not part of the scope of the vision study.

¹ https://roads.maryland.gov/OPPEN/Takoma_Junction_Vision_Study_report_print.pdf

² https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/Takoma-Junction/20210519-NDC-Response_to_SHA.pdf

³ <https://roads.maryland.gov/OPPEN/TJVS-SAG-Meeting-One-Notes.pdf>

The Takoma Park Council voted on the proposal, and the critical issue cited was the lack of SHA approval of the layby delivery situation, which led to their negative recommendation to this Board. Members of the Council expressed concern about approving a site plan that did not receive approval from SHA. Their vote therefore should be viewed in that context, and time should be given to work out a plan that SHA approves that then the Council can vote on.

In the meantime, this intersection is continues to be used unsafely for deliveries, as 18 wheelers and other delivery trucks already park in the travelling lane of Carroll Ave/Ethan Allen Ave for deliveries, see appendix A.

While the lay-by might not be the most attractive solution, deliveries in Old Town Takoma and Washington D.C., where often no lay-by exist, are conducted on a daily basis. A layby at the junction is much less intrusive. I hope SHA and the developer will find a solution that works for this site, and I hope you give them the time needed to come to agreement. The most recent conversations between the developer and SHA seem to indicate that only a few points remain contentious.⁴

I look forward to a positive decision by you to grant the request to extend the review period to address the remaining open questions related to the delivery situation. The Takoma Junction Development project would allow for some badly needed economic infusion and revitalization in this area.

Sincerely,

/s/

Emanuel Wagner
429 Boyd Ave
Takoma Park, MD

⁴ https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/housing-and-community-development/transportation-planning/HCD-20210907_19APMO008XX-Concept%20Review.pdf

Appendix

Evidence I – Co-Op Delivery Truck Blocking Intersection of Carroll Ave and Ethan Allen Ave



Evidence II – “Co-Op Delivery Truck Blocking Intersection of Carroll Ave and Ethan Allen Ave



Evidence III – Cash Truck Blocking Intersection of Carroll Ave and Ethan Allen Ave



Evidence IV – Two trucks unloading at a small grocery, sans layby in Washington DC (1864 Columbia Rd, NW)



From: [Karen Collins](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Takoma Junction
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 12:48:20 PM

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To - Montgomery Co Planning Board

In reference to the Takoma Junction Development Plan, I hope that the Planning Board will do two things :

1. Please deny the Neighborhood Development Company's request for an extension of time for review of the plan.
2. Please vote "No" on the proposed development plan.

Many,many residents in our community oppose this plan due to issues which include the proposed layby (and other safety/traffic issues), storm water management, little public space and destruction of trees in the rear of the lot.

Thank you for your consideration.

Karen Collins