

Item 5 - Correspondence

From: [Forrest Barney](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Ralph Belk](#); [Nancy Belsoj](#); [Mohammed Doka](#); [Julian Norment](#); Scott.Bruton@montgomerycountymd.gov; jackie.hawksford@montgomerycountymd.gov; marc.elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: Avondale Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 12020022A
Date: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 11:48:38 AM
Attachments: [NCCF Letter to Montgomery County Planning Board 4-12-2024.pdf](#)

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Good Afternoon All,

Please see attached letter for the April 18th Planning Board Meeting on the behalf of Ralph Belk, Executive Director for the National Center for Children and Families (NCCF). NCCF is planning and has signed up to testify as part of this meeting and as per requirement is submitting our written attachments to be included within the meeting. Thank you for your consideration and for allowing us the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Planning Board as they consider plan amendment No. 12020022A.

Sincerely,

Forrest C. Barney

Director of Administrative Services

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Child Welfare League of America
Consortium for Child Welfare

DC Alliance of Youth Advocates
Maryland Nonprofit

Maryland Association of Resources
for Families and Youth

UNITED WAY: 8409
CFC: 70510



Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reedie Drive, Floor 14,
Wheaton, MD 20902

Re: Avondale Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 12020022A

Dear Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board,

I am writing to express our concerns regarding the Avondale Preliminary Plan Amendment No. 12020022A, as representatives of The National Center for Children and Families (NCCF). NCCF is the owner of 4519, 4523, 4527 and 4531 Avondale Street and provides high-quality, low-income housing for up to 16 families on Avondale Street. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on this proposed development and its potential impact on our properties, our vulnerable tenants and the surrounding area.

Our primary concerns with the proposed plan are as follows:

Parking Impact: The construction phase of the project is likely to significantly impact parking availability in the vicinity. As a result, there may be disruptions to parking for both our tenants and visitors. There also could be times when the road will be fully blocked due to the construction preventing any tenants with ADA or mobility impairments from being able to access our properties. As there is only one point of egress on Avondale Street any impact on the ability for vehicle traffic, including emergency services, to access the other properties on the street represents a significant safety and quality of life impact on our tenants. As the Avondale Project is only adding parking for less than 50% of the units, the completed project's limited parking provisions will further strain the already insufficient street parking in the area, creating challenges for businesses and residents alike.

Health Impact from Increased Traffic: The anticipated increase in large truck traffic during construction poses concerns regarding air quality and public health. The heightened levels of exhaust emissions and construction-related pollution could have adverse effects on the well-being of individuals in the surrounding community and will have a negative impact on the quality of life of our tenants.

www.nccf-cares.org

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6301 Greentree Road, Bethesda, Maryland 20817



NCCF
The National Center
For Children and Families

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Light Pollution: The project's development will result in increased light pollution, particularly for properties located across the street. Excessive artificial lighting could disrupt the natural ambiance of the area and negatively impact the quality of life for residents and tenants. As the property is going to be significantly higher and closer to the street than the current buildings, the amount of light coming from streetlights and unit windows will result in a higher level of light pollution at our properties. This will result in a lower quality of sleep for our tenants which has been shown to have a verity of poor health impacts including weight gain, cardiovascular issues and even heightened risk of cancers.

Transportation Impact: The project is expected to have a significant impact on transportation infrastructure in the area. Potential street widening and alterations could disrupt the flow of traffic and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, further exacerbating congestion and safety concerns on Avondale Street. Additionally, the addition of large trucks for waste removal on the street will impact our tenant's ability to park vehicles in the existing street parking directly in front of 4531 and 4527 Avondale Street when those trucks are entering or exiting the proposed project. NCCF is requesting that the transportation statement, dated March 5, 2020, be reexamined and that further analysis into the transportation adequacy be performed.

Barrier to Tenant Recruitment: The anticipated increase in foot and vehicle traffic may serve as a barrier to tenant recruitment for NCCF's properties. Potential tenants may be deterred by the congestion and disruption caused by the project, impacting on our ability to attract and retain tenants in the buildings. NCCF serves a vital role in the county's commitment to address affordable housing with the affected properties featuring 100% Low Income Units. As such, any impact on tenant recruitment and retainment is negatively impacting the county executive's objective of providing high-quality low-income housing within the county.

Considering these concerns, we urge the Montgomery County Planning Board to carefully consider the potential impacts of the Avondale Preliminary Plan Amendment and explore mitigation measures to address the outlined issues including up to denial of the request for extension. We also request that adequate measures be taken to ensure meaningful engagement with stakeholders throughout the planning process.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We look forward to working collaboratively with the Planning Board to address these issues and ensure a development plan that prioritizes the well-being of our community and our properties.

Sincerely,

Ralph Belk, LICSW, LCSW-C
Executive Director
The National Center for Children and Families