

Item 12: Correspondence

From: [Sligo Woods](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: councilmember.friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Albornoz@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov; Councilmember.Jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov;
Councilmember.Sayles@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Yearwood, Nkosi](#)
Subject: UBC Preliminary Plan's Impact on Sligo Woods
Date: Tuesday, December 10, 2024 10:06:27 AM

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December 9, 2024

To the Montgomery County Planning Board:

The Sligo Woods Civic Association (SWCA) is writing this letter to the Planning Board in order to share our questions and concerns about the Preliminary University Boulevard Corridor Plan (UBC Plan), which was presented to the public on the evening of October 30th and to the Planning Board the following morning. As there was insufficient time to prepare this collective response prior to your October 31st hearing on the matter, we request that you retroactively include this letter in the public record for that hearing.

Sligo Woods is a subdivision made up of about 700 homes and more than 2,000 individuals that is bounded on the south by Dennis Avenue, on the west by Sligo Creek Parkway, and on the north and east by University Boulevard. We are a diverse and close-knit community reflecting varied races, ethnicities, ages, languages, and family status. Homes within our neighborhood are well below the median sale price that prevails in the County at large (currently \$615,000 according to Redfin), making it a very desirable neighborhood for young families, for elders seeking to age in place, and for others on a budget. The SWCA welcomes newcomers to the community and encourages participation by all residents in our community-building events, regardless of membership or homeownership status. To that end, we publish all event announcements in both English and Spanish in order to reach our many Spanish-speaking residents. We are fortunate to be situated next to Sligo Creek Park, which is a beloved recreation area and meeting place for neighbors.

The UBC Plan as currently envisioned places roughly half of the houses in our subdivision within the Plan boundaries. Nearly a quarter of subdivision houses closer to and bordering University Boulevard are being recommended for mixed-use and higher-density rezoning approval. We naturally have questions about how the Plan will impact the community that we love. Our specific questions and concerns are detailed below:

Communication. While planners have held several meetings and engaged in outreach, many in our neighborhood are still unaware of the UBC Plan and its potential impact on them, as we recently discovered while handing out SWCA information at our election site.

Planners stated at one recent meeting that they have not prepared or distributed any written communications about the Plan in Spanish. Given the high number of Spanish speakers in this area (approximately 27% within the immediate UBC Plan area and over 40% in Wheaton, where the Plan terminates), not communicating in Spanish is problematic. Planners also indicated that they've knocked on 1,000 doors to share information, but when pressed on the matter stated that nearly all of those doors were in the high-rise apartments at the corner of Arcola Avenue and University Boulevard, which are arguably the least likely to be impacted by this Plan.

Ideally planners would not only send written information in English and Spanish to all households within the Plan's boundaries, but also to all households within impacted subdivisions so that everyone in existing neighborhoods can understand neighborhood impacts. Posting signs in English and Spanish would also be helpful.

Others are aware of the Plan, but are confused about what it is proposing. Why, for example, are so many houses within Sligo Woods included within the Plan's boundaries when at present only properties within a few blocks of University Boulevard are being recommended for rezoning and development? Is additional rezoning envisioned? What do the various rezoning terms mean in relation to overall density projections, building heights (in stories, not feet), and the mix of commercial vs. residential structures? Clearer and relatable explanations of the frequently used terms CRN, CRT, CR, R-90, and R-60 are needed. If particular properties are currently tagged for rezoning, what process should homeowners follow to express their opinion on the matter? A simple, jargon-free brochure that speaks in terms of expected impacts and opportunities for engagement would be welcome.

Collateral Consequences. If fully implemented, the UBC Plan will significantly increase population density along the University Boulevard Corridor, yet the Plan gives no indication of how the County might address the collateral consequences of Plan implementation in terms of public safety, traffic, and school capacity.

- According to information presented during the 2023 County appropriations process, the Wheaton Police District, which encompasses much of the UBC Plan area and all of Sligo Woods, has an 18% vacancy rate among sworn police officers. While we have a relatively safe neighborhood at present, development efforts in other parts of the County have shown that higher density brings higher crime rates. Proceeding with the UBC Plan without concurrently addressing the significant shortage of sworn officers in this area will have negative public safety implications. We urge the County to begin addressing this issue now.
- The UBC Plan should be modified to indicate specifically how the population of the UBC Plan area is expected to increase over time if all current rezoning recommendations are eventually approved so that Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and the County can more accurately anticipate and budget for school expansion needs throughout the UBC Plan area going forward. Northwood High School, which serves the Sligo Woods community, is currently undergoing a three-year rebuilding process. Given the time frame for MCPS planning and budgeting, current UBC development efforts could not have been taken into account when that rebuilding process was initiated, meaning that the school may well be too small even before it's fully completed.
- Traffic concerns are already evident in our community, with increased traffic on Dennis Avenue and more cut-throughs in the neighborhood as housing developments come online on Georgia Avenue and in other nearby areas, and persistent traffic snarls in Four Corners. A clearer picture of how the planned increase in population density along the University Boulevard Corridor is expected to generally impact traffic patterns and how the County and/or the State Highway Administration might address these issues would be helpful. The UBC Plan would also open up Orange Drive, which has no benefit for our neighborhood. We would ask that the Plan be modified to eliminate this opening.

Many neighbors are under the impression that the Planning Board and developers are required by law to take the collateral consequences listed above into account when proposing new development, but that the County has granted waivers for the UBC Plan. It would be helpful if the Planning Board could confirm whether or not this is the case in order to keep the process fully transparent.

Affordability. The County has repeatedly acknowledged the need for more affordable housing. As noted above, Sligo Woods is one of the most affordable communities in the County for would-be homebuyers, with average prices well below the County median price. The UBC Plan fails to explain how increased density and new construction will impact the current affordability of this and other neighborhoods along the corridor. To put it bluntly, how can we be sure that the new construction envisioned by the Plan will be affordable and in keeping with the character of the neighborhood, and not just a moneymaker for developers?

In submitting this letter, we would simply note that we are a cohesive community and want to ensure that our community continues to thrive. We realize that the County has a shortage of affordable and attainable housing and are willing to do our fair share to help address that situation. We are also not averse to the idea of some limited commercial development along the corridor. We simply want to ensure that development is carried out on a reasonable scale and in a manner that respects our neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sligo Woods Civic Association Board
on behalf of the
Sligo Woods Civic Association
[Website here](#)

CC: Nkosi Yearwood, Montgomery County Planning Department
Montgomery County Council
Council Member Friedson
Council Member Fani-Gonzalez
Council Member Albornoz
Council Member Glass
Council Member Jawando
Council Member Sayles

From: james_williamson@verizon.net
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Jan. 16 hearing on UBC plan, agenda item #12
Date: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 9:43:16 AM

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I am a lifetime resident of Silver Spring and more specifically in Four Corners. I have attended all the meetings of the University Corridor plan since they began 3 years ago. I am adamantly opposed to virtually everything that has been proposed. No one is against safer streets. But their solutions are debatable and also have unintended consequences.

Should you remove a through lane in each direction, it will obviously back traffic up even more than it is now. The planners contend removing a lane in each direction will only delay traffic by 10-15 seconds. That is fantasy thinking, a denial of reality. You can't remove one third of road capacity and only slow traffic by 10-15 seconds as they stated.

Every neighborhood in Four Corners has a problem with cut-through traffic. If you slow traffic on the major roads it will cause more backups and result in more people cutting through our neighborhood streets. This is an unintended consequence. This is a highly mobile society with many impatient drivers. You make it more difficult for people to get through the Four Corners intersection and they will look for an alternative and too often that is speeding and running stop signs in our residential neighborhoods.

As far as greater density for housing and taller buildings, that went over at the meetings as well as the proposal for attainable housing at the countywide meetings. Admittedly there is some support. But the overwhelming majority of people have opposed this idea and plan. People in Montgomery County don't support upzoning and the people attending the meetings in Four Corners don't want it either. There is not a large groundswell of support for 50' tall residential buildings or a change to the street network. The current zoning regulations for single family homes in our neighborhoods has served us well. Please leave them alone.

According to the plan over 500 homes will be upzoned to allow for more density and taller houses. How many of those 500 have been notified of the pending change? The people I have talked with know little to nothing about a potential major change to their property. There are zoning changes to allow for more commercial properties in residential neighborhoods. None of these changes are reasons are why people moved here. We didn't ask for this. We like our suburban neighborhoods with single family homes.

I served on the Citizen's Advisory Committee the last time the County did a Master plan for Four Corners. You are absolutely shredding what our vision was for Four Corners and has been maintained over the years. Please reject this proposal that will not benefit the residents or businesses where we not you live. Thank you.

James Williamson
9910 Edgehill Lane
Silver Spring, Md. 20901
301 593 0973

From: [Ariana Spawn](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: councilmember.mink@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Wilhelm, Chris](#); [Yearwood, Nkosi](#); [Sanders, Carrie](#)
Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Rezoning of Timberwood Avenue within the University Boulevard Corridor Plan (UBCP)
Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 9:42:36 AM
Attachments: [Letter to MoCo Planning Board - Proposed Rezoning of Timberwood Avenue in UBCP.pdf](#)

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Good morning Montgomery Planning Board,

In advance of tomorrow's Planning Board Meeting to review and vote on the University Boulevard Corridor Plan (UBCP) Working Draft, please find attached a letter from 21 homeowners and residents of the 300 block of Timberwood Avenue, regarding the proposed rezoning of the south side of Timberwood Avenue in the UBCP Working Draft.

Thank you for your consideration and please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Ariana Spawn (310 Timberwood Ave)

cc

Carrie Sanders, Division Chief, Mid-County Planning, Montgomery County Planning Department

*Nkosi Yearwood, Community Planner, Montgomery County Planning Department
District 5 Councilmember Kristin Mink*

Chris Wilhelm, Chief of Staff, Councilmember Kristin Mink

January 15, 2025

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

Transmitted via email to MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Rezoning of Timberwood Avenue within the University Boulevard Corridor Plan (UBCP)

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board,

As homeowners and residents of the 300 block of Timberwood Avenue, we are writing to express concerns regarding the proposed rezoning of the southern side of our block as part of the University Boulevard Corridor Plan (UBCP). While we fully support the objectives of the UBCP, including its focus on fostering vibrant, sustainable, and equitable development, increasing pedestrian safety and access, and expanding attainable housing options, we feel the rezoning to CRN proposed for the southern side of Timberwood Avenue is inappropriate for the unique conditions of our block.

The 300 block of Timberwood Avenue dead-ends with no cul-de-sac into North Four Corners Local Park, and already faces challenges due to its lack of space for vehicle turnarounds and limited parking. These challenges will be significantly exacerbated by the proposed rezoning that, in its current iteration, permits lot consolidation to facilitate larger multi-lot residential developments that front to University. We also understand Planning has an objective to consolidate or eliminate driveway access for these buildings on University, potentially using Timberwood for all vehicle access and further exacerbating the above issues.

Our block has three key characteristics that merit special consideration in the UBCP:

- (1) **Direct pedestrian access to North Four Corners Local Park (NFCLP).** Our street's direct pedestrian access to NFCLP is a cherished attribute, attracting neighborhood residents who value the park's amenities and vehicle-free walkability. Students from Blair and Northwood High Schools regularly walk down our street and through NFCLP en route to and from school. It is not uncommon to see kids running after stray balls or playing near the end of our street while soccer games are in session. Increased traffic resulting from higher density on the block will compromise the safety of the students, families and children who use Timberwood to access NFCLP.
- (2) **Lack of vehicle turnaround space:** The dead-end nature of Timberwood already limits space for vehicle maneuvering, making it challenging for residents, visitors, and service vehicles to navigate the street. Additional density, and the associated increase in cars utilizing street parking on the block, will exacerbate this issue and may even create a safety risk by impacting turnaround access for emergency vehicles—which could be called to the street more frequently in a high-density redevelopment scenario.
- (3) **Insufficient parking:** Our non-permit parking street already struggles with inadequate parking availability for residents and visitors due to its proximity to the soccer field at NFCLP, as well as the popular 4 Corners Pub. This issue will worsen with a substantial increase in residential density on the block.

Additionally, our block consists of modestly-sized homes that remain relatively affordable in comparison to median home prices in neighboring close-in Montgomery County neighborhoods. Opening the properties on this block to CRN redevelopment only creates stronger financial incentives for developers to tear down the existing, quality, already-affordable houses on our block. This will undermine the historic identity of our neighborhood and further strain the block's existing infrastructure without meaningfully improving attainable housing objectives.

While we appreciate the UBCP's goals to enhance housing options and revitalize the corridor, we respectfully request the County reconsider the proposed rezoning of our block of Timberwood Avenue. Specifically, we urge the county to **exclude the southern side of the 300 block of Timberwood Avenue from the proposed CRN rezoning**. Given the unique challenges and characteristics of our dead-end street, this exclusion would ensure that any development aligns with the existing neighborhood's character and infrastructure capacity.

If the Planning Board insists on including the southern side of the 300 block of Timberwood Avenue in the proposed rezoning to CRN, we urge Planning to explicitly prohibit lot consolidation on the block. The final rezoning should explicitly disallow lot consolidation for rezoned properties on Timberwood Avenue to prevent the development of larger multifamily housing complexes that will significantly intensify existing issues.

In this circumstance, we also request the County rescind, for Timberwood Avenue, the Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 23-10 which eliminates minimum parking requirements for residential developments located near transit hubs. This is particularly appropriate in light of the fact that the now 12-year old recommendation to implement a University Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line that is driving much of the proposed corridor rezoning remains nascent and unfunded. Further, even after the completion of the Purple Line, our block will remain two miles from the nearest Metro or Purple Line station—well beyond the half-mile standard of “walkability.”

As residents of this block, we strongly believe that the success of the UBCP depends on tailoring its implementation to the specific needs and limitations of individual streets within the corridor. In fact, we understand that a hallmark of the underlying Montgomery County master planning process that is driving the UBCP effort is the ability to work closely with residents on the types and locations of new density appropriate for their communities, as echoed in Councilmember Mink's [Statement on the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative](#) from Friday, January 10, 2025.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns further and collaborate to find solutions that balance the plan's objectives with the realities of our neighborhood. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please feel free to contact us at the email addresses below to discuss these concerns in more detail. We look forward to your response and to seeing thoughtful adjustments made to the plan before its finalization.

Sincerely,

Ariana Spawn & Logan McCoy
310 Timberwood Ave
ari.spawn@gmail.com

Peggy & Chuck Kullberg
306 Timberwood Ave
kullberg@verizon.net

Charlie & Lisa Jones
300 Timberwood Ave
cej081423@nym.hush.com

Laurine Cooke
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Paul J & Katherine W Carroccio
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Shonali Burke
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Janelle Mingus
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Erika Brant & Damon Mehl
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Michael & Abigail Mitchell
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Greta Almore & Donald Pierce
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Bryant Woltz
314 Timberwood Ave
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Todd & Madison Spencer
312 Timberwood Ave
madisonspencer19@gmail.com
at Spencer@hotmail.com

CC

Carrie Sanders, Division Chief, Mid-County Planning, Montgomery County Planning Department

Nkosi Yearwood, Planner III, Montgomery County Planning Department

District 5 Councilmember Kristin Mink

Chris Wilhelm, Chief of Staff, Councilmember Kristin Mink

From: [Coello, Catherine](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: FW: Request Regarding Proposed CRN Zoning Changes in UBCP
Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 5:00:38 PM
Attachments: [CRN Zoning Letter Frissell 303 Timberwood Ave.pdf](#)

From: Daniel <dfrissell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 2:41 PM
To: Adrianvala, Zubin <Zubin.Adrianvala@montgomeryplanning.org>; Yearwood, Nkosi <nkosi.yearwood@montgomeryplanning.org>; Sharma, Atul <atul.sharma@montgomeryplanning.org>; Broullire, Bridget <Bridget.Broullire@montgomeryplanning.org>; Warnick, Karen <Karen.Warnick@montgomeryplanning.org>; McCarthy, Caroline <caroline.mccarthy@montgomeryplanning.org>; Peifer, Chris <Christopher.Peifer@montgomeryplanning.org>; Mortensen, Paul <Paul.Mortensen@montgomeryplanning.org>; Afzal, Khalid <khalid.afzal@montgomeryplanning.org>; Sanders, Carrie <carrie.sanders@montgomeryplanning.org>; Anspacher, David <david.anspacher@montgomeryplanning.org>; Sartori, Jason <Jason.Sartori@montgomeryplanning.org>; Kronenberg, Robert <robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org>
Cc: Harris, Artie <Artie.Harris@mncppc-mc.org>; Pedoeem, Mitra <Mitra.Pedoeem@mncppc-mc.org>; Linden, Josh <Josh.Linden@mncppc-mc.org>; Bartley, Shawn <Shawn.Bartley@mncppc-mc.org>; Hedrick, James <James.Hedrick@mncppc-mc.org>; Quinn Juliet <taurmanq@gmail.com>
Subject: Request Regarding Proposed CRN Zoning Changes in UBCP

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To:
Montgomery County Planning Department

CC:
The Hon. Artie Harris, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
Honorable Members, Montgomery County Planning Board

From:
Daniel and Quinn Frissell
303 Timberwood Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Re: Request Regarding Proposed CRN Zoning Changes in UBCP

Dear Montgomery County Planning,

My wife, Quinn, and I are writing regarding the proposed CRN zoning changes for our home on Timberwood Avenue in Silver Spring, MD, as part of the UBCP. While we are not in favor of the UBCP in its current form, as described in a letter sent by our block to Montgomery County Planning and the Montgomery County Council in November, we believe it is essential that our

property remain included in the proposed CRN zoning changes unless adjustments to the plan are made to address our concerns detailed below.

Today, a few of our neighbors submitted a letter requesting that our side of the 300 block of Timberwood Avenue, which includes seven houses, be excluded from the CRN zoning changes. However, we chose not to participate in their letter, as our property would be more isolated than the other houses due to its location at the beginning of the block. Our home directly borders two lots on University Boulevard and two more on Lorain Avenue—all slated for CRN zoning. This would leave our smaller home eventually surrounded on multiple sides by much larger, higher-density buildings, without the option to develop to a comparable height, resulting in an adverse impact to our property.

We believe a better solution would be to exclude not just the seven homes on Timberwood Avenue but also the adjacent properties on Lorain Avenue (10108 and 10104) at a minimum. This approach would help ensure that our home is not disproportionately affected by any exclusion while maintaining the character of our section of Northwood Park, which features classic Tudor-inspired homes from the 1930s that are already affordable compared to other parts of the county.

If this broader exclusion, incorporating the properties on Lorain Avenue, is not feasible, we request that our property remain part of the proposed CRN zoning changes as outlined in the UBCP working draft. This would help prevent our home from being unfairly affected by zoning changes that would leave it surrounded by higher-density development.

Thank you for your time and consideration. For your convenience, we have attached a PDF version of this letter. Please feel free to contact us at dfrissell@gmail.com or 240-381-7566 if you need additional information or clarification.

Best Regards,

Daniel and Quinn Frissell
303 Timberwood Avenue

To:
Montgomery County Planning Department

CC:
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Honorable Members, Montgomery County Planning Board

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