



SW

1 min  
Fastest

Anacostia River



82°

AQI 52



# To Dropped Pin



From **My Location**

**Leaving Now**















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Fastest

Anacostia River



82°

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# To Dropped Pin



From **My Location**

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I thank you

I wanted to add more pics to my report to help better explain what I am talking about. The old saying a picture is worth 1000 words is true.

These pic show a field of an example of Carbon Sequestration the cheapest and fastest way to remove carbon from the air.

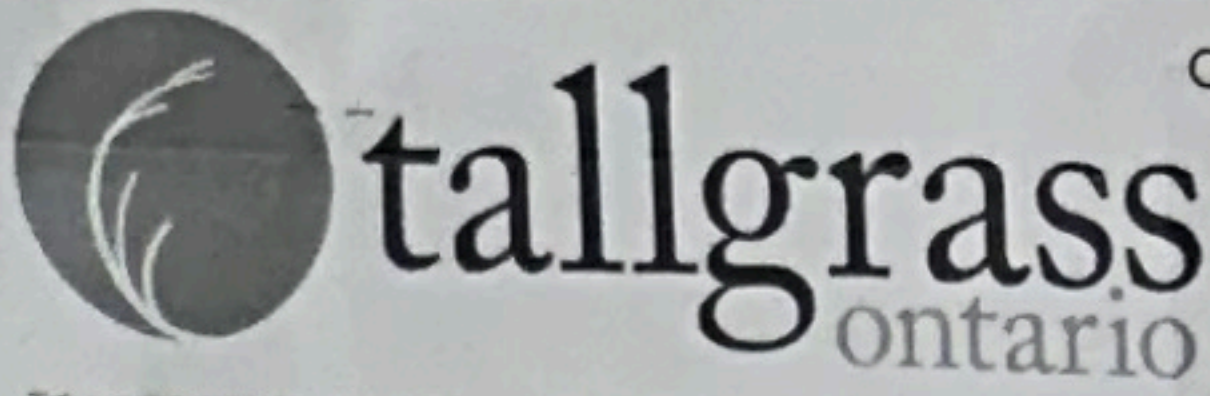
The other three pics by the Anacostia River show how very aggressive non native plants are choking the life of the big oak trees along the river.

These pics show where most of the creeks have merged that make up about 95% of the Anacostia River. North Brentwood has 30" levy's the water rushes so fast it was common to flood before the levy's. I've heard stories of Bladensburg water park the River would flood as far down Bladensburg road all the way to Eastern Ave.

Thank you for your time, I hope you can decide to give nature a chance to come back, you may recall when everything was shut down with covid and how nature started to rebound in with animals coming back, in just a short period of time. We just have ot give it a chance. .

William (Bill) Hernandez





## Tallgrass Prairie and Carbon Sequestration

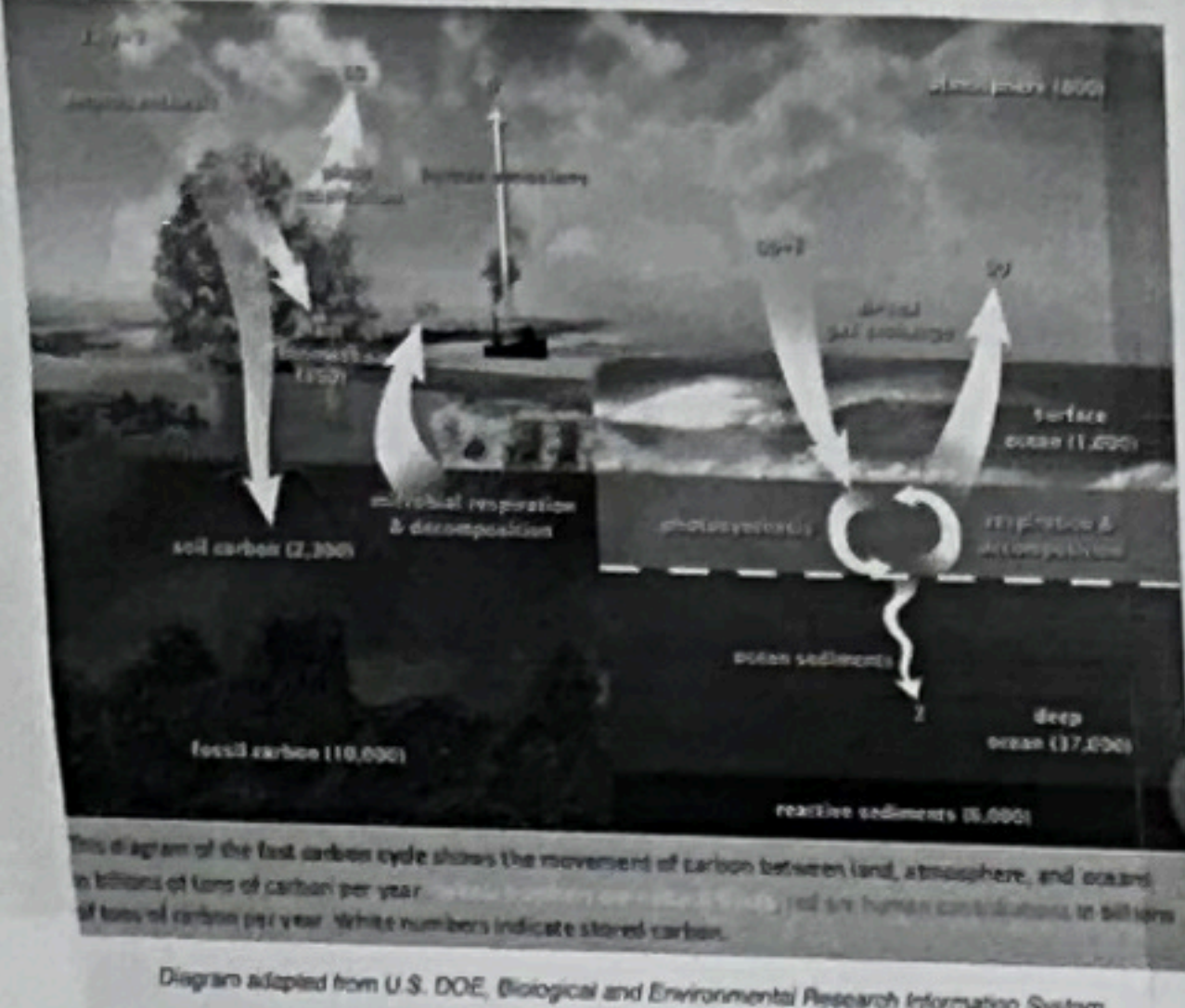


Diagram adapted from U.S. DOE, Biological and Environmental Research Information System

Plants absorb carbon dioxide from the air and use it as a source of energy. This carbon is made organic by other carbohydrates which the plant can store and use later for its own growth. During the growing season, plants give off oxygen. Photosynthesis is the biochemical process by which plants remove carbon from the atmosphere. In prairie grasslands, a large amount of dead carbon is stored in dead roots. When the plant dies, some of the carbon remains in the soil for hundreds of years as organic carbon. Prairie soil acts as a "carbon sink".

Highly diverse prairie grasslands such as tallgrass prairie communities contain more than 300 species of plants many of which are perennials. A perennial plant is one that lives more than 2 years.

In a prairie creation project a highly diverse seed mix typically includes 20% wildflowers, 40% grasses, and 40% legumes. The mix is sown in a prairie creation project. A diverse mix of species and 10% native prairie grasses (Big Blue Stem, Little Blue Stem, Indigo Grass, Virginia Wild Rye, Switch Grass, etc.) Highly diverse means "many species". Prairie seed mix is sown in a prairie creation project. A diverse mix of species and 10% native prairie grasses (Big Blue Stem, Little Blue Stem, Indigo Grass, Virginia Wild Rye, Switch Grass, etc.) Highly diverse means "many species". Prairie seed mix is sown in a prairie creation project. A diverse mix of species and 10% native prairie grasses (Big Blue Stem, Little Blue Stem, Indigo Grass, Virginia Wild Rye, Switch Grass, etc.) Highly diverse means "many species".

Soil roots - US Environmental Protection Agency

In the photo to the left, native prairie plants typically have deep and extensive root systems which help them survive dry conditions and which effectively lock up carbon in the soil. By comparison, most common lawn grasses, such as Kentucky Bluegrass, have shallow roots. The roots in the photo below are from a native prairie plant. They are very deep and extensive, and they are very effective in locking up carbon in the soil. The roots in the photo below are from a native prairie plant. They are very deep and extensive, and they are very effective in locking up carbon in the soil.

Soil roots - US Environmental Protection Agency

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## Water Quality Monitoring

With the passing of the Clean Water Act in 1972 water quality monitoring has become a staple for rivers and streams across the country. Unfortunately, over 70% of our national waterways remain unassessed. While the Anacostia is currently monitored by local, state, and federal agencies in some capacity, Anacostia water quality data still remains difficult to find or is absent for some locations. Water quality is essential to ensuring residents have safe and healthy access to the river and its streams for recreation like fishing, boating, and paddling.

### The ARK Water Quality Monitoring Program

We aim to provide up-to-date, accurate water quality data for the Anacostia to not only ensure the health of its waters, but to provide residents with the information they need to enjoy the Anacostia in a fun and safe environment.

Our water quality program is built on community science. We recruit volunteers each year to help us collect samples and investigate our waterways to track their health. In 2019 we started one of the first volunteer-based community water science programs in the District of Columbia, and in 2020 established a similar program in the Maryland portions of the watershed.

In total we've established 20 water quality stations across the watershed with sites in the District of Columbia, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County.



Chesapeake Bay Trust

More information (https://doe.dc.gov/service/citizen-science-initiatives)

Access DC Dataset (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd4yG6B00C3H9WtUPLQ4y4cEPI)

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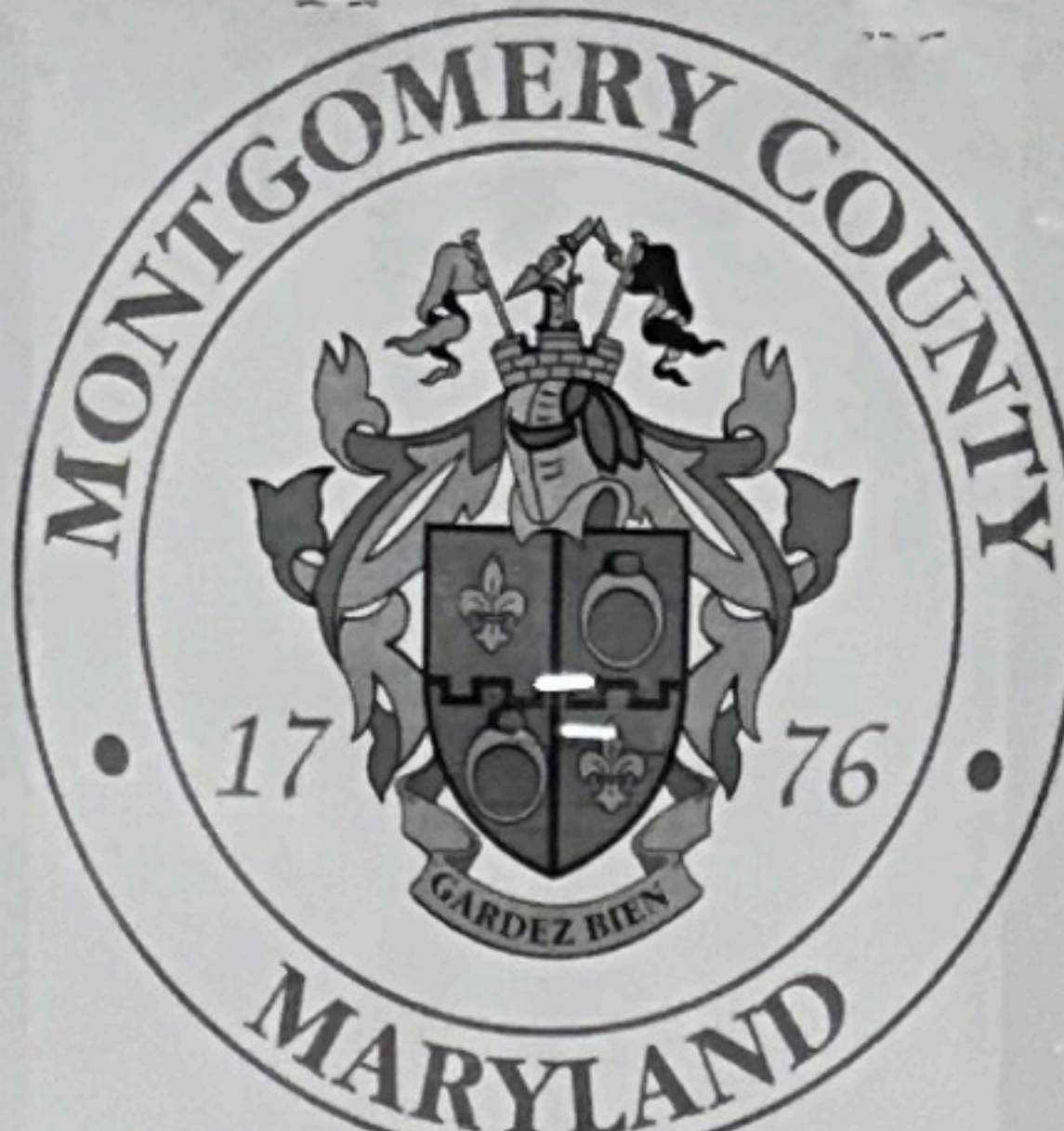
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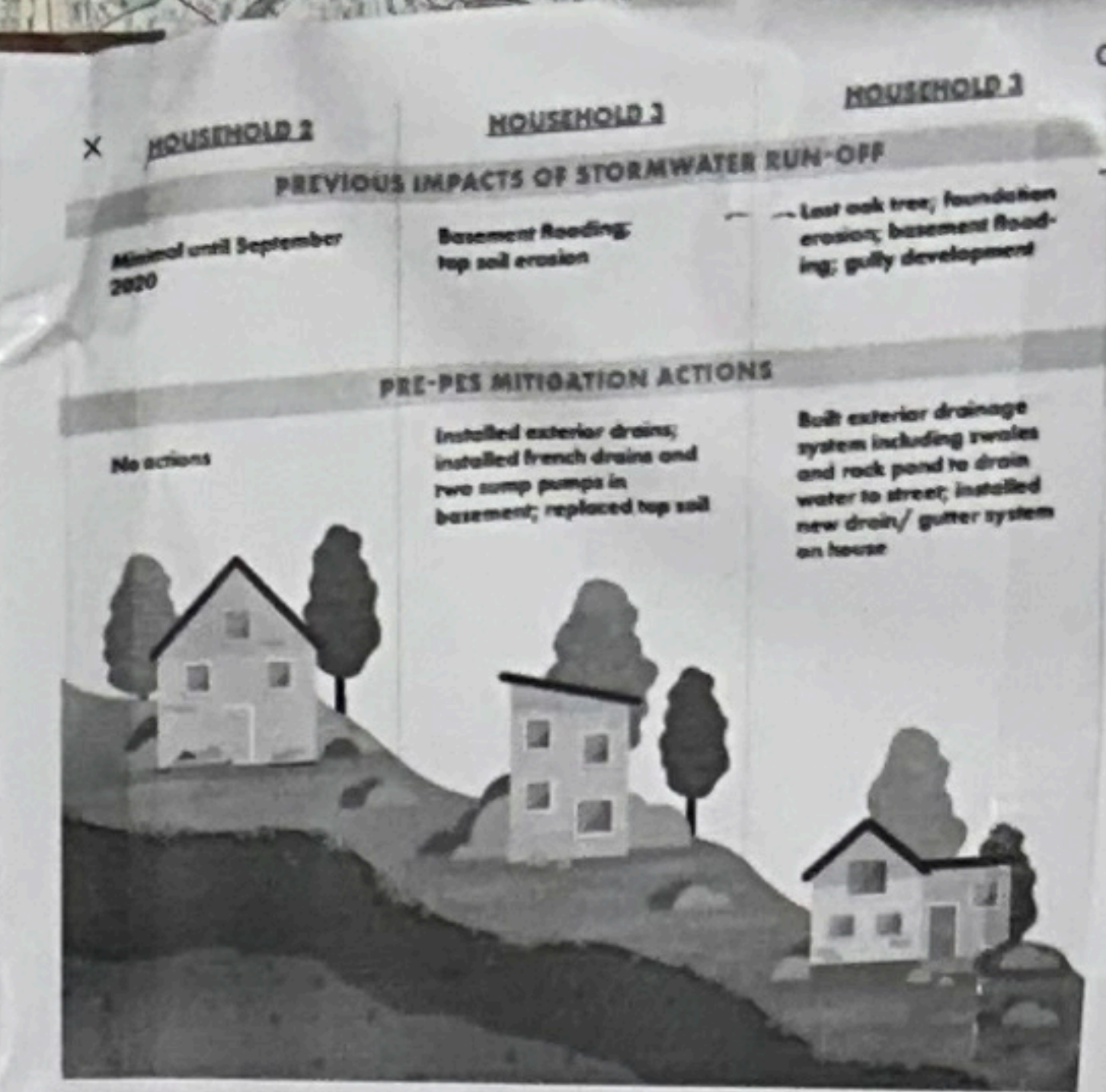
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Good Morning,

My name is Jason Klein and I am the Executive Director of Corporate Real Estate for Adventist HealthCare. I will providing testimony this evening at the Wheaton location and will check in with staff upon my arrival.

Thank you,  
Jason Klein

**Jason Klein, LEED AP**  
**Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate**

 AHC\_151

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[www.adventisthealthcare.com](http://www.adventisthealthcare.com)



Introduced by: Councilmember Small

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**RESOLUTION 2023-33**

**CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE PUBLIC  
HEARING DRAFT OF THE MINOR MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT  
(MONTGOMERY COUNTY)**

- WHEREAS, the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) is a County plan developed by Montgomery County Planning Department, in partnership with the City of Takoma Park, to amend certain elements of the Takoma Park Master Plan (last updated in 2000); and
- WHEREAS, the MMPA provides an opportunity to reexamine elements of the Takoma Park Master Plan in respect to unanticipated economic and land use changes; and
- WHEREAS, the unexpected relocation of the Washington Adventist Hospital opens an opportunity for the City of Takoma Park to consider resources on the campus and surrounding area and recommend changes, including the Washington Adventist University campus, and the multi-family housing areas along Maple Avenue; and
- WHEREAS, the City Council has been apprised of the MMPA at each step of the process to date, and has reviewed and discussed the proposed draft plan recommendations as presented by Montgomery County Planning in consultation with City of Takoma Park staff; and
- WHEREAS, the Takoma Park City Council supports the re-envisioning of the Washington Adventist Hospital campus and the enhancement of critical civic, economic, and housing resources in the surrounding neighborhoods along the Maple Avenue corridor in a manner that enhances the quality of life of area residents and is environmentally and financially sustainable; and
- WHEREAS, the MMPA covers an area within one of the City's most racially diverse communities and consists of a high number of the City's affordable housing units; and
- WHEREAS, in 2019 the City Council passed Resolution 2019-47, adopting the City of Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan which outlines the City's vision for housing and economic development for the next decade; and
- WHEREAS, this plan outlined three overarching goals for future development in the City: preserve existing businesses and affordable housing in Takoma Park, including in



revitalizing areas; produce more housing and opportunities for businesses to start and grow across the income spectrum and in neighborhoods across the City to meet the diverse housing and economic needs; and protect renters, homeowners, and local businesses from discrimination and displacement, and our environment from destruction; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines many strategies to achieve these goals, one of which is to encourage the use of County allowable use and zoning provisions to create and expand housing types that are under-represented in Takoma Park and desired by existing and new residents of various incomes, needs, abilities and family configurations; and

WHEREAS, other City adopted goals, plans, policies, and ordinances address aspects of the Plan amendment; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board will hold a public hearing and accept public comments to hear testimony on the draft recommendations of the MMPA; and

WHEREAS, at the City Council's request, Montgomery Planning set the Public Hearing date for September 14<sup>th</sup>, and extended the period of the open public record to allow for additional resident feedback; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the Public Hearing Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan and City Council members have held multiple information sessions and listening sessions for residents to ask questions and provide feedback on the plan, including the July 18, 2023 and August 16, 2023 Information Sessions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that per its June 7, 2023 Council Resolution 2023-16 , the City Council continues to request that the Montgomery County Planning Board ensures that the MMPA addresses seven priorities: incentivizing the creation of a range of housing types; retaining and improving existing affordable housing; retaining existing and attracting new local businesses; creating new public space opportunities; strengthening social and environmental factors; continuing community engagement throughout the planning review process; and assessing the impact of increasing residential units and retail on the provision of public services in the plan area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to address the aforementioned priorities, the City Council requires that the Montgomery County Planning Board holds work sessions that critically examine the following topics during development of the Planning Board Draft Plan of the MMPA:



- Topic: Potential Redevelopment of the Washington Adventist Site and the Flower Avenue District
  - How do the development requirements, including set-backs, building heights and step downs, lot coverage and density of the newly proposed zoning for the Washington Adventist site impact neighboring single-family housing? The MMPA should reduce the scale, height, and apply appropriate set-backs of parcels adjoining Maplewood and Greenwood Avenues in order to preserve the character of adjacent single-family housing.
  - What specific public space and public benefits recommendations can be made for the Washington Adventist site? Specifically, how can recommendations on the site address the six key community priorities in the Public Hearing Draft? The Plan should explore recommending inclusion of dedicated public spaces on the site. Additionally, the plan's 35 percent green cover requirement should not mitigate the need for dedicated public space to the benefit of green roofs.
  - Within the green space requirements of the Washington Adventist site development, the MMPA should (1) retain the greenspace at Hospital Hill (i.e., Maplewood Ave and Maple Ave) and (2) increase the recommended ½ acre primary central public open space with a recommended unobstructed opening on Flower Avenue to better preserve the existing central commons on the Washington Adventist site, promote its continuing accessibility to the public, and respect historical legacy of the commons for public health and recreation.
  - What is the appropriate zoning for the Erie Center retail node to meet the MMPA vision of the neighborhood that serves retail without adversely impacting existing single-family homes? MMPA roadway and transit recommendations within the District should allow for local usability of the Center and well-functioning traffic conditions.
  - The MMPA should clearly map the planned dedication and demarcate the allowable line of development on Site 23 abutting Sligo Creek. Any dedication and additional development requirements should preserve the existing native forested area and provide appropriate development setbacks and stormwater requirements to protect the environmental health of the Creek.



- Topic: Promoting a Diversity of Housing in the Plan Area
  - What are the potential impacts of newly proposed zoning on the diversity of housing stock and affordability? The MMPA should recommend that any new units constructed within the Plan area help meet the City's objectives of increasing the number of units and variety of housing types across the affordability spectrum that result in economically diverse communities.
  - What funding and regulatory recommendations can the MMPA make to ensure stakeholders (City, County, etc.) incentivize and finance the creation and preservation of quality, safe, diverse, and energy efficient housing within the Maple Avenue District?
  - What are the best comparable jurisdictions to Takoma Park with regard to housing density, transit access, geographic location, etc. to the MMPA and how do their zoning densities compare to the proposed MMPA land use?
  - Where appropriate, in the Maple Avenue District, the MMPA should encourage innovative in-fill development opportunities on underutilized portions of parcels that do not adversely impact existing affordable housing units. Given the trade-offs between commercial and housing development, consider alternatives to the proposed 100 percent commercial FAR to promote increased housing creation.
- Topic: Public Space, Infrastructure, and Amenities within the MMPA
  - What is the impact of the density proposed in the Plan on access to and provision of public space, infrastructure, recreational facilities, school capacity, roads, public utilities, and healthcare? How does the MMPA ensure adequate services will be available with the proposed increased population growth, and what mitigating strategies can be considered?
  - Are there specific parcels outside the Municipal District that would be appropriate locations to incentivize the expansion or creation of specific public benefit facilities?
  - The MMPA should include more specific recommendations around the activation and creation of usable greenspace including the activation of the greenspace neighboring Essex House and identification of additional opportunities for ballfields and structured play areas.
  - The plan should clearly support improvements in multi-modal transportation, help meet City and County climate goals, and address the current and future challenges of local vehicle traffic in the plan area.
- Topic: Protecting Existing Housing Affordability in the MMPA
  - How can the MMPA stakeholders retain existing housing affordability while improving the quality of existing stock of housing?



- What protection mechanisms are in place to prevent displacement of current renters in the Maple Avenue District and are additional protections needed in the MMPA?
- How do federal, state, and local policies such as low-income housing tax credits, Moderately-Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) requirements, rent stabilization, and others advance affordable housing goals in the MMPA, including no-net loss of affordable housing? The MMPA should be more explicit about how its goal of no-net loss of affordable housing, and City housing goals, will be met in this plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council wants the Montgomery County Planning Board to address the following in the Planning Board Draft Plan of the MMPA directly or prior to the advancement of the revised MMPA to the City Council and the Montgomery County Council:

- Include language in the MMPA that explicitly explains how the plan's recommendations address the Community Priorities identified;
- Provide additional documentation and background information on the Climate Assessment as well as assess the potential impacts of the MMPA on the environment and consider possible mitigating strategies;
- Provide additional information on the race equity impacts and how they were developed;
- Provide additional details on resident engagement during the development of the MMPA's vision, including outreach to residents along Maple Avenue;
- Provide additional information on how existing tree coverage in the MMPA along with future development requirements will help meet the goal of 60% tree canopy coverage throughout the entire City;
- Work with City staff to demonstrate alignment of the MMPA with City of Takoma Park adopted plans and policies, including: the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan, the 2019 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, the 2019 declaration of climate emergency, the 2020 Climate Action Framework, the City's Rent Stabilization ordinances, the City's Racial Equity Initiative, and City policies and ordinances related to stormwater, tree canopy, safe streets, and City right-of-way;
- Address forthcoming additional list of City edits and corrections to the text of the MMPA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that during the development of the Planning Board Draft Plan, the City Council will endeavor to hold work sessions on the following topics related to the MMPA:

- School facilities within the MMPA area and the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) site selection and school construction process;
- Current state of housing within the Maple Avenue District and ways to achieve City housing goals for protection and preservation; including rehabilitation needs, partnerships, and financing opportunities;
- The County's development review process and how the City can play a role in influencing future development;



- The Montgomery County Mapping Segregation project and how the results may advance race equity in the City including the elimination of racial restrictive covenants and street renaming.

Adopted by the Takoma Park City Council this 13th day of September, 2023.

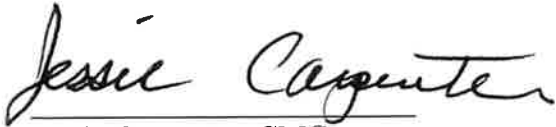
AYES: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Honzak

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Seamens, Small

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessie Carpenter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Jessie Carpenter, CMC  
City Clerk



Dear Planning Board Members,

Thank you very much for your work in developing the comprehensive Minor Master Plan Amendment for Takoma Park. My comments relate to the Public Hearing held on September 14, 2023. I want to reference the letter of support from Takoma For All, which I signed.

I want to restate my support. As you finalize the plan, I'd like you to work through some of the plan's details, namely the school situation and public transit.

1. The only high school in reasonable range is Blair, and that's quite a bus ride away and at capacity. Other schools mentioned in the plan are far outside the reasonable distance for a school commute (via bus), and a discussion with MCPS should be held to determine the viability of a high school in the Takoma Park/Silver Spring area (potentially without a dedicated athletic field due to footprint requirements).
1. Public transportation connectivity and a car-free lifestyle will be essential for the community. An increase in bus service and expansion of pedestrian and bikeways to the other transit centers (e.g., Takoma Metro, Takoma Langley Crossroads Transit Center) will be needed. However, Maple Ave towards Takoma Metro is very narrow, and Carroll Ave, which leads to the Transit Center, only has one sidewalk at times, barely five feet wide. This route would do poorly with heavier pedestrian traffic. The plan should recommend how to better connect the new area with the closest transit options and identify the responsible parties to act upon the recommendation.
1. If additional vehicle traffic is to be expected, the plan should review the redesign of the Carroll Ave/Ethan Allen Ave intersection (Takoma Junction). This intersection has been proposed to be redesigned by several studies (<https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/takoma-junction-redevelopment/takoma-junction-intersection-and-traffic-studies/>), but to date, SHA has not provided funding towards this project. With a recommendation in the plan to address this intersection redesign, this could change, making the intersection safer for all participants, but especially pedestrians, and reducing congestion.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Emanuel Wagner  
429 Boyd Ave  
Takoma Park, MD, 20912



TO: Planning Board Chair & Commissioners, 9/13/23, for 9/14/23 MMP Hearing

**The Silver Spring Historical Society endorses the Historic Preservation Commission's & Historic Preservation Office's recommendations to designate these 3 very significant historical properties onto the Master Plan for Historic Preservation:**

**<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/TPMMA-Public-Hearing-Draft-Final-6.21.pdf>**

- **The Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church (7700 Carroll Avenue)**
- **Heffner Park Community Center (42 Oswego Avenue)**
- **Krestview (7625 Carroll Avenue)**

**Thank you! Marcie Stickle, Silver Spring Historical Society Advocacy Chair, marcipro@aol.com 301-587-5955, 510 Albany Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912**



To whom it concerns:

As residents in Takoma Park, adjacent to Washington Adventist University, our family will be directly affected by the purposed zoning changes in the Minor Master Plan Amendment. Our home is in the plan to be rezoned.

These are our concerns and suggestions:

- Our highest priority is safety, as we have a family. A young lady was mugged in front of our house this year. With a large population increase, crime rates will continue to rise. The news apps notify of many crime instances in the area. We are very concerned for our children's safety due to the potential population increase.
- Park/playground capacities: Currently, the playgrounds along Sligo Creek are very full of children. Will more playgrounds with shade trees be added? By the afternoon, the slides that aren't in the shade can get very hot. Having the tall trees, help shade the parks to give children more time to play.
- Green space is a large attraction to Takoma Park. Developing land and adding high rise (120ft) options, takes away from that green space.
- There are many benefits to keeping green space: temperature cooling, air cleaning, more likely for residents to stay healthy (clean areas to be active in), etc.
- In conversations with young women in the city, many are already uncomfortable running/walking alone along the Sligo Creek trail. Increasing the population by 40% will only discourage more young women from utilizing the trail alone.
- Flower Ave, Carroll Ave, and Maplewood Ave are narrow roads, given the street parking. With the increase in traffic, how will the traffic on these roads be addressed? How will the maintenance of these roads be addressed?
- The public schools in the area are already over capacity. Where will more schools be built to accommodate these additional children?
- The grocery stores are already having a hard time meeting the needs of the current population. There are often empty shelf spaces where items with WIC labels belong.
- Street parking is very limited on evenings with WAU sports games. How will parking needs be met with tall apartment buildings added?
- Privacy: as our home is within the plans, we could end up living with stores directly next to our home. The lots with homes should not be re-zoned to include commercial options, specifically on Maplewood Ave and Flower Ave.
- City resources: with the increase in population, are the City of Takoma Park resources able to accommodate the growth? Specifically, the police department, fire department, and community center?

We propose to limit the height to 4-5 stories, which would match what is currently on the University and old Hospital sites. This allows for growth, but at a more manageable percent increase. We also propose to include shaded walkways and parks to maintain the Takoma Park lifestyle.

Sean and Kelsey Napier  
724 Maplewood Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear Planning Board,

I live in Takoma Park, and I am writing regarding the Minor Master Plan. I urge the County Planning Board to remove the "Maple Avenue District" from the Plan Area in the Takoma Park MMP Amendment.

I am concerned with the lack of affordable housing in our area, and I support new housing on the Adventist properties, especially affordable housing. However, I believe that the MMP threatens current lower-income residents of Maple Avenue with displacement. A large majority of residents along the area of Maple Ave in the MMP are people of color and with low or moderate incomes.

The area of Maple Ave. in the MMP offers important public amenities: strong schools, parks, bus lines, and many City services, all within walking distance. It's a desirable area to live and the proposed rezoning presents a profit-making opportunity.

My understanding is that the MMP has no mandates to ensure that affordable housing is kept along Maple Ave. or built at the Adventist site. It's only natural that the proposed new zoning of Maple Ave. would encourage developers to tear down existing residential buildings and build bigger, more expensive housing and/or commercial buildings.

Affordable housing doesn't just happen. It rarely gets built without a struggle, push back, or government requirements. When you build low-income housing, someone doesn't get richer; someone is made uncomfortable. It's easy to go along with these concerns, usually expressed in the language of what's "realistic." But we always have a choice.

Faced with the choice of protecting our existing affordable housing or opening the area to the development of higher priced housing, I hope the Planning Board will choose to protect our more vulnerable citizens from eviction and displacement. Please remove the Maple Avenue District from the Minor Master Plan Amendment for Takoma Park.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Jane Hsiao



Marcia Morris

address - 7710 Garland Ave, Takoma Park, MD, 20912

Ward 5

I am an African-American and have lived at this address for 25 years

I have heard much excitement and hope as to the new housing and commercial opportunities this change in zoning will bring to Takoma Park.

I share in that excitement and hope. I have loved my years In Takoma Park for its trees and green spaces, its walkability and its friendliness. My hope is that this new zoning not detract from the things we all love most about our city.

My comments are on four subjects:

1. Greater attention to insuring green spaces;
2. Reducing height limits around the edges of the planning zone;
3. Recognition of the storm water problems that exist and will be exacerbated by the massive construction to come and a commitment by the county and city that existing homeowners won't be left to battle each individual construction project on our own; and
4. Concern that without requirements to ensure no net loss of low income and affordable cost housing the rezoning will result in many current residents within these categories being forced out of Takoma Park and perhaps out of the Montgomery County.

Because my address (Garland Ave) places me directly adjacent to the University and the Flower District portion of the plan my first three comments and requests will focus on the Flower District but I believe these concerns apply to all sections of the the City and the plan.

1. Green Space - although one of the desired outcomes of the plan is to maximize green space, without specific attention to that it will be lost in the monetary desire for use of space. An example, the City right-of-way between Carroll and Maplewood behind the back of the Garland Ave properties and the back of the University property on Greenwood is a tree filled green corridor connecting by other green spaces to the Sligo and Long Branch green areas. Animals use this corridor to move among green areas. I see deer and raccoons and rabbits daily; foxes in Spring; owls are nesting in the trees and can be heard nightly; and there is a possum that visits on occasion. The new Zoning Plan comes right up to this City right-of-way with authorization for 55 ft high construction. This will likely result in the destruction of this green corridor and the loss of tree cover and wildlife habitat.

I request that the zoning plan be amended to indicate this existing green space and other similar spaces will be protected and to limit the height of adjacent construction to be compatible.

Which leads to my next concern-

2. Height limits around the edges of the rezoning plan.

The section of Garland Ave directly behind the college property on Greenwood is a long established neighborhood of one and two story homes. The proposed zoning change would allow for construction up to 55 ft in height which is not compatible with the existing neighborhood.

Request that the plan be changed to limit construction height in that area to 40 ft. I also request the construction heights be revisited around the edges of the zoning plan to determine whether the heights are appropriate considering already existing homes and communities.

3. Storm water management -

I believe storm water management issues are a problem in many areas of the City but I will speak from personal experience here on Garland Ave behind the University. Over a period of many years the residents of this neighborhood have had



several meetings with City and University representatives about the the problems we have had with storm water runoff from the University - in particular with runoff from a parking lot the University constructed several years ago. It flooded our yards and houses and in my case caused water damage to the foundation of my house. Nothing came of the two meetings I attended and I was forced to get a loan to do \$30k in repairs and remediation to partially deal with the water. As I understand it, the only home owners who received any assistance were those who filed individual lawsuits. This was an instance of dealing with only on entity. The proposed zoning change will result in many many construction projects by numerous individual contractors and property owners. Based on past experience that would leave all existing property owners at the mercy of each of those contractors and owners. I request that the County and the City include in the zoning plan a commitment to provide oversight on this issue and assure existing property owners have a recourse to the County and City for assistance on resulting problems .

My fourth comment concerns the Maple Avenue portion of the rezoning plan.

4. Net loss of low income and rent stabilized units.

The joys of Takoma Park are an abundance of trees and flowers and a warm welcoming diverse community. The Maple Avenue corridor contains most of the low cost and affordable housing in Takoma Park. There is considerable concern that much of that will disappear and those citizens of Takoma Park will be forced out if there is no provision in the Minor/Master Plan for no net loss of such housing. Request that this be addressed in the Plan to avoid pushing citizens out of Takoma Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Minor/Major rezoning plan.

Marcia Morris

Sent from my iPhone



I attended last week's Ward 4/Ward 5 meeting at WAU regarding the MMPA. The hard copy materials handed out contained numerous long URLs that nobody will type in. I urge you to circulate these materials electronically AND to use a URL shortening service (e.g., bit.ly) to make the links usable to the community. As currently circulated, the links in the hard copies distributed are unusable.

Please respond to this note.

**Keith Berner**

7902 Flower Avenue (Ward 5)  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
m: 301-588-5080



How can I get specific answers to my specific questions? The MMPA does not provide the information I requested. My questions are not testimony, but rather questions that need answers.

Keith Berner  
301-588-5080

Sent from my tablet

On Aug 9, 2023, at 16:00, Klevan, Larissa <Larissa.Klevan@montgomeryplanning.org> wrote:

Dear Mr. Berner,

Further review of your email regarding the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment indicates that it is testimony that was sent to the chair of the Montgomery Planning Board as part of the public record. Oral testimony provided at the Public Hearing and written testimony provided to the Planning Board within the designated timeframe collectively constitute the Public Record for the plan. All testimony (both written and oral) will be reviewed by Montgomery Planning staff once the public record has closed. Thank you for submitting your testimony.

Regarding the green promenade, you will find additional information on pages 31-35 and additional information on implementation on page 98.

Thank you,  
Larissa



# Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment

# Commentary on the Spring 2023 Public Hearing Draft

Prepared by Carl Elefante  
Ward 3 Resident

## Overview

- The TPMMPA addresses the potential redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site and links it to the Maple Avenue corridor. Generally, the Plan proposes a one-size-fits-all rezoning with a blanket of medium density commercial/residential zoning (mostly CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150), applying it to both a major redevelopment site and also a fully developed corridor containing a significant stock of the City’s affordable housing.
- Development of the Adventist Hospital site is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform a significant quarter within the City. It is a rare opportunity to house a large-scale institutional development, like a new school. (Such sites are extremely difficult to find.) Alternatively, it is also an opportunity to increase the City’s “missing middle” and affordable housing stock.
- Maple Avenue is already developed, housing a significant amount of the City’s missing middle and affordable housing. Plans for Maple Avenue should prioritize protecting and enhancing that housing stock. Infill development and better and more extensive community service retail are the most apparent needs on Maple Avenue.

## Key Takeaways

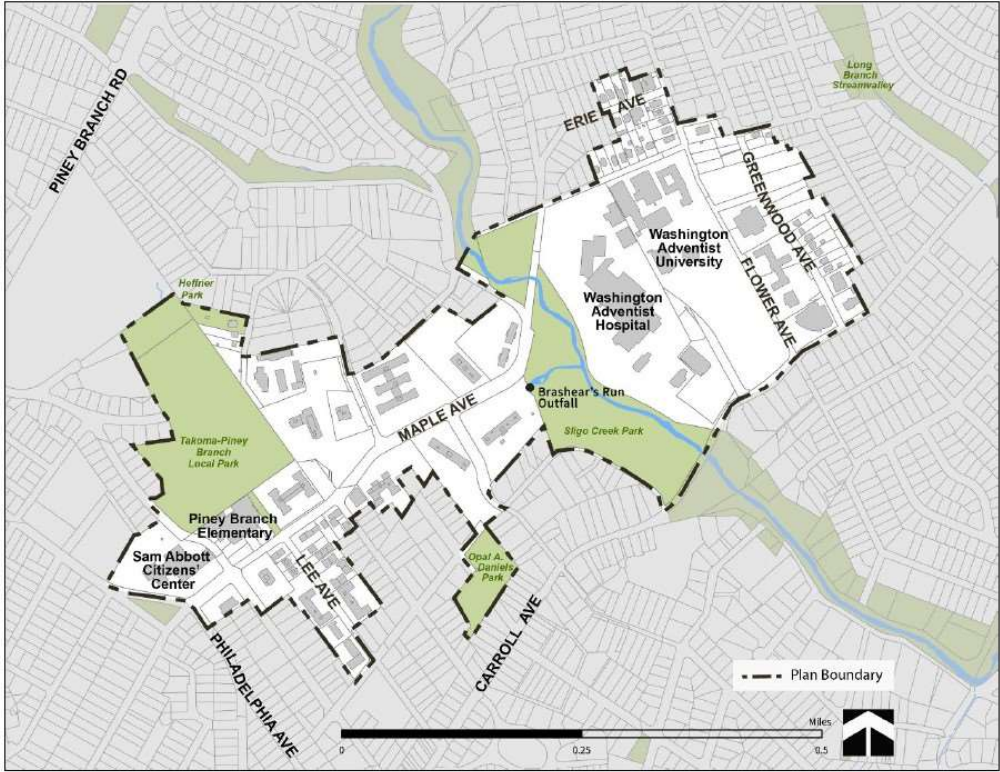
- The Plan does not provide enough direction for the redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site.
- It threatens, rather than protects and enhances, the City’s most substantial inventory of affordable housing.
- It threatens, rather than protects and enhances, three of the City’s most important municipal facilities.
- It proposes zoning that would encourage development not in keeping with the character of the City and most directly impacted neighborhoods.
- It proposes very substantial increases in density without any substantive increase in transportation and transit facilities.
- Its proposals for open space and other public amenities are of questionable benefit and unlikely to be realized.
- It fails to protect Sligo Creek, even though it addresses a site critical to its protection.
- The one-size-fits-all re-zoning approach proposed in the Plan falls far short of the robust planning work needed to address conditions in this part of the City.

## Commentary Format

- Except for the building photos on Page 6, the maps and other graphics on the following pages are reproduced from the Spring 2023 Public Hearing Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment prepared by Montgomery Planning.



# Plan Limits



## Commentary

- The term “minor” amendment is misleading. The Plan depicts a major alteration to community character in and around the Plan boundaries which will impact lives in Takoma Park for generations.
- The availability of the Adventist Hospital site for redevelopment is full of possibilities for Takoma Park and Montgomery County. Conducting a planning study is both needed and timely.
- Combining the Adventist Hospital study with redevelopment of Maple Avenue and Municipal Center tracts is not necessarily beneficial.
- Like many planning initiatives in the County, the proposed Plan limits are drawn to avoid single-family dwellings. A questionable planning principle, it is instead a political calculation.
- Clearly the Plan’s impacts are not limited to the Plan boundaries.

# Stakeholder Process – Key Takeaways



Residents like living in Takoma Park



Desire for affordable housing on Washington Adventist Campus



Concern about loss of the hospital, desire for urgent care or health clinic to remain



Desire for walkable retail options on Washington Adventist Campus, specifically a grocery store



Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park as an important asset that should be protected



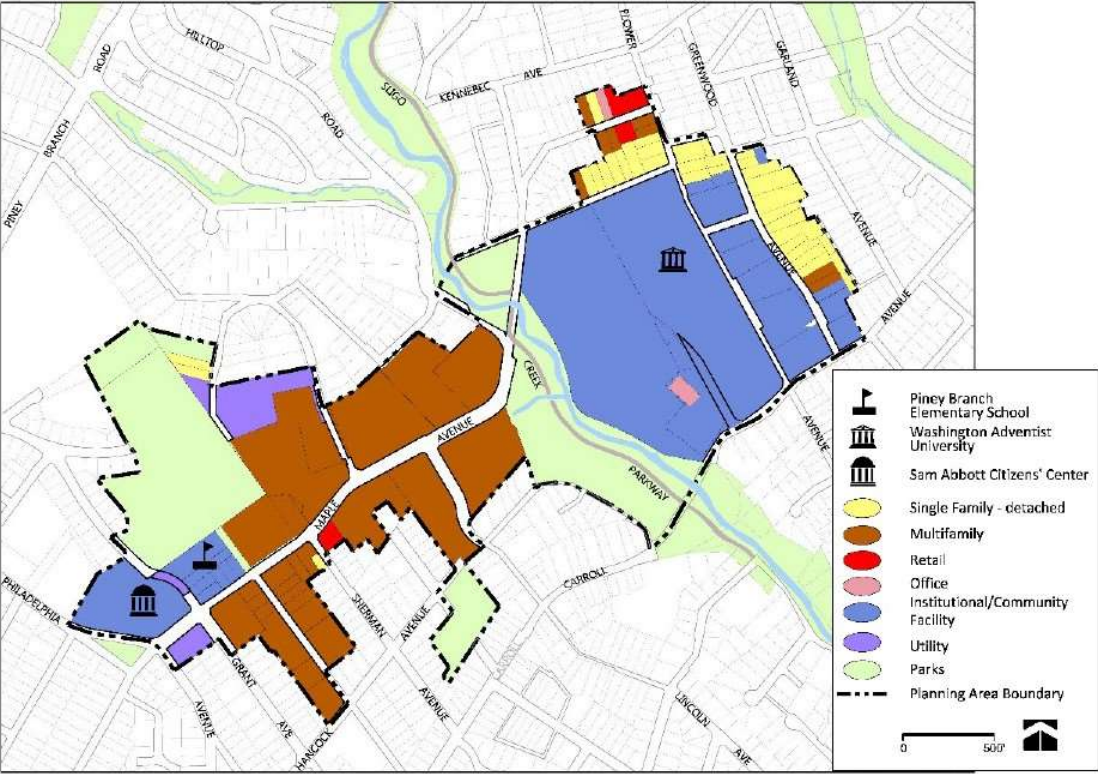
Desire for public amenities on Washington Adventist Campus, such as a space for community gathering, fitness center and swimming pool

## Commentary

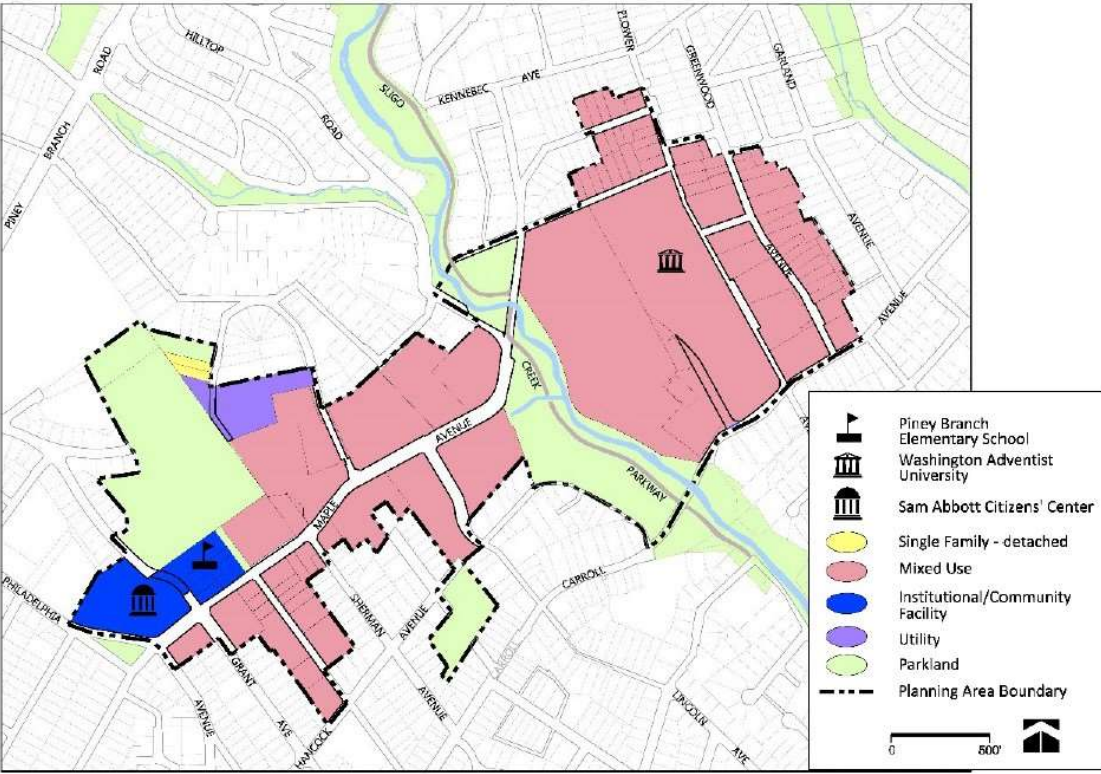
- The stakeholder outreach process yielded useful information about the concerns and interests of the Takoma Park community.
- The effectiveness of the Plan in addressing stakeholder concerns and interests is questionable.



# Existing Land Use



# Proposed Land Use



## Commentary

- The Adventist Hospital site has housed institutional uses for generations. Sites of sufficient size and character to accommodate institutional uses, like schools, are very rare. Many densely developed communities like Takoma Park and Montgomery County have great difficulty securing sites for institutions. Priority should be given to assessing and enhancing the Adventist Hospital site for institutional uses beneficial to the Takoma Park community.
- Realizing the aspirations of Sammy Abbott and other progressive leaders in Takoma Park, Maple Avenue provides a very substantial stock of affordable dwellings for the Takoma Park community. Planning addressing Maple Avenue should prioritize the preservation and enhancement of existing affordable housing.
- The few parcels incorporated in the Municipal District are only a portion of the City and County institutional uses located nearby. Considering only these two parcels within the Plan is questionable.

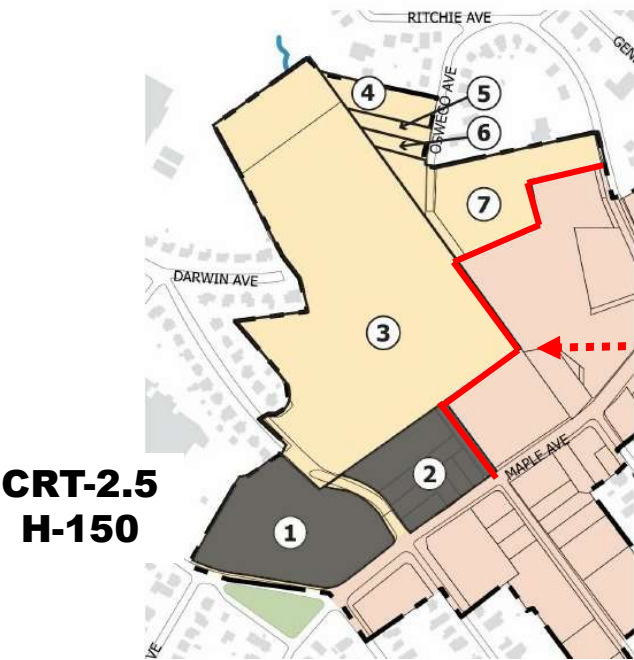
## Commentary

- While the Plan claims to provide flexibility for future development, in fact it applies the same planning and re-zoning approach for both the Adventists Hospital site – poised for major redevelopment – along with dozens of occupied sites on Maple Avenue, a one-size-fits-all approach that is questionable.

# LAND USE



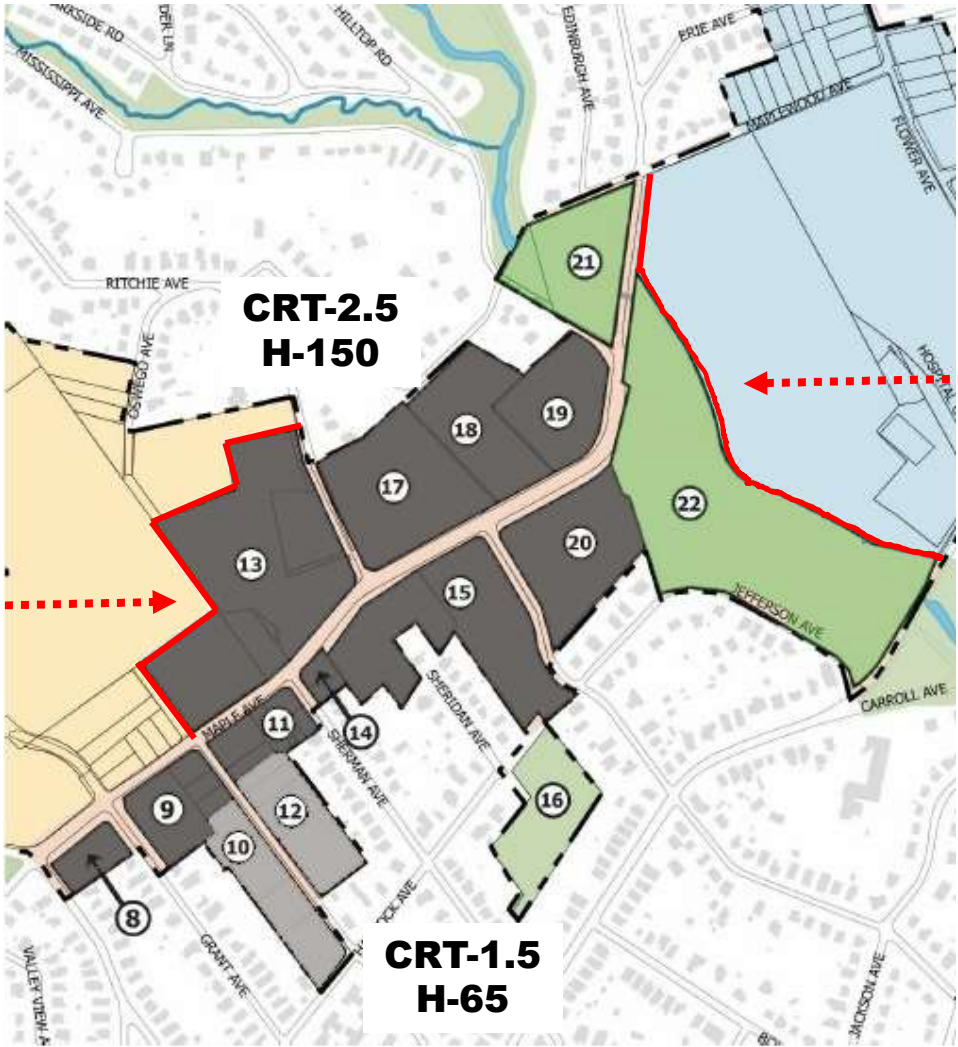
Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Municipal District



Commentary – Municipal District

- Intentionally or not, the Plan places redevelopment pressures on Municipal District parcels.

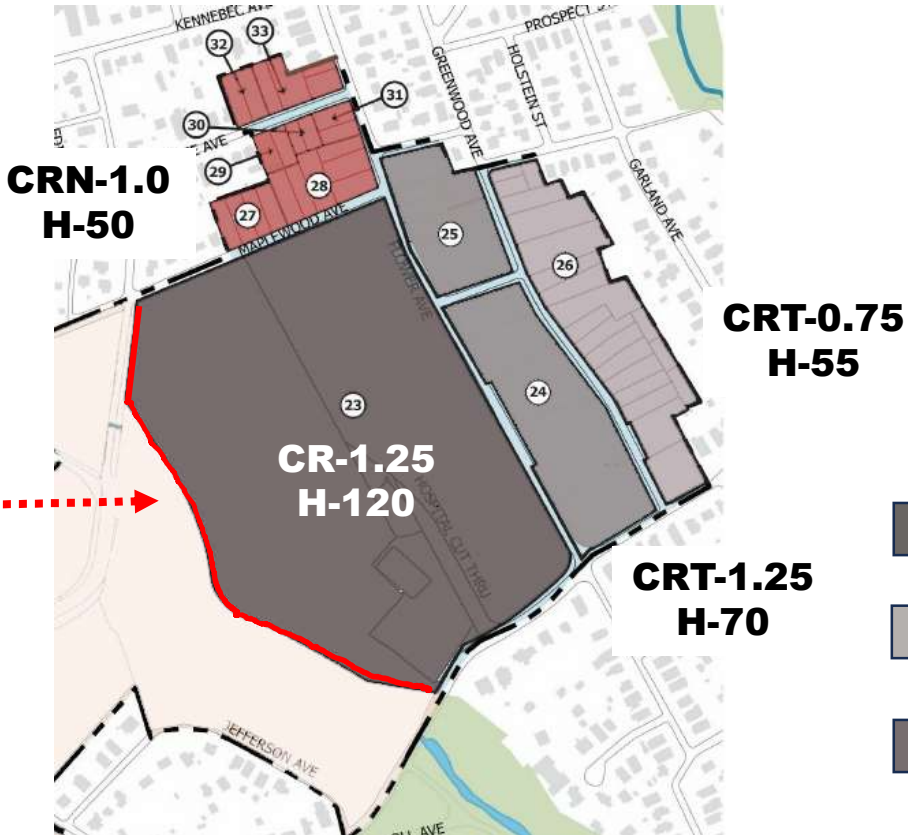
Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Maple District



Commentary – Maple District

- Increased density and height allowances (by making the land far more valuable) sew the seeds for the demolition of the existing affordable housing along Maple Avenue. Despite good intentions, replacing existing affordable housing with newly constructed affordable housing rarely succeeds.
- Unless otherwise provided for, CRT does not guarantee affordable dwelling units since properties can be developed for commercial purposes alone.
- Parcels 21 & 22 should be rezoned for open space only.

Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Flower District



Commentary – Flower District

- With substantially increased density and more permitted uses, the Plan shuts the door on reusing the Adventist Hospital site for institutional uses (by making the land far more valuable).
- The Plan provides no specific direction for the site.

LEGEND

CRT-2.5	150 ft. Buildings
CRT-1.5	65 ft. Buildings
CR-1.25	120 ft. Buildings
CRT-1.25	70 ft. Buildings
CRT-0.75	55 ft. Buildings
CRN-1.0	50 ft. Buildings

Commentary – All Districts

- Most CR / CRT / CRN zones designate different densities for commercial and residential uses, not in this Plan.
- Unless otherwise restricted, the proposed CR / CRT / CRN zones would allow by-right 100% commercial uses from 0.75 FAR to 2.5 FAR.

RE-ZONING MAPS



Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Municipal District

Map Number	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Justification
1	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
2	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
3	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
4	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
5	R-60	R-40	Increase flexibility for future residential development that permits duplexes
6	R-60	R-40	Increase flexibility for future residential development that permits duplexes
7	R-60	R-40	Increase flexibility for future residential development that permits duplexes

Commentary – Municipal District

- The Plan provides no justification for re-zoning the Library, Municipal Center, and Piney Branch Middle School sites for such high-density development and very tall buildings.

Commentary – All Districts

- While CR zones support development flexibility, they allow by-right commercial-only development. The Plan provides no justification for accommodating such a substantial amount of commercial development at this location.
- In a City and Country struggling to provide sufficient housing, particularly affordable housing, the application of CR zoning to the study area is questionable.

Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Maple District

Map Number	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Justification
8	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
9	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
10	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	Increase flexibility for future development
11	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
12	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	Increase flexibility for future development
13	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
14	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-35	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
15	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
16	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
17	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
18	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
19	R-30	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
20	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
21	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
22	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use

Commentary – Maple District

- The substantial up-zoning proposed creates substantial redevelopment pressure on sites currently providing much-needed affordable housing.
- The Plan provides no justification for encouraging such a dramatic change to the character of the Maple District.
- The Plan’s one-size-fits-all approach does nothing to address real conditions in the District and appropriate approaches that preserve and enhance the affordable housing stock located there.

Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Flower District

Map Number	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Justification
23	R-60	CR-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-120	Increase flexibility for future development
24	R-40	CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70	Increase flexibility for future development
25	R-40	CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70	Increase flexibility for future development
26	R-40	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.75 H-55	Increase flexibility for future development
27	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
28	R-60	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
29	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
30	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-50	CRN- 1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
31	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
32	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
33	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-50	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development

Commentary- Flower District

- The proposed up-zoning both discourages the redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site for institutional uses and produces significant redevelopment pressure on Washington Adventist University properties.
- The proposed location of CRN zoning does not provide residents of Maple Avenue walkable access to community service retail.

RE-ZONING TABLES



**M-NCPPC  
Wheaton  
CR-6.0 H-200**



**Commentary**

- Although a higher density is permitted at the site pictured above (6.0 FAR instead of 2.5 FAR), the Plan permits development of the Library, Municipal Center, and Piney Branch Elementary School sites of similar character.
- The 15-story building pictured above is similar to that permitted in CRT-2.5 H-150.
- The photo shows a recently completed County government facility – the Planning Office’s home – in Wheaton adjacent to Metro, a municipal facility built in a CR zone.

**The Aurora  
Silver Spring  
CR-3.0 H-125**



**Commentary**

- Although an increment of density greater (3.0 FAR instead of 2.5 FAR), the buildings pictured above have similar character to those permitted in the CRT-2.5 zone.
- Buildings in the proposed CRT-2.5 H-150 zone could be constructed two stories taller than those pictured above.
- The photo shows residential buildings.

**The Citron  
Silver Spring  
CRT-1.5 H-70**



**Commentary**

- The building pictured above has a character like those permitted in the proposed CRT-1.5 zones. Parcels in the Maple District permit a maximum height 5 ft. lower. (65 ft. not 70 ft.) Parcels in the Flower District permit the same height as shown above.
- The photo shows a residential building.

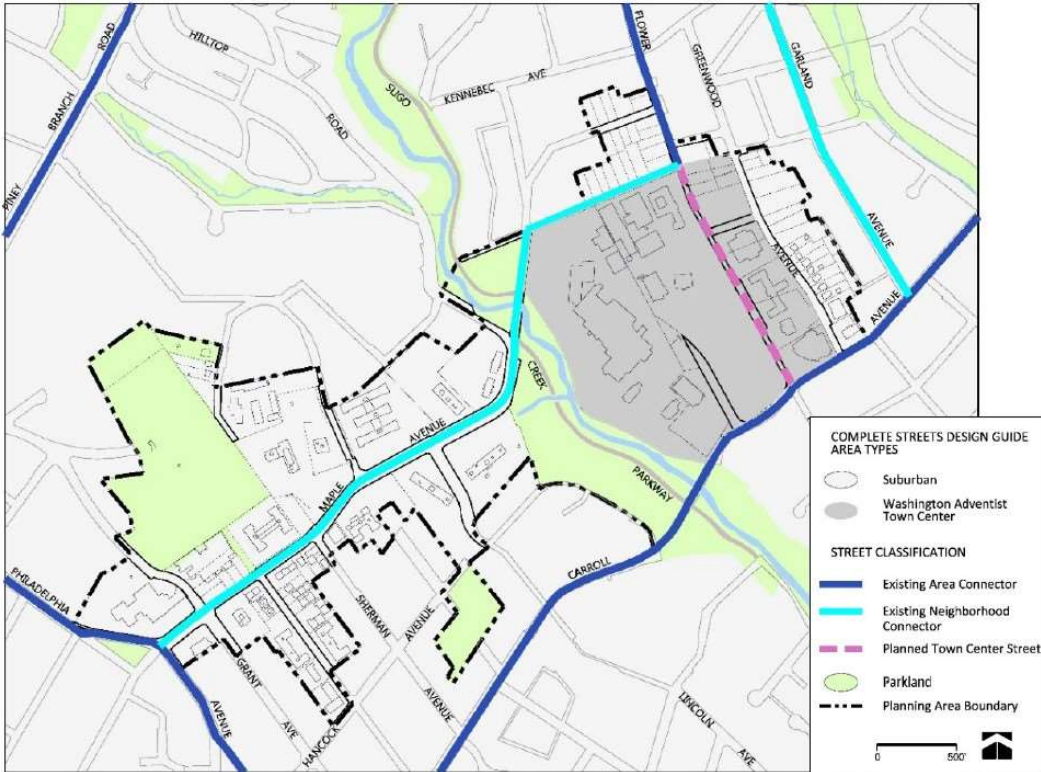
**Commentary – All Photos**

- It is difficult to illustrate exact parallels to the re-zoning proposed in the Plan because there are so many variables. These photos show recently constructed buildings in zones permitting similar heights and densities.

**PRECEDENTS**



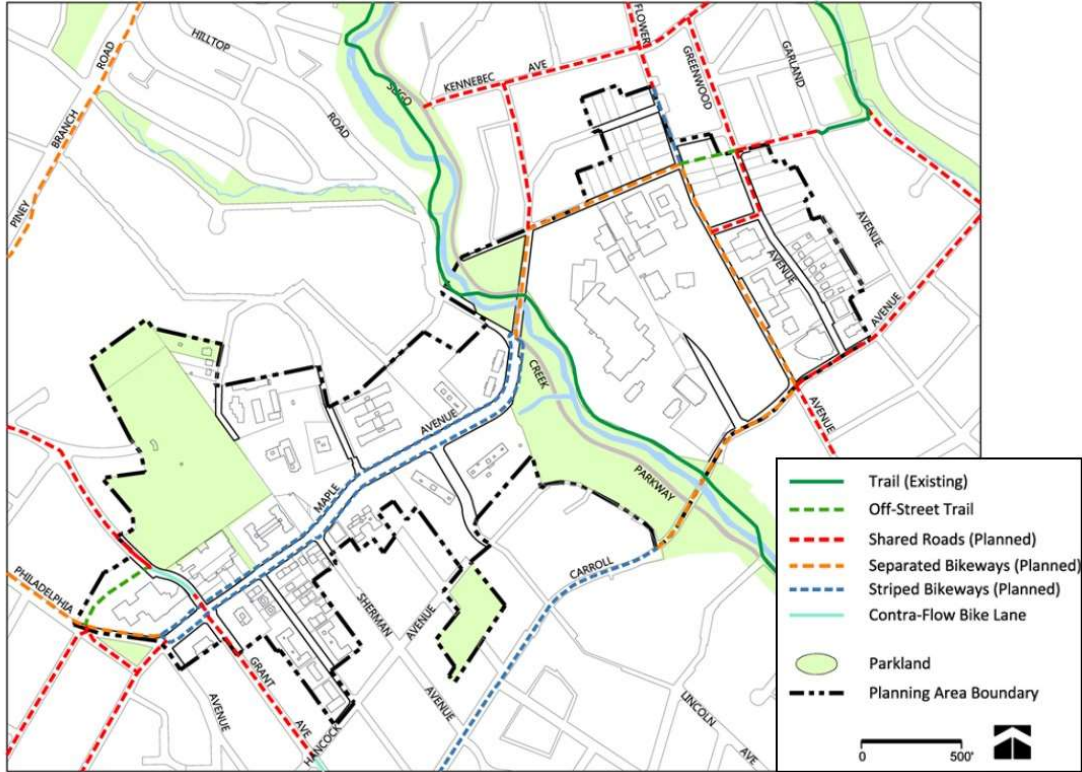
Roadway Network



Commentary

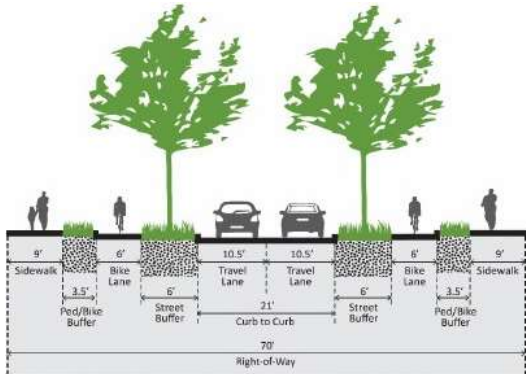
- The Plan proposes no major roadway network improvements. Instead, the only transportation enhancements address alterations to roadway sections along Maple Avenue, Flower Avenue, and Carroll Avenue.
- Since the proposed enhancements address only roadway segments within the Plan limits, benefits to capacity and flow will be negligible.
- Failure to address additional roadway capacity and transit is a substantial deficiency of the Plan, particularly in light of the tremendous increase in density proposed.

Bicycle Network

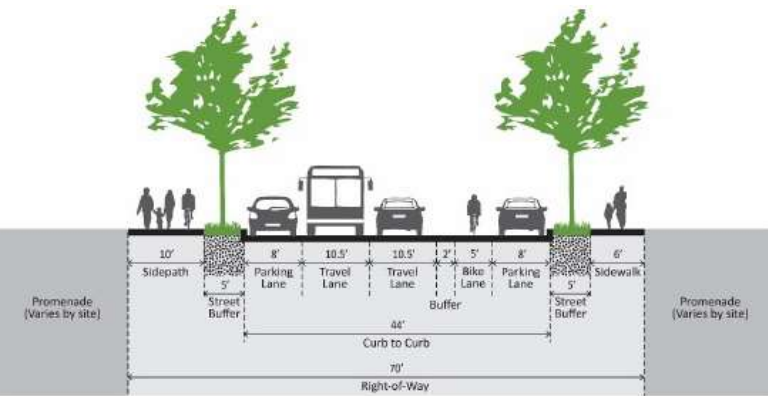


Commentary

- Bikeways are inconsistently provided in the Plan. Physical separation of bike lanes are the exception, not the rule. Even within the Plan limits, the least safe bikeway – shared roads – are proposed.



Flower Avenue



Maple Avenue

Commentary - Roadway Sections

- Even where roadway sections are most substantially modified, bikeway accommodations are not consistently prioritized.
- The proposed section of Flower Avenue shown (between Maplewood and Kennebec) is the only segment where bike lanes are prioritized over parking lanes.
- Even on Maple Avenue where the Green Promenade is proposed, parking and vehicular travel lanes are prioritized over bike lanes.

CONNECTION



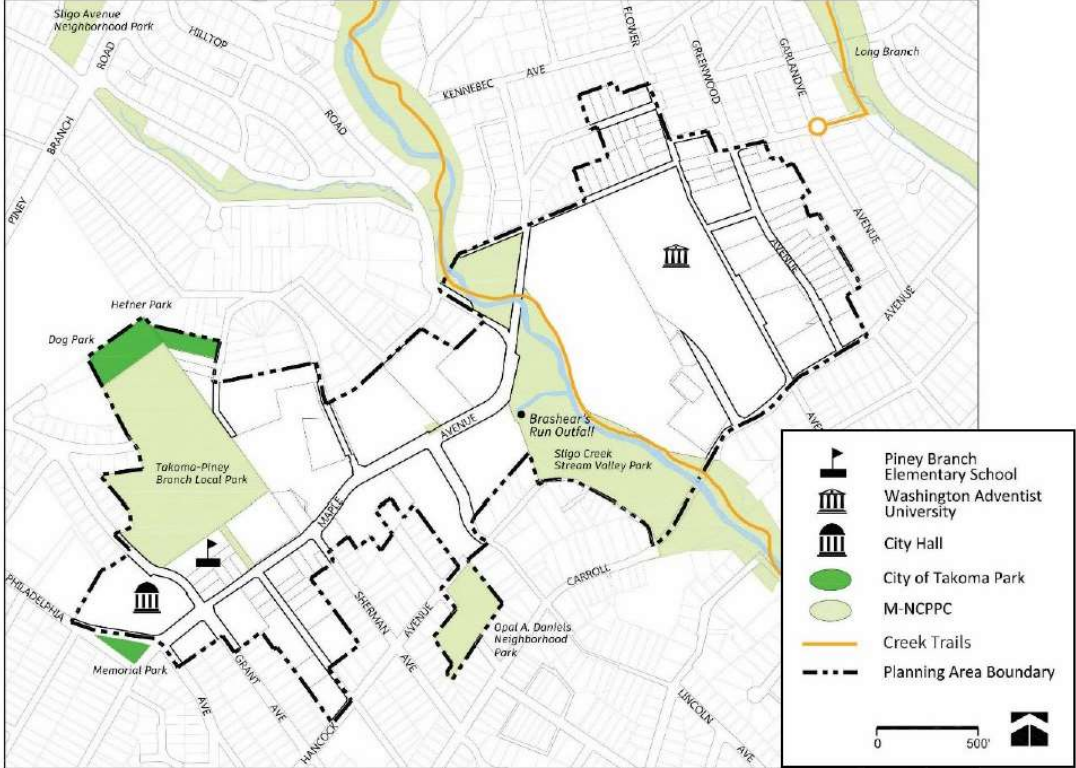
# Green Promenade



## Commentary

- The Green Promenade – the major open space concept proposed in the Plan – is located on private property abutting Maple Avenue, not public space, making its implementation difficult, even unlikely. See Maple Avenue Roadway Section, Page 6.

# Parks & Recreation



## Commentary

- Despite claiming to prioritize ecological health, open space, recreation, and cultural opportunities, the Plan makes no substantial open space allocation.
- No description is provided for the “open space” highlighted on the Adventist Hospital site.
- No action is proposed to assure the ongoing protection of the Sligo Creek riparian area. See Pages 4 & 5. R-60 zoning remains unchanged in the Plan.
- The greatest threat to Sligo Creek within the Plan limits are the steeply sloping portions of the Adventist Hospital site adjacent to the Creek. The Plan makes no proposal to protect the riparian buffer along this site.

# OPEN SPACE



Dear Mr. Harris,

As a longtime resident of Takoma Park and a career in architecture, I have come to appreciate the importance of community revitalization efforts like the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. The Planning Board's interest in the former Adventists Hospital site and Maple Avenue corridor is certainly a very positive step and full of possibilities. However, the proposed one-size-fits-all rezoning to a fairly dense commercial/residential zone is a very blunt instrument applied to two very different places and opens the door to as many bad futures as good ones. Planning in Montgomery County simply needs to be more thoughtful and targeted than the proposed MMPA.

I will not be able to attend the public hearing on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Instead, I have prepared the attached document to provide as much detail as possible for why I am so concerned about the current rezoning recommendations.

I would be happy to discuss my concerns further with you, the Board, or staff at a mutually agreeable time.

Best regards, Carl

**Carl Elefante** FAIA, FAPT

Senior Fellow  
Architecture 2030  
Principal Emeritus  
Quinn Evans  
Buildings and Infrastructure Issues Lead  
GlobalABC Liaison  
Climate Heritage Network  
Senior Research Associate  
University of Notre Dame  
Michael Christopher Duda Center  
2018 President  
The American Institute of Architects

[clft94@gmail.com](mailto:clft94@gmail.com)

301-325-3266



1. Limit Washington Adventist Hospital site rezoning to seven stories (CRT H-75).
2. Limit all new zoning in areas surrounding the hospital and on Maple to match the heights of current buildings.

Jill Gay, 7218 Spruce Avenue, TP, MD

Chief Technical Officer

What Works Association

Tel: 301-920-1137

Email: [jillgay.rh@gmail.com](mailto:jillgay.rh@gmail.com)

<http://www.whatworksforwomen.org>

<http://www.whatworksassociation.org>



Dear Planning Committee Members,

I have read some of the proposals for developing high-rise apartments on the old hospital grounds and elsewhere. I understand that these developments will enrich a handful of developers at the expense of long years of ensuring affordable housing for primarily people of color on Maple Ave and elsewhere in Takoma Park.

We are already a very crowded city with high use of Sligo Creek, streets, transportation, educational and recreation facilities. Please keep in mind the values that make Takoma Park such a precious place to live within a diverse community and stop developers who do not share our values.

Sincerely,  
Joann Malone  
Aspen Ave, TP

--

Joann Malone  
Author of [AWAKE to Racism](#)  
[www.qicircles.com](http://www.qicircles.com)  
<https://joannmalone.wordpress.com>



Submitted testimony

8/13/23

Ben Glickstein

201 Hodges Lane, Takoma Park, MD 20912

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Update - Spring 2023 Public Hearing draft.

I am a homeowner at 201 Hodges Lane, in Ward 1 of Takoma Park, a block from the western edge of the area affected by this plan. I want to express my strong support for the revised zoning laid out in much of the plan area. Allowing for maximum mixed-use flexibility and “Town Center” density will hopefully lead to the development of the most new homes possible, releasing some pressure on skyrocketing prices to buy and to rent in Takoma Park, while providing opportunities for density-enabled services like grocery stores, daycares, and parks.

Some residents who testify may suggest that tall buildings do not fit with Takoma Park’s “character.” I do not agree with this thinking: I hope that it is in Takoma Park’s character to welcome new neighbors by building new a great deal of new homes.

While re-zoning for density and mixed-use will benefit our community, there are other parts of this plan update that fail to fully reflect the values of Takoma Park, and I believe it would be relatively easy to incorporate them. If we don’t incorporate provisions into the Minor Master Plan update, developers will build housing that isn’t accessible to lower-income residents and that squanders key opportunities to make Takoma Park more safe and accessible.

#### Affordability:

There appear to be no hard requirements in this plan regarding affordable housing. Section 3.3.2.2. uses a lot of language like “when feasible,” and “strive to,” leaving affordable housing development to the whim of private developers. It would default to the county’s insufficient 12.5-15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units requirement. The area outlined in the plan is going to be extremely desirable and profitable for developers, so we can no doubt do better and still allow for projects that “pencil out” for developers. I implore the county to identify reasonable additional requirements (not “suggestions,”) for deeply affordable (not “moderately priced”) housing in each new development. An additional 15% affordable housing, on top of the MPDU requirement, seems reasonable, though some analysis of what’s feasible without significantly slowing development would be warranted.

#### Accessibility:

Essential walking/biking safety improvements only get built these days when they are required by new developments. We cannot lose this opportunity to require in the Minor Master Plan Update that all new developments in the area install ADA-compliant sidewalks and physically-protected bike lanes on all streets in the plan area. Many of our old sidewalks are not up to ADA code. Protected bike lanes will make our city safer and more negotiable for car-free families, meeting environmental and affordability goals. They also provide traffic-calming benefits. The language about the Green Promenade, sidewalk improvements, etc., is very encouraging. However I’m not clear if this plan makes development of adjacent portions of these an absolute requirement of new construction. I want to ensure that any new construction is required to build ADA-compliant sidewalks and separate, protected bike lanes, adjacent to their projects, or even beyond the bounds of their project by a designated number of blocks to avoid a patchwork of accessible and inaccessible blocks.

#### Police:

Page 20 recommends that the City analyze the space needs of the police department as part of this plan. It also implies that “co-location” of a police station with private development is a “public benefit” in the same way that co-locating a school would be. It concerns me that potential expansion of the police is shoe-horned into this plan without much explanation. I believe Takoma Park should strive, whenever possible, to meet the safety and public health needs of our growing community by any other means than growing police presence. Safe streets with hard



traffic-calming measures reduce the need for policing traffic. Mental health ambassadors, civilian de-escalation staff, and other deployments of unarmed employees can result in a much safer and more inclusive community. If the Takoma Park police station needs to be expanded, I would recommend this be done as a completely standalone planning process to provide our community an opportunity to fully weigh in on the implications.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to keep Takoma Park welcoming to all.

Best,  
Ben Glickstein

--

-- Ben Glickstein 978.290.3164



Good Afternoon,

WSSC Water has received a letter from Ms. Tanya Stern, Acting Planning Director, providing a copy of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment and notification of the public hearing on September 14, 2023. This letter was sent to Mike Harmer, Chief Engineer with WSSC Water.

Mr. Harmer has forwarded the Plan for staff review and comment. On behalf of Mr. Harmer, WSSC Water would like to thank Montgomery Planning for the opportunity to review the report. Based on this review WSSC Water does not have any comments.

We look forward to continuing our working relationship with the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission , Montgomery Planning Group on your future Plans and initiatives.

Thank you  
Tom Hilton



**THOMAS C. HILTON, P.E.**

*Planning Division Manager*  
Engineering and Construction Department

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WSSC Water is the proud  
provider of safe, seamless and  
satisfying water services, making  
the essential possible every day.



# Advice on the Minor Master Plan Amendment

2023 August 12

By Richard C. Masterson, Takoma Park, resident of Ward 5

We, the residents and electors of Takoma Park, appreciate all the good that our government can do for us. We are proud of the representatives we have put onto our City Council. We all want people to thrive.

The Minor Master Plan Amendment is an instrument that will set guidance for physical planning and building for our nearby community. It gives us an opportunity to consider our desires for future living with the resources we have and anticipate. Anything set up in this document will express the desires of those offering input and the approval votes of our elected representatives.

Laws will be made based on whatever we approve here. This is not just a wish list.

The people want to maximize protection of their homes and the developers want to build to maximize corporate profit. Licensed corporations currently licensed have a legal obligation to generate generous profit. People would be naive to think real estate and investment corporations are focused on providing for the needs and wishes of the people. Corporations are not obligated to serve the consumer. However, we are working on laws to clarify that corporations are licensed to benefit all the people – consistent with our government for the people.

Approval of the Minor Master Plan Amendment will require a broad spectrum of input and analysis because of the acreage, population, and resources involved, and we need a climate change report for evaluation more than seven days in advance of a deciding vote. Please don't rush the report; delay the vote.



An example of resident's desires is building heights. If we do not want concrete canyons created by twelve story buildings but will accept four or six stories, we need to put that down in this document.

Shorter buildings may reduce the potential profit from the upper floors that cost less once the foundation is built. But the apartments are not being built for profit, and shorter buildings do not force an economic loss on corporations. Shorter buildings are what developers can do for us. Developers will calculate the financing to match what they are permitted to do. Buildings are not for the financiers, they are for the inhabitants. Buildings are for all the people.

I am in full support of the cautions and procedures recommended by De Herman ([bikerde76@gmail.com](mailto:bikerde76@gmail.com)) \* and Paul C in their Between-the-Creeks postings. Each bulleted point deserves a response. Adequate education of the public is difficult, but the onus is on the developers. Often, public projects will sprout up and many residents will say, "I never knew this was coming!" Not here.

What was in place before this MMPA came up?

Is this proposed because of the removal of the Adventist Hospital?

Can residents take advantage of the MMPA to keep their community socially sized for them?

Did the MMPA come from developers that will profit from it?

Please consider the most rewarding life-experience for the local population and their progeny for the next eight generations – 200 years – and more.



## Notes and Comments

I might say these things to you over a cup of coffee in the context of a reference document.

\* Source document: De Herman <[bikerde76@gmail.com](mailto:bikerde76@gmail.com)>, 2023 July 31 and August 2 postings on Between-the-Creeks.io.

[Quoted with my comments in blue brackets.]

De Herman writes, “But the Plan also...

- Allows increased density from Greenwood Ave, to Philadelphia Ave.
- Allows new 15-story high-rises in the “open spaces” on Maple Avenue.
- Allows new 12-story high-rises on the old hospital site, including along Sligo Creek.

[Sligo Creek must not have any human occupancy structures within 500 feet.

We do not see ourselves part of a high rise urban center.]

- Allows new higher and denser zoning in the Flower Avenue and Erie district.

[I doubt this idea came from a local residential property owner. They are likely happy where they are. A developer has to build to make a living so they will promote construction wherever they can.]

- New buildings would NOT be rent-stabilized for 5 years, driving up average rents.

[Rent stabilization is in place to prevent abusive and/or un-affordable rent changes and should apply AT CONSTRUCTED DATE.]

- Allows some 3500 new residential units, increasing City population by some 30%.

[Limit height to three stories and then with a ten-foot minimum set-back on four sides for all floors up to six.]

- Doesn't study the capacity of schools, traffic, storm water, green space, or Sligo Creek, to handle this growth.

[The relative agencies must be notified and their comments included with recorded comments.]

- Doesn't study net effect on climate change of massive new building.

[The climate impact statement must be published not less than 30 days before a County Board vote is taken. Don't rush the climate report; delay the review meeting.]



- Doesn't consider alternative zoning benefits of townhouses and garden apartments, versus high-rises.

[Quality of life is more important than an increased number of people per square mile.]

- Doesn't explain why we're asking the City's densest neighborhood, on Maple Ave, to shoulder even more density.

[This does not seem appropriate. We have built a dense neighborhood to the maximum occupancy that we want.]

- Doesn't consider the essential benefits of the current open and green space on Maple Ave for the residents now living there.

[There are only two reasons to reduce the existing open space: corporate greed and housing. If developers want to build more housing, they can do it in a way that improves lives rather than stacking them in rat cages. Consider a unit size similar to 500 square feet plus 200 square feet for each person]

[Suggested table for minimum unit size that has nothing to do with MMPA.

<u>Persons</u>	<u>500 SF + 200 SF/Person</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>400 SF + 200 SF/Person</u>
1	700	1	600
2	900	2	800
3	1100	3	1000
4	1300	4	1200
5	1500	5	1400
6	1700	6	1600

]

- Doesn't present a Plan to protect our rent-stabilized and subsidized housing, and protect those residents from displacement.

[Displacement can be caused by raising rent in one or two buildings to imply to other building owners that the market is going up (maybe not) so the others can start pricing residents out. It's the classic use of "market share" and "gentrification."]

- Doesn't document that renters in these neighborhoods have been adequately informed of the Plan consequences (they haven't)."

[Even a door-to-door done by developers could yield a financial return for them, assuming they are eager to do what locals want.]

...

"...there is no proposed funding for, or requirement to build, the many lovely public amenities described in the Plan."

[Amen]







**The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA)** can only grant opportunities for development. What is in place has been acceptable till now. However, there has been a change. The Adventist Hospital has been removed.

This opens an opportunity to create a change in our future. We may want more housing and commerce, and we have to surrender something to get it. This MMPA will be the justification for laws. Let's build it in a way that respects the residents, the environment, the economics, and the infrastructure. Sustainability is measured by the support of thriving people over other factors. We need a clear record of our residents' intentions in this document. The courts of today do not interpret the law on the basis of *intent*. They are sheepishly reading the literal rather than the implied. So let's make it clear that the residents come first.

The attached is a contribution to the discussion of terms. The first two pages are my composition. The last two pages are conversational comments on points that have been brought up.

Thanks for all you are doing for us.

*Dr. Richard C. Masterson*  
*8319 Roanoke Ave, Apt 1*  
*Takoma Park, Ward 5*



Hello,

I am sharing the following concerns regarding the Minor Master Plan for Takoma Park:

1. Require (not simply recommend) a significant % of any new residential units be designated as affordable housing.
2. Require (not simply recommend) either new or renovated construction to comply with specific energy efficiency, electrification and greenhouse gas emission reductions in response to climate change which will contribute to a carbon neutral footprint.
3. Require (not simply recommend) design and construction in any development to implement watershed conservation practices to reduce erosion and stormwater run off during and after construction is completed.
4. Require (not simply recommend) a transportation plan that would minimize the use of personal cars and increase public transportation options.

Thank you for your consideration,

*Kolya Braun-Greiner, MDiv*

7603 Central Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912

Home: 301-920-0226, Cell: 301-909-8943

*The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time. --Terry Tempest Williams*



I would like to share my thoughts on the proposed minor master plan amendment for the area. My name is Jason Starbird-Tierney and I'm a renter at 714 Erie Ave within the plans boundaries, where I've lived for nearly a decade. First off I would like to say that broadly speaking I'm supportive of the plan, and I think the possibilities for the Adventist site itself look great, however I believe that the way the plan excludes adjacent wealthy single family areas while focusing new development exclusively in the existing low income multifamily areas is very inequitable and unjust. I would urge the planning board significantly expand the plan area. With housing costs out of control and the growing climate crisis we need dense housing to create affordable, transit oriented communities, and add new amenities such as basic shopping needs and transit infrastructure. Housing affordability is a huge issue right now and we need to make sure the zoning can accommodate affordable options as much as possible, and considering how wildly expensive homes are in the area it's clear that higher density options are needed. I'm happy to see the plans recommendations to improve the heat island effect, provide more green space and tree cover and improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure that all will help work towards our climate goals and improve the quality of life in the community.

### **The Adventist site and Flower district**

The planning document has laid out a lot of good options for the Adventist site itself and I would support having larger buildings similar in scale to Essex House or the new development at the Takoma metro. If we could get a main street type setup in the area I think that would be great for creating community and increasing access to amenities without driving. It's important that the development process in this area lead to the creation of affordable units so we should ensure development over the 20 unit threshold is a possibility and a larger number of overall affordable units, rather than a larger percentage of a smaller number of total units should be the goal and I'm fine with more market rate apartments if it means more affordable ones. Speaking locally in regards to the proposed lower density areas on Maplewood Greenwood and Erie where I live, with home prices in the area reaching toward a million, in order to build something to be affordable for working families that cost would have to be split a few ways by building apartments or multiple homes on the same lot. While it's not clear to me from the planning document just how large buildings would be allowed to be in this area I think it should at minimum allow buildings of a similar density to the condos at 719 Erie and allow for at least 5 stories if not more and take up a much larger part of the lot than currently allowed. It's hard to visualize the FAR numbers so I think that would be slightly bigger than the current proposal. All of this should apply to areas currently outside the plan boundaries as well. Without upzoning the area notably I'm concerned these affordable apartment could be converted to wildly expensive single family homes as we've seen in other parts of Takoma Park.

### **Affordability**

In both areas I see a greater path to affordability with more dense zoning options and I support the plan ensuring this density is an option. There was a new single family home built on Carrol recently directly outside the plans boundaries and while there's more than enough room for it to have been an apartment building, due to it's low density zoning it's now a single family home going for 1.2 million dollars. That's absurd and our zoning shouldn't be forcing the construction of homes for the wealthiest while we're in the midst of an affordable housing crisis for everyone else. It's a clear example of how our strict zoning laws work to exclude people and perpetuate the housing crisis in our community and something we need to remedy.

### **Issues**

I do have serious concerns about how narrow and confined the plan area is - it explicitly only covers already low income, high density areas and completely excludes development in the very wealthy adjacent neighborhoods and this is a serious equity and justice issue. The areas around the plan have the same access to transit and roads and amenities as the plan area so I don't see any good reason to create such a divide in our community. This exposes renters to redevelopment, especially since potential developers have fewer potential properties to develop on and implies that wealthy residents are somehow more deserving of quiet unchanging neighborhoods than low income people. The way the plan calls for lower density adjacent to these areas signals that there isn't a plan to change that going forward either. I believe the solution isn't to weaken the existing plan but to expand the plan area significantly. For me and many of my neighbors in my building, who are largely disabled or retired, having an affordable apartment in a quiet neighborhood is important to their quality of life and that shouldn't only be an option for wealthy people. One of the major strengths of Takoma Park is it's diversity of housing options, where we already have apartment buildings scattered throughout a lot of neighborhoods. The idea that the wealthiest residents shouldn't even have new buildings next door to them alter their neighborhoods but low income people can have their neighborhoods completely changed, or much worse face eviction for redevelopment, is very unfair and unjust and continues a legacy of exclusionary zoning. Tenants don't have a say in whether their building gets sold and redeveloped out from under them, but homeowners don't have to sell unless they choose too, so expanding the possibility for new development to areas of single family homes is a much more fair and reasonable way to grow our community especially in regards to missing middle housing. Referring back to that 1.2 million dollar house on Carrol again, it's still outside of the plan area despite being directly adjacent to the hospital site area with the highest proposed density, access to the same transit options and walkable to a future purple line station. This pattern is repeated all along the plans boundaries with wildly expensive homes and exclusionary zoning. While I believe we need dense new housing, I think the neighborhoods surrounding this proposal should also be zoned for medium density to help spread the growth more equitably, and I think we should allow the edges of the plan area to have a higher potential density with that in mind. Spreading the potential for medium density housing across our neighborhoods would go a long way towards meeting our social justice and environmental goals, and provide the opportunity for much needed missing middle housing without losing the potential for affordable apartments.

I'm concerned about the existing affordable apartment buildings in the area, particularly those in the Flower Ave district adjacent to the Adventist site, and regardless of what happens here the city and county should form a concrete plan to preserve these rare very affordable homes which we desperately need in our community. Given the condition of some of these buildings, redevelopment is going to be a matter



of when and how, not if. Many of them are very old and even sometimes worth less than adjacent single family homes so a developer could be incentivized to redevelop these buildings into less affordable buildings or single family homes, evicting all their residents rather than having new development increase density through voluntary buy outs of single family homes. I would very much urge the city and county to track these properties and proactively have a plan in place to secure either tenant purchases or having them sold to nonprofits so they could remain affordable moving forward.

### **Bike infrastructure**

I'm very happy to see the prospect of new bike infrastructure especially the couple of fully separated bike paths but I would like to comment about the proposed redesign of maple ave, as someone who bikes along the road regularly. Referencing the picture on page 49 of the document, it seems like the bike lane facing east could comfortably fit on the other side of parked cars, created a protected lane. I'd be concerned about getting hit with opening doors with the bike lane as is, and would probably ride on the outer edge of the bike lane at best. With Maple Ave going downhill that way, bikes are going quite fast, especially with scooters and ebikes it can be around 20-25 mph in that direction, which makes right hooks and dooring even more of a concern, especially since there are a lot of right turns into parking lots along the route. From a cyclist perspective I would say as is I'm not optimistic about a mixed path being a viable option for bikes depending on how it's implemented, for example the path in downtown Silver Spring on Wayne Ave north of Georgia isn't effectively differentiated from the sidewalk and is too busy with pedestrians to ride on and the branch trail path along the metro between Takoma and Montgomery college has broken pavement to the point it can't be used by bikes at all and has been that way for years now while also being hard to maneuver around pedestrians, so most bikes just use the adjacent road. I think people expect bikes on sligo trail which helps keep it functional but I know many pedestrians find fast riding bikes there to be stressful. In the case of going west/south on Maple, I would likely end up riding on the road still, and with it being uphill and there being less room for cars to get around I could see it being a point of greater stress. I understand there area benefits to the sidepath idea for pedestrians and community space but as is this could be a step back as far as cycling down the route as the current large space on the road, even though unprotected, means cars have room to get around without much conflict. If it's possible to remove a lane of parking for a protected bike lane in both directions as well as the sidepath that would be something I would very much support. Maybe the sidepath could have a clearly differentiated bike section at the same level as the sidewalk to help provide options, or the east direction bike path could be changed to a 2 way cycle track alongside the sidepath. Aside from this issue the proposed bike network looks very promising and I look forward to the increased connectivity.

### **New amenities**

I think that new development could help bring local food and retail, along with better transit options in a way that it currently can't support as well and help make the area way more walkable, less car dependent and accessible for our neighbors who do not drive. My spouse is disabled, is unable to drive and we lived here for a long time without a car - the lack of access to these amenities has been a huge quality of life and independence issue. If this development would even justify a simple convenience store it could help a lot of people in their day to day lives, but even better would be a walkable main street section that could serve as place where community can be formed. Businesses in the Erie center have typically not lasted very long and more local residents would mean a better chance of success. If we had a denser population here I would hope we could also justify running more buses more often, which would help existing transit riders a lot and encourage current drivers to consider transit. I rode the 12 as part of my commute for years and while at rush hour it's fairly reliable and frequent, after that things drop off heavily and if we could improve that I think we could convince more people to use transit rather than drive, especially with the short trip to the purple line.

Thank you,  
Jason Starbird-Tierney  
714 Erie Ave #6  
Takoma Park



Hello - We have several concerns regarding redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site that we'd like to express for the record:

Primarily we want to make sure that there are realistic cost / benefit analyses being done regarding the impacts of different levels of development on the City and the County.

Which government entity is responsible for doing this analysis, and is one actually going to be done?

For example, if the city must hire additional police officers, and extend its other services to the new additional people in town, how does that impact the city's budget going forward? Will the City have to choose between raising taxes or reducing services? Or, will there be sufficient tax revenue from the new development to cover its own County and City costs?

Another example is impact on schools- a county issue with very local impacts. Right now, Takoma Park's public school children attend overcrowded schools from K-12. What is the County's plan for assimilating all these new kids into these currently overcrowded schools?  
Thank you,

Adam and Debra Bodner  
7125 Carroll Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear sirs,

Some thoughts on the MMPA.

I live on the edge of the area under consideration, at 700 Erie Ave.

1) This "minor amendment" makes major changes to two very different parts of TP, the WAH site and the Maple Ave corridor. As such, EACH part needs very different consideration: different zoning, of course, but also different outreach.

2) For the WAH blocks, at a minimum, setting a max height of 7 stories encourages less institutional construction while still offering WAU robust development opportunities. Setting the max height of the WAH property to 15 stories would encourage a far more capital intensive construction design.

3) For the Maple Ave corridor, limit Maple Ave corridor to existing heights. Simplifying the zoning patchwork is commendable, but a one-size-fits-all zone will create more problems for residents.

Thank you for your time,

Mark Fisher

Erie Ave



**From:** Keith Berner <keith@kberner.us>

**Sent:** Monday, August 21, 2023 17:49

**To:** 'Cara Honzak' <carah@takomaparkmd.gov>; 'Talisha Searcy' <talishas@takomaparkmd.gov>; CindyD@takomaparkmd.gov; shanaf@takomaparkmd.gov; randallg@takomaparkmd.gov; 'Terry Seamens' <TerryS@takomaparkmd.gov>; jasons@takomaparkmd.gov

**Cc:** Councilmember.Stewart@montgomerycountymd.gov; 'mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org'

**Subject:** oppose the current MMPA draft

Dear Mayor Searcy and City Councilmembers:

The Minor Master Plan Amendment draft currently under consideration is flawed and requires substantial revision. I call on City Council to send a clear message to the County Planning Board to this effect, in the form of a new resolution (following on resolution [2023-16](#)).

1. The MMPA area is too large and contains elements that are best addressed separately: development on the WAH/WAU campus/Greenwood Avenue/Erie Center (Flower Avenue District) should be distinct from any rezoning of Maple Avenue and the City's municipal core. These districts (as defined in the MMPA draft) have differing contexts and justifications for their zoning. While an overarching vision may make sense (making possible, for example, cross-district features such as the Green Promenade), the MMPA should be rewritten as two or three separate amendments.
2. The building heights proposed for the Flower Avenue District are out of scale with the surrounding communities. Buildings on the Adventist campuses should be limited to seven stories. Step-downs to the periphery of the district should also be proportionally reduced and existing single-family homes on Flower (between Maplewood and Erie), Greenwood, and Erie should not be upzoned at all.\*
3. Potential displacement of disadvantaged people and people of color in the Maple Avenue district needs to be taken seriously. Protections need to be in place for existing tenants/types of tenants and rezoning should take place mostly only to match current conditions. I'm skeptical of planners' claims that the MMPA would not negatively impact diversity.
4. It is unacceptable for consideration of the MMPA to proceed without ample time for the community/City to examine detailed environmental and climate analyses. Further, traffic studies cannot be put off. Flower and Carroll Avenues were close to failure back when WAH was proposing its expansion in the mid-aughts. (That expansion now seems quite modest!) We need to know now if development will require widening these or any other streets and how private property will be impacted.

The City's actions thus far appear to be too accommodating of developers' and the Adventist communities' interests. I note that WAH/WAU have had contentious relationships with the City and the community for decades. I acknowledge the legitimacy of their pursuing profit from on-campus development, but call on the City to show some more skepticism about the Amendment and the timing of its supporting elements. The City should allow and embrace development that is good for it. But it doesn't owe anything to WAU.

I am in favor of dense housing development and increasing the City's tax base. I support, further, retail development in the Flower and Maple Avenue Districts. Indeed, the MMPA has much to recommend it. But, its real flaws need to be addressed.

\*Full disclosure: my home is due to be upzoned by the MMPA, due to its location between WAU and Erie Center. This would likely provide me a financial benefit by making my property more valuable. Nonetheless, I oppose this upzoning.

**Keith Berner**

7902 Flower Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
m: 301-588-5080



## Dear members of the Montgomery County Planning Board:

I'm a 28-year resident of Takoma Park, currently residing at 7921 Edinburgh Lane (Sligo Creek Pkwy). I'm writing you this letter regarding my concerns with the Takoma Park Minor Master plan and the Sept. 14th hearing meeting. After taking significant time to read the plan and attend meetings, both organized by the city and by my Ward 5 neighbors, I must outline aspects of the plan that are troublesome to me.

1. In the most basic terms, I feel that the up-zoning of the areas considered by the plan will, eventually, result in nothing less than gentrification, with no protection for lower income residents. We have seen this happen in numerous neighborhoods in DC, and that is not in the spirit of Takoma Park.
2. I believe that the Washington Adventist Hospital area (WAH) plan should be considered separately from the other two areas (Maple Avenue and Erie business). This is the main area of concern that everyone agrees needs development. I don't understand why they need to be connected.
3. I truly feel that the up-zoning heights are far too high. I strongly urge you lower the WAH height to 70 feet. Any more height than that triggers steel construction techniques that will impose a much greater, and potentially dangerous, environmental impact on the surrounding areas.
4. The zoning heights for buildings on Maple avenue should remain at their present heights.
5. It is my understanding that the city owes the public an environmental/climate study, which has been promised but not delivered.

Sincerely,  
Tom Huizenga  
7921 Sligo Creek Pkwy  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
[tomska@rcn.com](mailto:tomska@rcn.com)

CC: Mayor Talisha Searcy, Ward Council persons Shana Fulcher, Cindy Dyballa, Randy Gibson, Terry Seamens, Cara Honzak, Jason Small



## **TPMMPA**

### Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment

Commentary on Takoma For All (TFA)

Letter of Support for the TPMMPA

Prepared by Carl Elefante

Ward 3 Resident

The community development vision expressed by TFA is exactly the kind of progressive thinking that Takoma Park needs to realize its priorities over the next generation of development, “promoting a sustainable, equitable, transit-oriented community with plenty of homes.” The Letter states that the proposed TPMMPA is “good for the climate, good for equity and affordability, and good for local businesses.” Statements throughout the TPMMPA current draft claim to be advancing those and several other very appropriate and laudable goals.

The fundamental question confronting the City of Takoma Park and the Montgomery County Planning Board is whether the proposed rezoning delivers on those promises. In its current form, the proposed TPMMPA does not provide the needed development guidance and controls, presenting a threat to our beloved community more than a promise.

### **Plenty of Homes?**

TFA’s Letter begins by applauding the additional residential development the proposed rezoning would allow along both Flower and Maple Avenues. With the exception of a handful of sites along Maple Avenue which are already quite densely developed, the proposed rezoning will **permit** – not require or guarantee – additional residential development across the study area.

Calling the TPMMPA a “master plan” is misleading. The Draft TPMMPA document contains inspiring descriptions of a revitalized Flower and Maple Avenue precinct. However, the only **binding** elements of the TPMMPA are changes to land use regulations – zoning – for properties within the limits of the study area. TPMMPA is a **rezoning** proposal, period.

Rezoning addresses only a few development factors. **Allowable** (not required or guaranteed) occupancies, development geometry including height and yard setbacks, and density are the most consequential. There is nothing in the TPMMPA rezoning that requires or guarantees construction of missing middle and affordable dwelling units, development of much-desired services like a grocery store, needed infrastructure upgrades to transit and bike lanes, or environmental benefits like greenspace and protection of Sligo Creek.

The TPMMPA proposes a one-size-fits-all rezoning approach. Existing residential zoning is replaced with Commercial-Residential (CR) zoning. We are told in the TPMMPA document that this change promotes mixed-use development and supports market flexibility.

But the devil is in the details. The proposed rezoning fails to establish different residential and commercial densities. All proposed CR zones in the TPMMPA allow – by right – full development density for **either** commercial **or** residential development. (That is what those confusing terms like CR-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 indicate.) In reality, the proposed CR rezoning permits **substituting** commercial development in place of residential development. This is not a future anyone wants. Why adopt zoning that permits it? When the



potential impact of commercial rezoning on property values is taken into account, the TPMMPA can even be said to incentivize bulldozing residential properties for commercial development.

CR zones were created a decade ago to add residential density to commercial-only districts. Careful study by the Planning Board showed the County Council how adding residential density to commercial districts supported sustainability, transit-oriented development, and economic and social equity. CR zoning in the TPMMPA flips the pattern on its head, permitting the replacement of existing residential properties with dense commercial development. Contrary to the statement in TFA's Letter of Support, the proposed application of CR zoning, even to the former hospital site, *is* "radical change".

### **Which Future?**

Before anyone who cares about Takoma Park signs off on the TPMMPA in its current form, Montgomery Planning must provide much more detailed information about the potential development futures permitted under the proposed CR rezoning. The TPMMPA document provides very little guidance, including only vague references like "lower-density mixed use development".

The proposed rezoning includes six different CR zones (CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.75 H-55 / CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50 / CR-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-120 / CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70 / CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65 / CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150) Their range is enormous, with densities and building heights three times greater permitted across different properties. Can anyone honestly say that they fully understand the specific goals and likely outcomes of the proposed rezoning?

Two recent projects completed in Silver Spring illustrate the scale variations embedded in the TPMMPA rezoning proposal. First is a five-to-seven-story "podium-plus-stick" mid-rise apartment complex, The Citron, located behind the Silver Spring Civic Building. Zoned CR-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-70, The Citron is a good example of the sort of residential development that could occur on lots uphill from Maple Avenue and on the former hospital property. Another project, constructed on Mayor Lane behind Georgia Avenue retail shops, The Thayer & Spring Apartments is a twelve-story high-rise apartment building. Zoned CR-3.0 C-3.0 R-3.0 H-130, Thayer & Spring is a reasonable approximation of the sort of residential development that could occur along Maple Avenue.

These projects appear to be the sort of development models that Montgomery Planning had in mind preparing the TPMMPA. While I find these examples reassuring as housing-type models, important questions remain unanswered in the TPMMPA. Why not greater density on the former hospital property? Significantly greater height is proposed there (H-120), yet densities are only half those proposed along Maple Avenue. What goal is achieved? My list of such questions is long.

The big difference between these Silver Spring sites and the TPMMPA study area goes back to the development implications of commercial-only zoning allowances. Like the TPMMPA, zoning on both Silver Spring properties permit full commercial and residential densities. In other words, both buildings – by right – could have been developed as commercial-only buildings. In my view, at these two Silver Spring sites commercial-only development could have been compatible with the overall development character of downtown Silver Spring. The "aligned" zoning factors for commercial and residential development are justified there. The same is not true for TPMMPA properties.

How much commercial development density is really useful and desirable along Flower and Maple Avenues? Should proposed CR zones strictly limit commercial density (to C-0.25, C-0.5, or C-1.0?) so that property owners are encouraged to develop primarily residential projects? What commercial density



is needed to permit much-needed and desired community-service retail like a grocery store without risking unintended and undesirable dense commercial-only development? Montgomery Planning should be compelled to provide answers to these questions?

Encouraging more housing and other community-supportive development on the former hospital property presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create an entirely new residential quarter in Takoma Park. The proposed TPMMPA does not provide enough certainty about the likely outcomes of the rezoning and opens the door to radically incompatible development. Montgomery Planning can and must do better.

### **Good for Equity and Affordability?**

As an architect who devoted decades resuscitating “obsolete” buildings, my greatest concern with Montgomery Planning’s one-size-fits-all view of the study area is its blindness to the real challenges and opportunities for assuring the future of existing affordable housing along Maple Avenue. Upzoning these properties is far more likely than not to cause wholesale demolition and dislocation of residents.

My professional experience has made me very aware of “tired old building” biases. The TPMMPA document reveals several. Just like people, buildings age. Unlike people, with renewed investment buildings can be returned to their prime. Many buildings on Maple Avenue have reached an age when significant reinvestment is needed.

To assure housing affordability, the first priority must be keeping buildings on Maple Avenue economically viable and livable. Land use policies and development plans should help maintain, renew, and improve properties along Maple Avenue. There is no more reliable strategy for assuring a sufficient supply of affordable housing.

The economics of affordable housing have been understood since the days of Jane Jacobs. Building new affordable housing is more than challenging, it is fundamentally an oxymoron. New construction costs too much. (The older properties operated by the County’s Housing Opportunities Commission prove the point.) The TPMMPA acknowledges the importance of keeping existing affordable housing, yet it fails to articulate a sufficiently ambitious goal. As TFA’s Letter of Support notes, the TPMMPA document “recommends striving to achieve no net loss of affordable housing.” Striving for “no net loss” is a severely deficient goal.

To deliver equity and affordability, the TPMMPA must support two imperatives along the Maple Avenue corridor. 1. Keep residents in their buildings. 2. Identify infill development opportunities to add dwelling units and provide needed retail and other services.

Both are best accomplished by prioritizing the stewardship of existing housing. The reinvestment life-cycle of decades-old buildings on Maple Avenue is on full display. Retrofits are occurring. The TPMMPA efforts can and should accelerate them. With help financing proper care, the substantially-constructed properties on Maple Avenue can provide affordable and agreeable places to live for decades, even generations, to come.

There are many development opportunities on Maple Avenue that do not have to start with demolition and dislocation. Extensive surface parking lots provide significant opportunities for infill development. Improving transit services, consolidating necessary parking into (publicly funded?) parking structures, weaving in new residential, retail, and service buildings can both make Maple Avenue more livable and produce new income sources for property owners.



## Good for the Climate?

In buildings, greenhouse gas pollution that causes climate change is emitted by three sources: direct, indirect, and embodied emissions. All three must be addressed in preparing land use regulations and development plans for the TPMMPA study area.

Direct emissions are produced within buildings themselves by burning fossil fuels in boilers, water heaters, and cooking appliances. Designing new buildings and retrofitting existing buildings to employ only electric systems and appliances rapidly reduces direct emissions and improves public safety and health. The TPMMPA initiative can and should require all-electric buildings in any new development. In coordination with it, the County and City can and should adopt comprehensive programs to convert existing buildings in the study area to all-electric systems and appliances no later than 2030 to align with Paris Agreement targets.

Indirect emissions occur off-site, where electricity is generated by non-renewable sources. There is nothing preventing the County and City from adopting policies and programs for green-power purchase agreements today. The TPMMPA initiative can and should require all new development to purchase all power from renewable sources. In coordination with it, the County and City can and should adopt policies and programs to assist existing properties in the study area to purchase green power.

Embodied emissions are produced both on- and off-site from the thousands of activities to produce, transport, and install the hundreds of materials and systems that go into making and retrofitting buildings. Constructing new buildings is enormously carbon intensive. Typically, embodied emissions equal at least twenty years of direct and indirect operational emissions. With high-efficiency buildings, embodied emissions can equal more than fifty years of operational emissions.

Retrofitting existing buildings presents a very different picture. Relatively small amounts of embodied emissions from renovation activities result in substantial reductions of both direct and indirect operational emissions. *The greenest building is...one that is already built.* Retrofitting is the surest way to reduce current levels of operational emissions. Avoiding demolition and construction of new buildings, however “green”, is the surest way of avoiding massive quantities of embodied greenhouse gas pollution.

As TFA’s Letter of Support states, both the former hospital site and Maple Avenue corridor have a role to play in supporting transit-oriented development, alternative transportation networks, walkable neighborhoods, and – as the TPMMPA document terms it – 15-minute living districts. Once again, the fundamental question is whether blanket rezoning of both a large site poised for redevelopment and a densely populated neighborhood provides the optimum tools for realizing those objectives. The proposed TPMMPA rezoning does not deliver on its promises and, arguably, even frustrates efforts to achieve them.

Takoma Park wants, needs, and deserves better from Montgomery Planning. Without significant redirection, the proposed TPMMPA should not be endorsed by the City of Takoma Park or approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board.



Dear Mr. Harris,

As a follow-up to the previous "Commentary" I submitted, I am now forwarding some additional thoughts I prepared. A few days ago, the Takoma Park citizen's group, Takoma For All, circulated an email containing their Letter of Support for the proposed TPMMPA and included several thoughts that appeared to be rebuttals to points I had made in my earlier Commentary. I thought a few points deserved clarification. Therefore, I prepared the attached Commentary on TFA's Letter of Support.

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Best regards, Carl  
Takoma Park Ward 3 Resident

**Carl Elefante**

[clfnt94@gmail.com](mailto:clfnt94@gmail.com)  
301-325-3266



To the Montgomery County Planning Board

First an introduction. I am Irene Huntoon and I reside at 7211 Maple Avenue in Takoma Park. I am writing to express my views prior to the public hearing on September 14, 2023 when you will be considering the amendment to the minor master plan for Takoma Park. Next I would like to say that I support the intention to redevelop the Adventist Hospital site.

However, concerning this amendment to Minor Master Plan for Takoma Park, I ask that the Montgomery County Planning board rewrite the amendment by including successive stages of development. This would offer us a scenario wherein stage 1 is completed and evaluated before going on to successive stages. Stage 1 should be the redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site.

Several aspects of the current draft of the Minor Master Plan amendment are of significant concern and demand a cautious approach.

-In its current iteration, the draft plan would allow an abrupt and enormous increase in the density of our city, possibly by a third of its current size, not a minor development

-The possibility that much of the rent-stabilized housing stock currently available could be redeveloped and no longer under rent-stabilization for 5 years would displace a significant portion of middle- and working-class residents who now call Takoma Park home.

-Several other concerns the master plan does not address are the impact a huge population increase would have on: local school enrollments; vehicular traffic; the need for more robust public transportation along the Maple, Carroll, Flower and Philadelphia Avenue corridors; the significant added load to city services and resources such as recreation, open green space, policing and road improvements; and the impact all of these changes would have on Sligo Creek.

-Other topics need serious consideration as well: 1) some of the proposed development is in already-identified flood zones; 2) flooding may well increase because of new development at the Adventist site if not done properly; 3) potential for increased flooding in several locations (in particular the library and citizens center) because of changing climate-related impacts.

All of these considerations argue for a staged approach to the development proposed in the current draft of the minor master plan. Please write a resolution demanding a better plan, one that includes stages of development, from the Montgomery County Planning Board.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Irene Huntoon



While I included my home address in my email earlier today, I did not include my zip code.

My address with zip code is

Irene Huntoon  
7211 Maple Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



## **TPMMPA**

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Commentary on Takoma For All (TFA)

Letter of Support for the TPMMPA

Prepared by Carl Elefante

Ward 3 Resident

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Best regards, Carl  
Takoma Park Ward 3 Resident

**Carl Elefante**

6607 Westmoreland Avenue  
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

[clfnt94@gmail.com](mailto:clfnt94@gmail.com)  
301-325-3266



# Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment

# Commentary on the Spring 2023 Public Hearing Draft

Prepared by Carl Elefante  
Ward 3 Resident

## Overview

- The TPMMPA addresses the potential redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site and links it to the Maple Avenue corridor. Generally, the Plan proposes a one-size-fits-all rezoning with a blanket of medium density commercial/residential zoning (mostly CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150), applying it to both a major redevelopment site and also a fully developed corridor containing a significant stock of the City’s affordable housing.
- Development of the Adventist Hospital site is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform a significant quarter within the City. It is a rare opportunity to house a large-scale institutional development, like a new school. (Such sites are extremely difficult to find.) Alternatively, it is also an opportunity to increase the City’s “missing middle” and affordable housing stock.
- Maple Avenue is already developed, housing a significant amount of the City’s missing middle and affordable housing. Plans for Maple Avenue should prioritize protecting and enhancing that housing stock. Infill development and better and more extensive community service retail are the most apparent needs on Maple Avenue.

## Key Takeaways

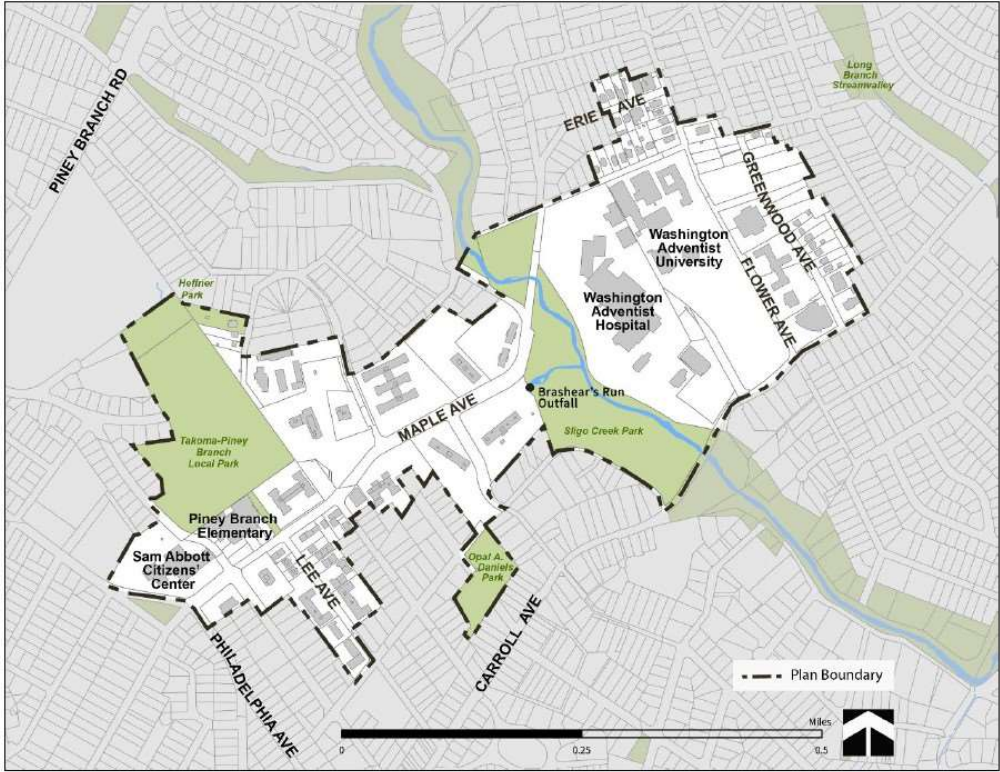
- The Plan does not provide enough direction for the redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site.
- It threatens, rather than protects and enhances, the City’s most substantial inventory of affordable housing.
- It threatens, rather than protects and enhances, three of the City’s most important municipal facilities.
- It proposes zoning that would encourage development not in keeping with the character of the City and most directly impacted neighborhoods.
- It proposes very substantial increases in density without any substantive increase in transportation and transit facilities.
- Its proposals for open space and other public amenities are of questionable benefit and unlikely to be realized.
- It fails to protect Sligo Creek, even though it addresses a site critical to its protection.
- The one-size-fits-all re-zoning approach proposed in the Plan falls far short of the robust planning work needed to address conditions in this part of the City.

## Commentary Format

- Except for the building photos on Page 6, the maps and other graphics on the following pages are reproduced from the Spring 2023 Public Hearing Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment prepared by Montgomery Planning.



Plan Limits



Commentary

- The term “minor” amendment is misleading. The Plan depicts a major alteration to community character in and around the Plan boundaries which will impact lives in Takoma Park for generations.
- The availability of the Adventist Hospital site for redevelopment is full of possibilities for Takoma Park and Montgomery County. Conducting a planning study is both needed and timely.
- Combining the Adventist Hospital study with redevelopment of Maple Avenue and Municipal Center tracts is not necessarily beneficial.
- Like many planning initiatives in the County, the proposed Plan limits are drawn to avoid single-family dwellings. A questionable planning principle, it is instead a political calculation.
- Clearly the Plan’s impacts are not limited to the Plan boundaries.

Stakeholder Process – Key Takeaways



Residents like living in Takoma Park



Desire for affordable housing on Washington Adventist Campus



Concern about loss of the hospital, desire for urgent care or health clinic to remain



Desire for walkable retail options on Washington Adventist Campus, specifically a grocery store



Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park as an important asset that should be protected



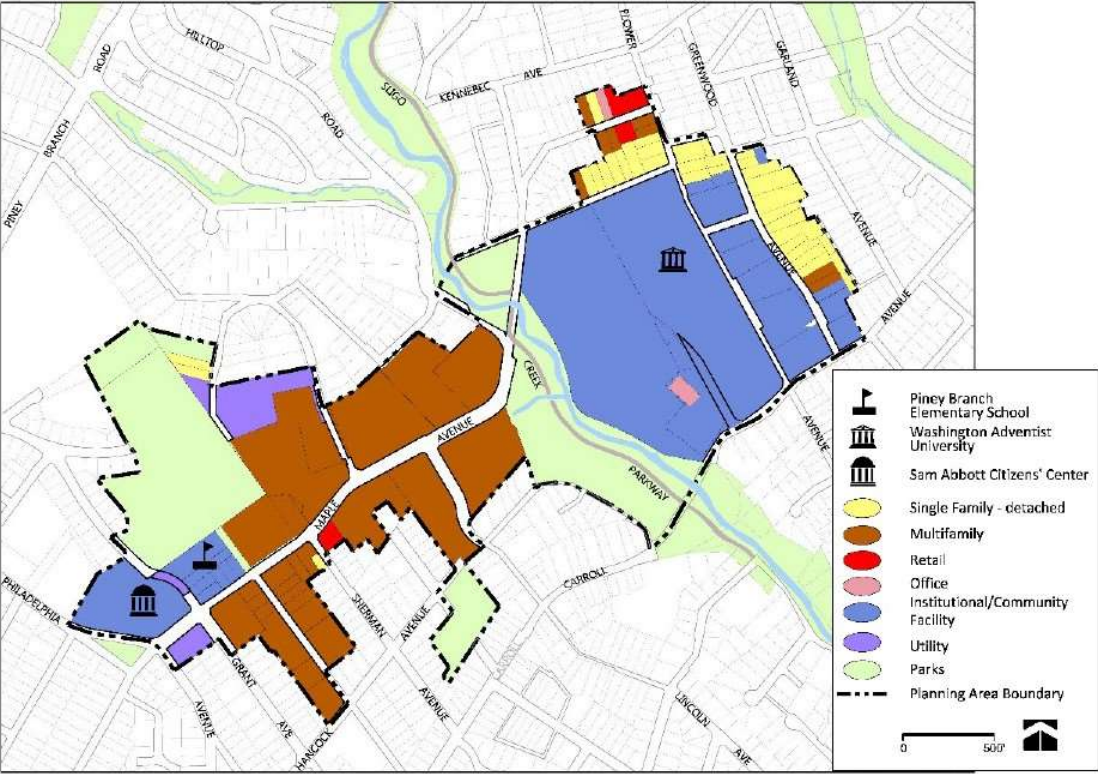
Desire for public amenities on Washington Adventist Campus, such as a space for community gathering, fitness center and swimming pool

Commentary

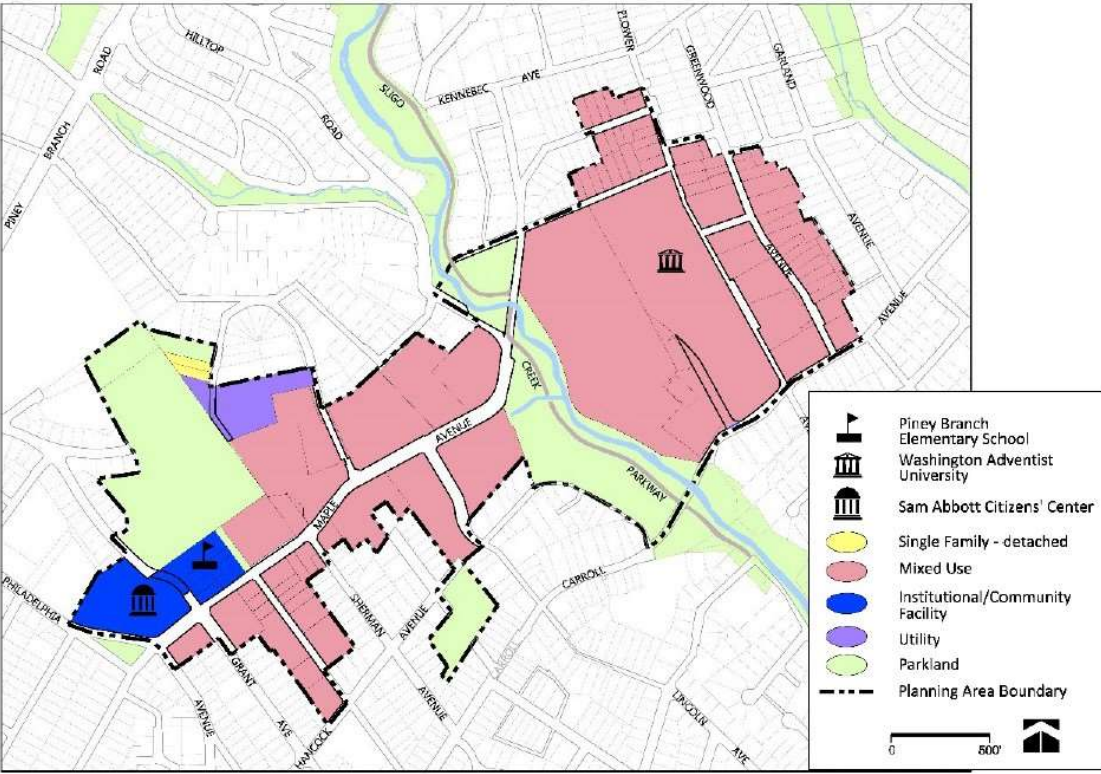
- The stakeholder outreach process yielded useful information about the concerns and interests of the Takoma Park community.
- The effectiveness of the Plan in addressing stakeholder concerns and interests is questionable.



# Existing Land Use



# Proposed Land Use



## Commentary

- The Adventist Hospital site has housed institutional uses for generations. Sites of sufficient size and character to accommodate institutional uses, like schools, are very rare. Many densely developed communities like Takoma Park and Montgomery County have great difficulty securing sites for institutions. Priority should be given to assessing and enhancing the Adventist Hospital site for institutional uses beneficial to the Takoma Park community.
- Realizing the aspirations of Sammy Abbott and other progressive leaders in Takoma Park, Maple Avenue provides a very substantial stock of affordable dwellings for the Takoma Park community. Planning addressing Maple Avenue should prioritize the preservation and enhancement of existing affordable housing.
- The few parcels incorporated in the Municipal District are only a portion of the City and County institutional uses located nearby. Considering only these two parcels within the Plan is questionable.

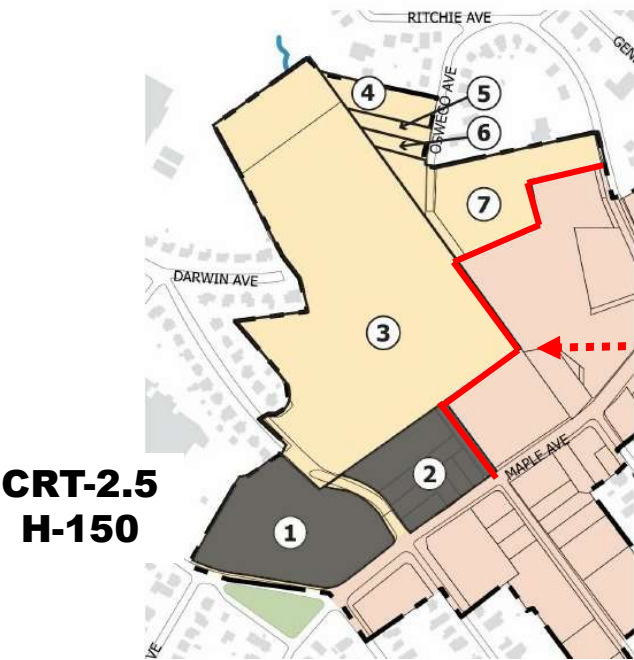
## Commentary

- While the Plan claims to provide flexibility for future development, in fact it applies the same planning and re-zoning approach for both the Adventists Hospital site – poised for major redevelopment – along with dozens of occupied sites on Maple Avenue, a one-size-fits-all approach that is questionable.

# LAND USE



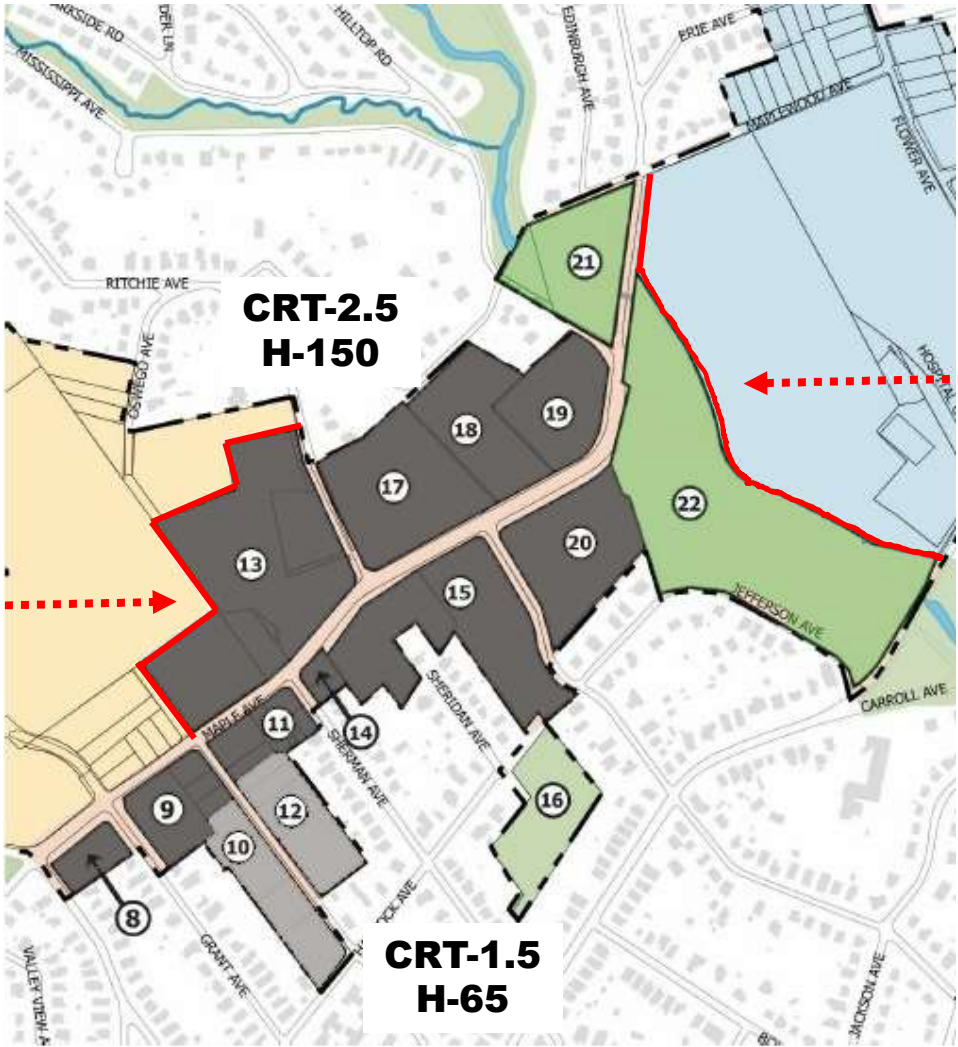
Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Municipal District



Commentary – Municipal District

- Intentionally or not, the Plan places redevelopment pressures on Municipal District parcels.

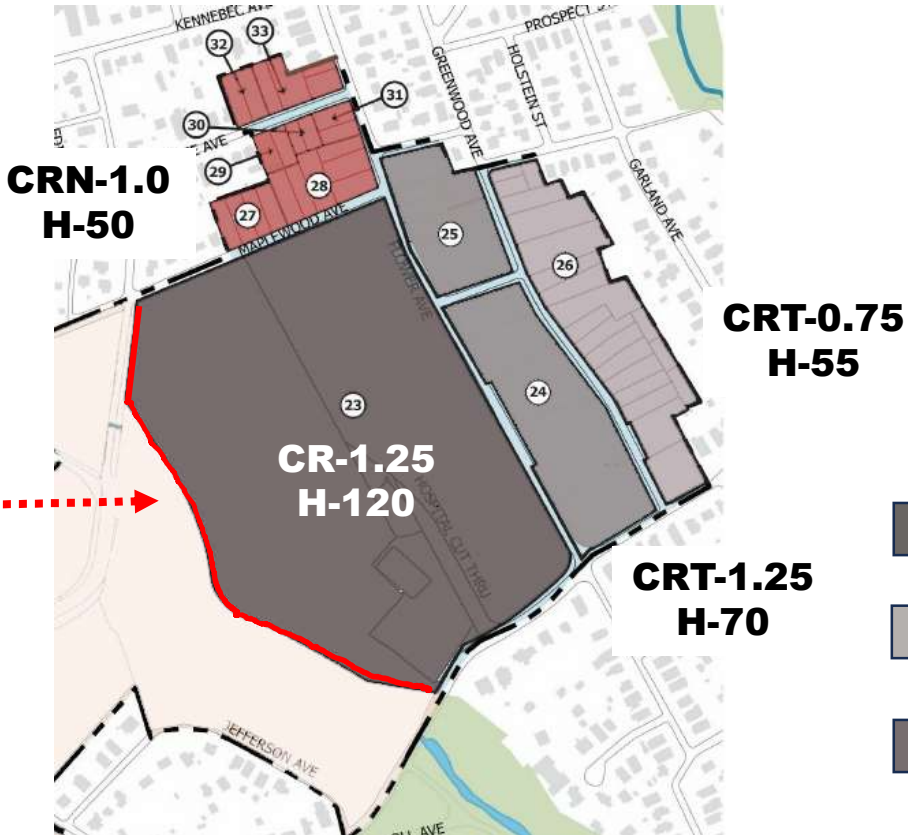
Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Maple District



Commentary – Maple District

- Increased density and height allowances (by making the land far more valuable) sew the seeds for the demolition of the existing affordable housing along Maple Avenue. Despite good intentions, replacing existing affordable housing with newly constructed affordable housing rarely succeeds.
- Unless otherwise provided for, CRT does not guarantee affordable dwelling units since properties can be developed for commercial purposes alone.
- Parcels 21 & 22 should be rezoned for open space only.

Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Flower District



Commentary – Flower District

- With substantially increased density and more permitted uses, the Plan shuts the door on reusing the Adventist Hospital site for institutional uses (by making the land far more valuable).
- The Plan provides no specific direction for the site.

**LEGEND**

	CRT-2.5 150 ft. Buildings
	CRT-1.5 65 ft. Buildings
	CR-1.25 120 ft. Buildings
	CRT-1.25 70 ft. Buildings
	CRT-0.75 55 ft. Buildings
	CRN-1.0 50 ft. Buildings

Commentary – All Districts

- Most CR / CRT / CRN zones designate different densities for commercial and residential uses, not in this Plan.
- Unless otherwise restricted, the proposed CR / CRT / CRN zones would allow by-right 100% commercial uses from 0.75 FAR to 2.5 FAR.

RE-ZONING MAPS



Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Municipal District

Map Number	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Justification
1	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
2	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
3	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
4	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
5	R-60	R-40	Increase flexibility for future residential development that permits duplexes
6	R-60	R-40	Increase flexibility for future residential development that permits duplexes
7	R-60	R-40	Increase flexibility for future residential development that permits duplexes

Commentary – Municipal District

- The Plan provides no justification for re-zoning the Library, Municipal Center, and Piney Branch Middle School sites for such high-density development and very tall buildings.

Commentary – All Districts

- While CR zones support development flexibility, they allow by-right commercial-only development. The Plan provides no justification for accommodating such a substantial amount of commercial development at this location.
- In a City and Country struggling to provide sufficient housing, particularly affordable housing, the application of CR zoning to the study area is questionable.

Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Maple District

Map Number	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Justification
8	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
9	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
10	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	Increase flexibility for future development
11	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
12	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	Increase flexibility for future development
13	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
14	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-35	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
15	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
16	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
17	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
18	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
19	R-30	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
20	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	Increase flexibility for future development
21	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use
22	R-60	R-60	Reconfirm existing zoning to retain park use

Commentary – Maple District

- The substantial up-zoning proposed creates substantial redevelopment pressure on sites currently providing much-needed affordable housing.
- The Plan provides no justification for encouraging such a dramatic change to the character of the Maple District.
- The Plan’s one-size-fits-all approach does nothing to address real conditions in the District and appropriate approaches that preserve and enhance the affordable housing stock located there.

Re-Zoning by Parcel  
Flower District

Map Number	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Justification
23	R-60	CR-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-120	Increase flexibility for future development
24	R-40	CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70	Increase flexibility for future development
25	R-40	CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70	Increase flexibility for future development
26	R-40	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.75 H-55	Increase flexibility for future development
27	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
28	R-60	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
29	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
30	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-50	CRN- 1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
31	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
32	R-30	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development
33	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-50	CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50	Increase flexibility for future development

Commentary- Flower District

- The proposed up-zoning both discourages the redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital site for institutional uses and produces significant redevelopment pressure on Washington Adventist University properties.
- The proposed location of CRN zoning does not provide residents of Maple Avenue walkable access to community service retail.

RE-ZONING TABLES



**M-NCPPC  
Wheaton  
CR-6.0 H-200**



**Commentary**

- Although a higher density is permitted at the site pictured above (6.0 FAR instead of 2.5 FAR), the Plan permits development of the Library, Municipal Center, and Piney Branch Elementary School sites of similar character.
- The 15-story building pictured above is similar to that permitted in CRT-2.5 H-150.
- The photo shows a recently completed County government facility – the Planning Office’s home – in Wheaton adjacent to Metro, a municipal facility built in a CR zone.

**The Aurora  
Silver Spring  
CR-3.0 H-125**



**Commentary**

- Although an increment of density greater (3.0 FAR instead of 2.5 FAR), the buildings pictured above have similar character to those permitted in the CRT-2.5 zone.
- Buildings in the proposed CRT-2.5 H-150 zone could be constructed two stories taller than those pictured above.
- The photo shows residential buildings.

**The Citron  
Silver Spring  
CRT-1.5 H-70**



**Commentary**

- The building pictured above has a character like those permitted in the proposed CRT-1.5 zones. Parcels in the Maple District permit a maximum height 5 ft. lower. (65 ft. not 70 ft.) Parcels in the Flower District permit the same height as shown above.
- The photo shows a residential building.

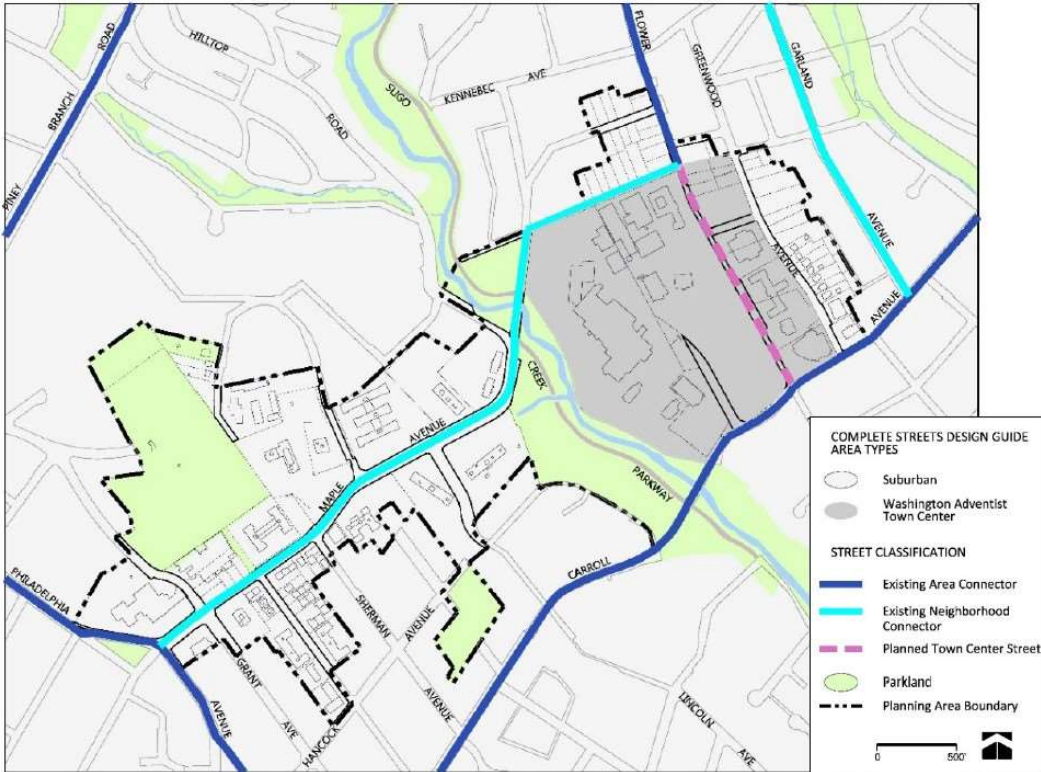
**Commentary – All Photos**

- It is difficult to illustrate exact parallels to the re-zoning proposed in the Plan because there are so many variables. These photos show recently constructed buildings in zones permitting similar heights and densities.

**PRECEDENTS**



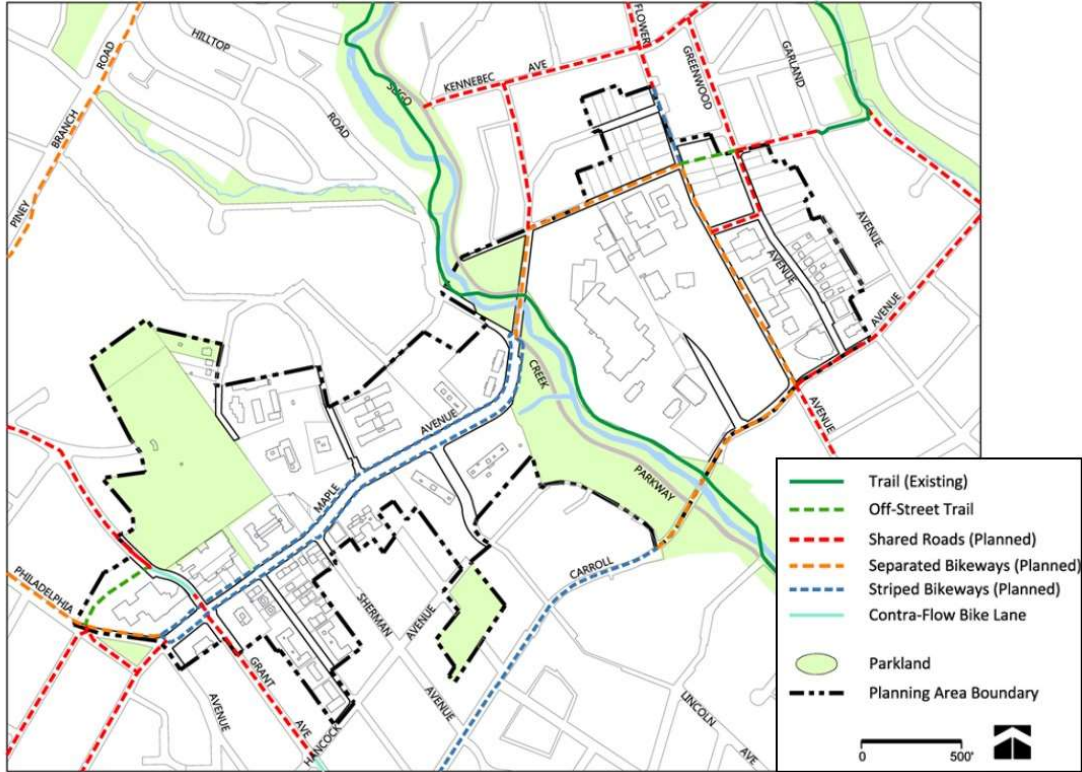
Roadway Network



Commentary

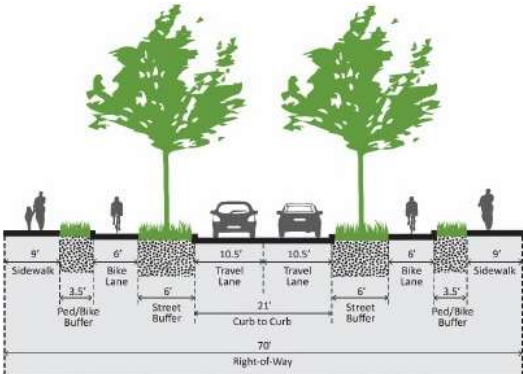
- The Plan proposes no major roadway network improvements. Instead, the only transportation enhancements address alterations to roadway sections along Maple Avenue, Flower Avenue, and Carroll Avenue.
- Since the proposed enhancements address only roadway segments within the Plan limits, benefits to capacity and flow will be negligible.
- Failure to address additional roadway capacity and transit is a substantial deficiency of the Plan, particularly in light of the tremendous increase in density proposed.

Bicycle Network

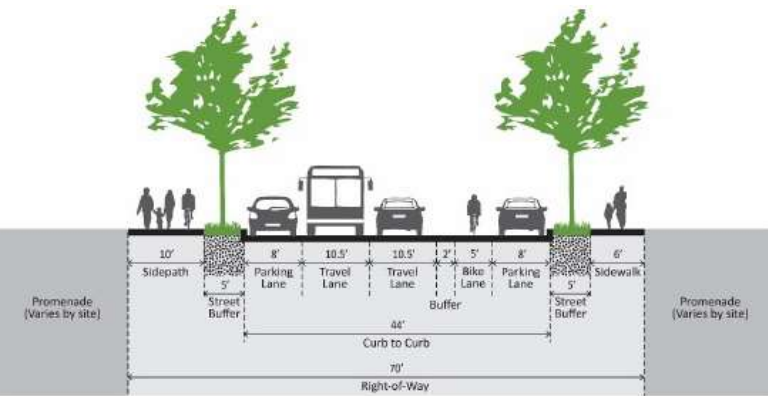


Commentary

- Bikeways are inconsistently provided in the Plan. Physical separation of bike lanes are the exception, not the rule. Even within the Plan limits, the least safe bikeway – shared roads – are proposed.



Flower Avenue



Maple Avenue

Commentary - Roadway Sections

- Even where roadway sections are most substantially modified, bikeway accommodations are not consistently prioritized.
- The proposed section of Flower Avenue shown (between Maplewood and Kennebec) is the only segment where bike lanes are prioritized over parking lanes.
- Even on Maple Avenue where the Green Promenade is proposed, parking and vehicular travel lanes are prioritized over bike lanes.

CONNECTION



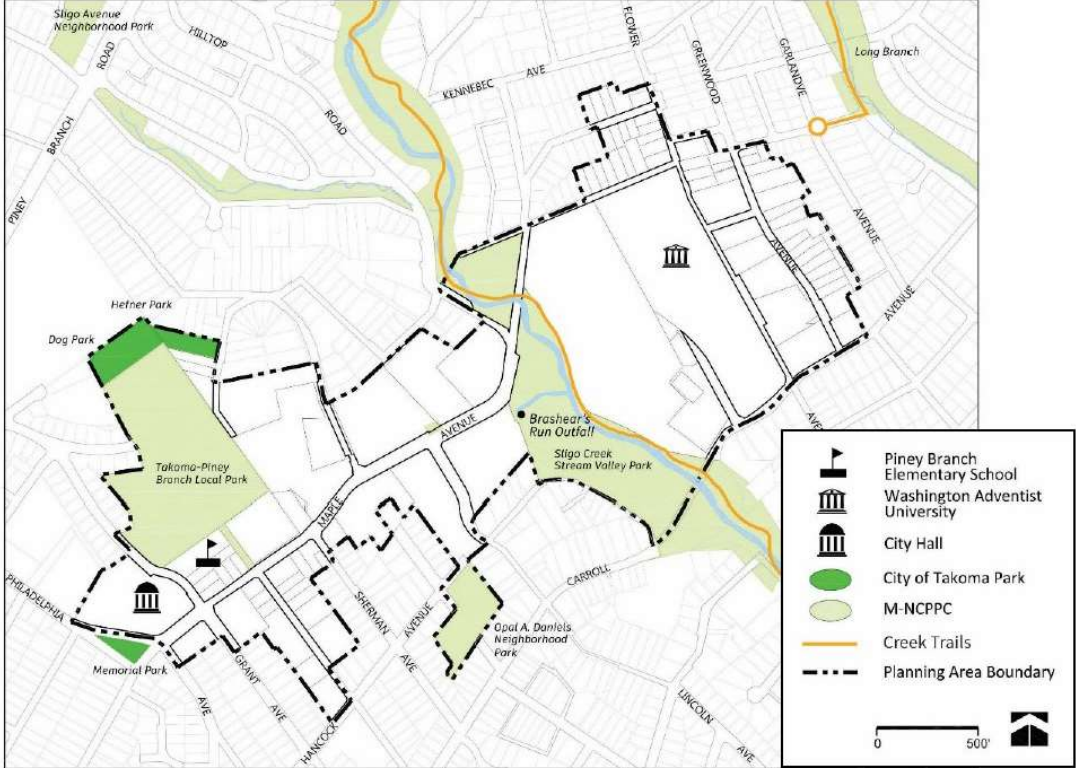
# Green Promenade



## Commentary

- The Green Promenade – the major open space concept proposed in the Plan – is located on private property abutting Maple Avenue, not public space, making its implementation difficult, even unlikely. See Maple Avenue Roadway Section, Page 6.

# Parks & Recreation



## Commentary

- Despite claiming to prioritize ecological health, open space, recreation, and cultural opportunities, the Plan makes no substantial open space allocation.
- No description is provided for the “open space” highlighted on the Adventist Hospital site.
- No action is proposed to assure the ongoing protection of the Sligo Creek riparian area. See Pages 4 & 5. R-60 zoning remains unchanged in the Plan.
- The greatest threat to Sligo Creek within the Plan limits are the steeply sloping portions of the Adventist Hospital site adjacent to the Creek. The Plan makes no proposal to protect the riparian buffer along this site.

# OPEN SPACE



Dear Mr. Harris,

As a longtime resident of Takoma Park and a career in architecture, I have come to appreciate the importance of community revitalization efforts like the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. The Planning Board's interest in the former Adventists Hospital site and Maple Avenue corridor is certainly a very positive step and full of possibilities. However, the proposed one-size-fits-all rezoning to a fairly dense commercial/residential zone is a very blunt instrument applied to two very different places and opens the door to as many bad futures as good ones. Planning in Montgomery County simply needs to be more thoughtful and targeted than the proposed MMPA.

I will not be able to attend the public hearing on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Instead, I have prepared the attached document to provide as much detail as possible for why I am so concerned about the current rezoning recommendations.

I would be happy to discuss my concerns further with you, the Board, or staff at a mutually agreeable time.

Best regards, Carl

**Carl Elefante** FAIA, FAPT  
6607 Westmoreland Avenue  
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

Senior Fellow  
Architecture 2030  
Principal Emeritus  
Quinn Evans  
Buildings and Infrastructure Issues Lead  
GlobalABC Liaison  
Climate Heritage Network  
Senior Research Associate  
University of Notre Dame  
Michael Christopher Duda Center  
2018 President  
The American Institute of Architects

[clfnt94@gmail.com](mailto:clfnt94@gmail.com)  
301-325-3266



I received the flyer from the "Community Equity Coalition" and many of the things they object to in their flyer I consider good things. One thing that is great and unique about Takoma Park is our diversity of housing, which therefore results in actual resident diversity. My family couldn't afford to live here if we had to buy one of the huge homes - we love living in our two-bedroom! Our region has a housing issue, and one thing that will help that is more supply. I see approving higher and denser zoning a positive thing.

My only concern is that these plans be done in coordination with the county, which will have to plan for accommodating students in schools. My understanding is that this coordination effort is taking place.

Please don't give into vocal NIMBY pressure; do the right thing for our housing stock and the housing crisis.

- Claudia Trapp  
24 Manor Circle #107  
Takoma Park MD 20912



To whom it may concern,

My family and I wanted to express support for the Minor Master Plan for Takoma Park. We participated in the community listening sessions, and we are excited about the possibilities this plan may bring to our neighborhood.

We are happy to see increased density, which will bring in populations that are able to support retail in mixed use developments. We do like the affordable housing mentioned, and even hope it can be increased.

As bikers and walkers, we are excited about the new streetscape designs that will make it safer for our family to bike and walk to school and along Sligo Creek. We hope that there will be community amenities, like parks/splash parks or a grocery store that can eventually make it into the development. We like having another retail anchor for the community besides the coop/downtown areas, as this site is closer and more walkable to our house.

We look forward to seeing the results of these plans in a few years, and how they will help Takoma Park be a walkable, dense neighborhood prepared for the future, rather than fixated on the past.

Warm regards,

Leanne Sedowski and William Girardo  
436 Lincoln Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



To whom it may concern at City council,

Please limit Washington Adventist Hospital site rezoning to seven stories (CRT- H-75).

Limit all new zoning around the hospital and on Maple to match the heights of current buildings

Submit the resolution to county planning by September 13th.

Thank you

*Cristina Cunha-Strasser*

*7215 Garland Ave*

*Takoma Park, MD 20912*



Dear Montgomery County Planning Board,

We have reviewed the draft Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment in preparation for the **September 14, 2023** public hearing, and can see that the Planning Board is trying to encourage more flexible development in Takoma Park.

However, the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment is scary for how it could change our city. The proposed density is inappropriate for development that is NOT at a transit center (i.e., within a 15-minute walk to a transit center). The plan would create housing for people who would need vehicle transportation and would increase traffic. Furthermore, there needs to be an equity analysis. There is no protection in the Plan to prevent the loss of affordable units and the displacement of residents.

Takoma Park has had a long commitment to affordable units and rent stabilization. It is one of the aspects of the city which make it very attractive. We do not want the Plan to result in the loss of affordable housing or for the increase in housing units to be largely at market rate. Is there some way to ensure that the new housing has 40% to 50% affordable units?

To address concerns about density, I suggest:

- Limit the Washington Adventist Hospital site rezoning to seven stories (CRT H-75)
- Limit all new zoning in areas surrounding the hospital and on Maple Avenue to match the heights of current buildings.
- Require traffic studies for all projects.
- Require adequate parking to be provided for any new development.

To address concerns about equity:

- How can the Plan honor that 44% of the rental units in the Maple Avenue District are affordable rental units, also known as "deed restricted subsidized housing." How can the Plan ensure that the percentage of affordable rental units stays close to 40% with new development?

Thank you for all your work,

Carol Schatz and David Rodgers  
7310 Hilton Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



To whom it may concern,

I am a resident of Takoma Park. My biggest concern about this plan is that the scope of it is too large. I would like to see Maple Ave decoupled from the plan for now. Incorrectly developing Maple Ave is irreversible and I believe that, just as the Adventist's are doing with their land, there should be more thought put into designing it.

The plan in its current form is just too big. Let the Adventists move forward with their design plan first and complete the environmental assessment before re-zoning.

Marguerite Cyr  
403 Boyd Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



August 30, 2023

**Comments regarding Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Working Draft  
For September 14 hearing, comments updated from June 5, 2023 submission**

Frank Demarais, 8006 Maple Ave. Takoma Park,  
[fdemarais@starpower.net](mailto:fdemarais@starpower.net) , 202-746-9986

Dear Montgomery Planning,

The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Working Draft represents a solid approach to development planning involving a unique large parcel undergoing economic transition, demonstrating a commitment to using zoning and land use approaches to meet the Thrive 2050 goals to protect current residents while growing the housing stock.

The scale of the potential development provides capacity, but not requirement, to support maintaining and increasing the numbers of units affordable to current residents of the eastern end of the County in a mixed income framework. The County needs new units and the City of Takoma Park offers extraordinary amenities and locational advantages which need to be accessible to more residents.

The Plan needs more specificity and parameters to address the stated goals of no net loss of number and affordability of current rental housing in the Plan Area, and to meet the objective of ensuring new construction includes housing affordable to the income distribution of residents of the area.

Zoning and Land Use requirements can and should address these issues by mandating replacement of any demolished affordable units and leveraging the zoning density to achieve more than standard 12.5% restricted Moderately Priced Dwelling Units based on the significant density being granted. This Plan has a unique opportunity to structure such proactive approaches.

- Plan needs to establish an affirmative, not aspirational, standard for protecting existing affordable housing with requirement for any redevelopment of existing rentals to demonstrate the options to ensure replacing existing market rate affordable housing on one-for-one basis, and separately should require more than 12.5% MPDU affordability for all new construction ownership and rental housing based on the granting of significant density outside of a central business district. High Rise zoning includes 15% MDPU requirements in other Plans.
  - Takoma Park market rate rents are substantially more affordable than adjoining areas, and loss of current units would cause significant dislocation.



- Plan recognizes that it creates density and height incentives to redevelop older currently affordable residential buildings. (Maple Ave 150 feet from Sligo Creek to Philadelphia Ave)
  - Section 3.3.2 Housing discussion highlights the fact that this plan represents the first plan adopted under the guidance Thrive 2050 and will build on the “progressive housing policy laid out in several recent master plans, including .... the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan, ..... and the Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan”.
    - Both the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan and the Silver Spring and Adjacent Communities Plan included provisions for increased density on specific naturally occurring affordable housing buildings which require replacement of all existing units with dedicated affordable housing if redeveloped with higher density.
    - High-rise development has generally occurred in sectors with 15% MPDU requirements, and the Minor Master Plan should revisit this option of increasing MPDU from 12.5% to 15% which would create about 25 additional restricted units for each 1,000 units developed.
  - Plan identifies 1,300 existing housing units in the plan boundary, of which 500 are subsidized, leaving 800 affordable market rate units subject to potential loss in redevelopment. Rent Stabilization rent levels lost on redevelopment, restarted five years after new construction.
  - Plan does not create any obligation for redevelopment to protect the current number of market rate affordable units, only states general objectives, ‘striving to achieve no net loss of affordable housing’ ‘preservation of existing naturally occurring affordable housing where possible’. (Housing 3.3.2 pg 66 – 67).
- Takoma Park Minor Master Plan should identify specific buildings on Maple Avenue with both naturally occurring affordable housing and restricted affordable housing, and tie increased density on those properties to No Net Loss requirement as was done in Silver Spring and Viers Mill Plans
    - Veirs Mill Corridor Plan identified a specific parcel with 568 units which the Plan required replacement on a one-for-one basis.
    - Silver Spring and Adjacent Communities Plan identified five affordable garden apartments with increased FAR tied to No Net Loss.
  - Granting parcels CRT-2.5 and H-150’ without one-for-one replacement requirement ensures that when these buildings are redeveloped, the high-rise costs will dictate only premium rent units outside of MPDU 12.5% which will not replace the demolished affordable units.



Additional areas where the Working Draft needs more clarity relate to the impact of significant high-rise development in the Flower Avenue District.

- Limiting location of maximum 120-foot height (R1.25, H-120) is needed to protect sky view for streets facing Site 23, as described in Recommendations 4.3.2 pg 89-90, on hospital and WAU campus area bounded by Flower Ave /Maplewood /Sligo Creek Park/Carroll Ave. The document only addresses the Flower Ave exception from 120-foot maximum *“Maximum building height should be concentrated along Sligo Creek with height along Flower Avenue limited to 70 feet.”*
  - By default, this provides for 120 foot maximum on Maplewood and Carroll across from houses as well as on the current open grass covered space along Maple Ave across from wooded park land, which is not ‘along Sligo Creek’.
  - 120-foot building heights fronting on Carroll, Maplewood and Maple Avenues would block the sky for residents, whereas allowing overlooking Sligo Creek would not.
- Plan needs to address preservation intentions of the current open grass covered space along Maple Ave between Maplewood and Sligo Creek trail.
  - The ‘Green Promenade’ envisions widened bicycle/pedestrian lanes across Maple Ave bridge, up Maple and Maplewood, across to Long Branch, but does not mention preservation of the block long open lawn on Maple Ave.
  - The extensive grass covering below the hill line along Maple provides important heat/ground water management, integration with wooded park land and a gathering place for children and exercise.
- The Plan needs to address the traffic impacts of potential for up to 3,500 additional units on the primary rush hour/school time ingress and egress.
  - School pedestrian danger to four local schools increased with traffic diverted in 2012 with ¾ mile east/west barrier rush hour closures.
  - The rush hour closure of four east/west roads through Sligo Park Hills should be reviewed with new traffic analysis based on the potential population increases and the Friday closures of Sligo Creek Parkway.
  - Rush-hour traffic channeled to Maple/Philadelphia, Philadelphia/Piney Branch, Sligo Creek Pkwy/Piney Branch, Ritchie/Piney Branch, Flower/Piney Branch creates the school pedestrian danger.
  - The Plan references the area wide transportation adequacy measurements conducted for the Silver Spring Plan in 2022, which does not address individual intersection capacities, graded as failing in the studies used to support the rush hour closures.



## **Montgomery Planning Documents Recommending No Net Loss of Affordable Housing**

### **Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Section 3.3.2 Housing**

The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan represents one of the first opportunities to implement the vision for housing laid out in Thrive Montgomery 2050 (“Thrive”), the 2022 update to the County’s General Plan that identifies a long-range policy framework that will guide future land use and growth. Thrive’s housing recommendations, found in the Housing for All chapter, have wide-ranging policies to help make housing more affordable and attainable, including increasing housing production (including affordable housing production), and preserving existing affordable and attainable housing.

The vision laid out in Thrive builds upon a foundation of progressive housing policy laid out in several recent master plans, including the Bethesda Downtown Plan, the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan, Forest Glen Montgomery Hills Sector Plan and the Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan.

The entire City of Takoma Park has over 1,000 federal and state government-subsidized affordable housing units, which make up 41% of the City’s total number of licensed rental units.

The Plan Area currently has over 1,300 housing units, about 500 of which are subsidized units, and have rents limited to affordable to households with incomes between 30% and 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

The City also has a Rent Stabilization Ordinance covering over 1,500 units citywide. After a multi-year period where the market sets rents, rent increases are limited to the Consumer Price Index. Today, many of these units are also affordable to households between 30% and 80% AMI.

Given that many rental properties in the City were built 40 or more years ago, there is a need for reinvestment in these buildings to ensure quality, safe, affordable housing. The Plan recommends that the City explore incentives and policy changes to encourage building improvements that extend the life of housing units and provide improvements like increased energy efficiency. In the event of redevelopment, the Plan recommends striving to achieve no net loss of affordable housing.

### **Thrive 2050**

Racial Equity and Social Justice: Housing, page 49

Identifying and promoting safeguards against the potential loss of naturally occurring affordable housing continues to be a priority for the county. The county has made recent strides in preserving naturally occurring affordable housing by using a variety of



financial and land use tools. For example, the county has increased funding for the Housing Initiative Fund to help preserve naturally occurring affordable housing. Through recent master plans, the county has also allowed for increased density in exchange for no net loss of affordable housing in the event of redevelopment. Understanding that these naturally occurring affordable housing units are important housing resources to the county, more work is needed to understand the risk factors associated with losing these units, as well as the best strategies to preserve these units. If housing affordability continues to decline, it is quite feasible that Montgomery County could require even more commuters from outside the region to staff its businesses. This dynamic would be in opposition to both the Equity and Sustainability goals of Thrive Montgomery 2050. (See Appendix B-7: Housing Affordability, 2020).

Undoubtedly, many residents who currently occupy a community where they have historical, cultural, spiritual, and other ties (kinship) will want to remain in their home community. However, there will be some residents who may like to move to a more affluent area. Traditionally, planning documents are written to support Housing Choice as a strategic goal for future outcomes. When we juxtapose this idea with regional housing markets, it would seem that in order to balance the integration of low-income neighborhoods, some accommodation for rebalancing should be made to ensure that economic benefits begin to reach historically disadvantaged populations. As such, integration should be a two-way process, by which there should be a parallel strategy of making accommodations for low-income housing in areas that are already wealthy, thus providing new residents who want the choice of living somewhere else to achieve immediate access to communities that have proximity to jobs, good education, etc. If we are going to promote development in the growth areas with new market-rate housing, there should also be a provision of new low-income housing in high income areas to allow for housing choice in different markets,

#### **Silver Spring and Adjacent Communities Plan, page 64**

##### **Garden Apartments**

- South Silver Spring is home to several garden style apartment complexes built predominantly in the 1930s and 1940s that provide a significant source of naturally occurring affordable housing for the Silver Spring community. Like many aging multi-family properties discussed in previous master plans, these garden facilities may require significant renovation, rehabilitation, or redevelopment in the coming decades. In the event of redevelopment, these properties should strive for no net loss of affordable housing. No net loss is where naturally occurring affordable housing units are replaced with an equivalent number of new income-restricted affordable housing units through redevelopment.
- 7719-7725 Eastern Avenue (Blair Park Apartments): This Plan recommends rezoning to allow flexibility and redevelopment that would support future affordable housing development.



- 7701-7705 Eastern Avenue; 805-809 Juniper Street; 7700-7705 Blair Road (Blair Park Gardens): Recommendation to support a future application for a CRT Floating Zone with residential density of up to 4.0 FAR, that strives for no net loss of affordable housing.
- 7603-7615 Eastern Avenue (Eastern Avenue Apartments): Recommendation to support a future application for a CRT Floating Zone with residential density of up to 4.0 FAR, that strives for no net loss of affordable housing.
- 8000-8012 Eastern Drive; 8001-8009 Eastern Drive; 8033- 8039 Eastern Avenue; 8000-8004 Blair Mill Road; 1300-1302 Blair Mill Road (Rock Creek Springs): Recommendation to support a future application for a CRT Floating Zone with residential density of up to 4.0 FAR, that strives for no net loss of affordable housing.
- 8001-8031 Eastern Avenue (Spring Garden Apartments): Recommendation to support a future application for a CRT Floating Zone with residential density of up to 4.0 FAR, that strives for no net loss of affordable housing

### **Long Branch Sector Plan**

Community Values and Planning Principles, page 5

Land Use, Zoning, and Character

- Preserve and improve the community's affordable housing and small scale commercial uses by leveraging proximity to Purple Line stations and supporting the application of flexible zoning, density incentives, and expanded economic development programs.
- Provide various housing options that serve all residents at different life stages and economic levels.
- Preserve and protect historic resources for future generations. Designate the Flower Theater (limited to the theater facade, two adjoining shoulders, and second wall plane to a depth of 40 feet from the theater building line) on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and implement design guidelines to encourage compatible and appropriate future development nearby

### **Page 8**

Among the challenges faced by Long Branch will be to ensure that rental and ownership costs, for either homes or businesses, remain affordable, while also providing mechanisms to strengthen code enforcement and provide incentives to encourage reinvestment. Current land use and zoning policies have not done enough to encourage reinvestment and may have inadvertently led to decline. Many properties are not zoned appropriately and lack sufficient density to spur private investment. This Sector Plan addresses those issues with recommendations that encourage appropriate levels of reinvestment and support for incremental redevelopment.

### **Page 20**

The Plan's challenge is to protect housing affordability in Long Branch while also providing mechanisms that strengthen code enforcement and create incentives to



reinvestment. To achieve this, the Plan encourages higher density, mixed-use development than can add to existing subsidized units by maximizing use of the CRT Zone's optional method density incentive for MPDUs.

Current MPDU (Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit) regulations in Montgomery County require new development with 20 or more dwelling units to provide at least 12.5 percent of the units as affordable to households earning up to 65 percent of the area median income. The Plan recognizes that maintaining affordability is essential and that higher densities and other incentives are needed to encourage affordable housing units above the minimum. But the MPDU program should not be viewed as the sole remedy. To resolve this challenge requires a more comprehensive set of recommendations and cooperation with other agencies and policy makers.

The Sector Plan encourages development that increases housing opportunities and maintains existing affordable housing. The following measures in the 2012 Montgomery County Housing Policy support that goal:

- Develop strategies to preserve naturally occurring affordability and preserve existing federal, state, or county financed affordable housing.
- Encourage development that provides for affordable, energy efficient housing including smaller units for singles and three to five bedroom units for larger families, including maximizing solar orientation and design to reduce energy demands.
- Support Alternative Location Agreements (within the Sector Plan area) that result in the development of more than the required number/percentage of MPDUs.
- Encourage the voluntary development of Workforce Housing at and near planned transit facilities.
- Encourage the development of funding mechanisms to provide for rental and condominium fee subsidies to low-and moderate-income residents.
- Provide for the inclusion of affordable housing in all public building projects within the Plan area and establish housing as a preferred use when the County sells property, and encourage public/private partnerships with Housing Opportunities Commission and other affordable housing providers.
- Provide technical assistance to landlords and property owners to maintain apartment buildings and building stock.
- Continue to implement Montgomery County programs that provide supportive housing for individuals and families.
- Support the creation of additional programs that provide for the development of housing for extremely low- and moderate-income families.
- Encourage faith-based organizations, non-profit agencies, neighborhood housing groups, and employers to use their existing property or to purchase land and buildings for the production and preservation of housing affordability.

Recommendations seek to increase the number of affordable homes and further expand housing choice in Long Branch by providing options for various types of housing, including MPDUs, live/work units, and accessory dwelling units. Furthermore, increased densities will help support the local economy by attracting new residents with varying



income levels. They will shop at existing small businesses and encourage new retail and commercial uses to locate within Long Branch, creating local jobs.

The Purple Line may well result in increased housing values and raised rents however, the Plan seeks to address affordability and displacement issues through a comprehensive strategy that includes the MPDU program, increased funding and programming to create affordable housing, and introducing housing where it currently doesn't exist—on historically commercial properties.

### **Veirs Mill Corridor Plan**

#### **3.4.1 Land Use and Zoning Page 102**

- Rezone the Halpine View Apartments from R-30 to CRT 1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-85 to allow increased residential density near the Twinbrook Metrorail Station and the future bus rapid transit station. Halpine View Apartments
  - o The plan recommends maximizing residential development with a minimal amount of commercial density to fulfill the requirements of the Optional Method Development of the CRT zone. An optional method project that includes residential dwelling units should:
    - Provide a minimum of 15 percent MPDUs.
    - Provide 10 percent market-rate affordable units under a rental agreement for up to 30 years. To achieve no net loss in market-rate affordable units, each phase of development should provide a number of affordable units (MPDUs plus market-affordable units under rental agreement) equal to the number of units being removed.
    - Provide a range of unit sizes, including those that accommodate larger families. With redevelopment, a minimum of 20 percent of all units must be two-bedroom units and five percent of all units must be provided as three-bedroom units. Priority should be given to existing residents for the two- and three- bedroom units and the units under market-affordable rental agreements



Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board

I have signed up on the website to provide testimony at the September 14 hearing.  
The attached represents the testimony I intend to address at the meeting.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Frank Demarais  
8006 Maple Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
202-746-9986  
[fdemarais@starpower.net](mailto:fdemarais@starpower.net)

***Think Think : It Ain't Illegal Yet!***



hello

Please stop unwanted extreme redevelopment on the hospital site. What you have in mind would destroy half of Takoma Park, contribute to climate/heat/ problems, traffic problems, greenspace problems. would like to see something like the greenspace development of montgomery village, not the blight you propose.

Kristen Moeller

319 Lincoln Takoma Park MD 20912



Dear County Board Members,

What a surprise to get info about this MINOR plan that could MAJORLY affect hundreds of low-income folks who live on Maple Ave. After listening to our council talk about it, and reading about it, I'm actually so surprised this kind of plan would come from MOCO leaders. We are better than this.

We don't need rezoning on Maple Ave. We might need some renovating (that does not take rezoning) to make apartments nicer for low-income folks. I am all for that.

And I agree with the plan when it comes to the hospital. We need something better for that area---more affordable housing AND some retail space for people to be able to walk to shop.

Finally, we are in a climate crisis. This shouldn't be part of what you are planning for, it should be the framework from which all planning happens. We need to have more affordable housing for climate refugees. We need less cement and roads and more places to walk to and we need to preserve our precious Sligo Creek.

We need to prepare for the upcoming hotter summers and storms. The greenest building is one still standing. No more buildings on Maple. This should be one of our first priorities.

PLEASE leave Maple Ave alone--no rezoning.

Make the Adventist Hospital space green and consider storm water issues as you plan.

Thank you for listening and it's not too late to reconsider please.

Most sincerely,  
Rev. Julia Jarvis  
6718 Gude Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



To whom it may concern,

I am a resident of Takoma Park. My biggest concern about this plan is that the scope of it is too large. I would like to see Maple Ave decoupled from the plan for now. Incorrectly developing Maple Ave is irreversible and I believe that, just as the Adventist's are doing with their land, there should be more thought put into designing it.

The plan in its current form is just too big. Let the Adventists move forward with their design plan first and complete the environmental assessment before re-zoning.

Marguerite Cyr  
403 Boyd Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Date: September 1, 2023

To: Chairman and members of the Montgomery County (MoCo) Planning Board.

From: Wayne Sherwood, Takoma Park MD.

**Subj: Proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA)**

The proposed Takoma Park MMPA (Minor Master Plan Amendment) covers two areas of Takoma Park, the Adventist site and the Maple Avenue area. My comments below sometimes refer to those areas separately, but the areas are closely related.

### **The Adventist site**

Many questions are still unanswered about the MoCo planning staff's MMPA proposals for the Adventist site, so it is difficult for me to comment on some of these proposals in an informed way.

However, I have decided to speculate about some of the MoCo planners' proposals for the Adventist site, acknowledging that I could be wrong about some of these things.

**Question:** what is the source of the figure of **1.8 million square feet** that has been mentioned with regard to the Adventist site?

I heard that figure mentioned at some point in the MoCo planners' presentation. This number also appears in a newspaper article which was based upon a reporter's interview with **Melissa Williams, the MoCo planning project director**.

The MoCo planners have referred to an area with a map number #23 (see map and chart below). They have said that this area is likely to be controlled by the Adventist University and developed as a whole by the University. The MoCo planners have said that this area comprises 43 acres. There are 43,560 square feet to an acre. Multiplying those two numbers produces the result of **1.873 million square feet**. So I think it likely that the 1.8 million square feet number represents the size of the area to be developed as a whole by the Adventists (#23).



**LEGEND**

- 1 Site
- 2 Park
- 3 Municipal
- 4 Major Arterial
- 5 Flower

**TPMMA Working Draft**

Council Meeting - Wednesday, May 24, 2023

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Recommended Flower Avenue District Zoning			
Map Number	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Justification
23	R-60	CR-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-120	Increase flexibility for future development
24	R-40	CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70	Increase flexibility for future development
25	R-40	CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70	Increase flexibility for future development
26	R-40	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.75 H-55	Increase flexibility for future development

When the MoCo planners made their presentation to the Takoma Park City Council on May 24, Takoma Park City Councilmember Jason Small asked them about the history of the county planners' work with the Adventists. The MoCo planning staff said they had been working with the Adventists for four years, and they know what the Adventists would like to do, and they want to give the Adventists maximum flexibility to do what they want to do, within the limits of the new commercial/residential zoning (CR) that is being proposed for area #23. The planners said that they expect that the Adventists will make their decisions based upon their own evaluations of "what the market will bear," within the CR designation. The "CR" designation has a height limit of 120 feet. (see table above). This could allow numerous high-rise buildings of 120 feet height to be developed in area #23, including almost down to Sligo Creek.

The plans of the Adventists have never been made public. Why not? In light of the lack of information about the Adventists' plans, all I can do is speculate. I recognize that there is a risk in doing this, but there is no alternative in my opinion.

### **What does the CR zone mean?**

The CR zones are described at the MoCo planning website:



## Commercial Residential Zones - Montgomery Planning

I have quoted excerpts from some of these items below.

=====

The Commercial/Residential (C/R) Zones are a family of mixed-use zones that allow a range of densities and heights. These zones are designed to

- encourage a mix of commercial and residential uses
- create interactive streets
- provide meaningful public spaces
- foster jobs and services where people can live, work, shop and play within a given neighborhood.

There are three Commercial/Residential Zone classifications which define the types of uses and the method of development allowed:

- CR Neighborhood (CRN)
- CR Town (CRT)
- **Commercial Residential (CR)**

The CRN Zone allows standard method development; the CRT and CR Zones allow standard and optional method development. Optional method development requires the provision of public benefits, which are based on a point system specified in the zoning ordinance. The Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines provide further criteria for Planning Department staff, the Planning Board, applicants, and citizens to evaluate the adequacy of the public benefits proposed in an optional method application.

The family of zones allows for a range of densities and heights – as low as 0.25 [floor area ratio \(FAR\)](#), near single-family neighborhoods, to 8.0 FAR, which may be used in areas with direct access to Metro Stations such as our Central Business Districts. Within this range, master plans use the flexibility of the zones to ensure that development fits within the context of each community. Once mapped with specific density and height limitations, the zone provides certainty for residents about the type of development they can expect. Any zone must be designated on the official zoning map approved by the County Council.



By creating CR zoning classifications for neighborhood, town, and metro settings, the zones offer:

- ways to soften the transition between mixed-use and residential areas
- address concerns about the proximity of some uses to single-family residential properties
- create rules for parking and drive-through design

For example, more intense uses are prohibited or require a public review process to mitigate impacts with increased setbacks, screening, or noise/light abatement. In addition, public benefit requirements are adjusted for small properties and lower density areas to address concerns about revitalization and redevelopment in particular areas.

In the CR and CRT zones, an upper limit for density is set by the zoning map and developers must provide public benefits to be allowed to develop to that limit.

CR zone	Intent	Density &
CR Neighborhood	Allows services commonly used by neighborhood residents; requires buffering for certain moderately intense uses; and prohibits uses deemed too intense	Limited to be 0.25 and 1.5 25'-65' height
CR Town	Flexible uses – some restrictions on commercial and flexible residential; site plan for some standard method; and sketch plan and public benefits up to 50 points required for optional method	Limited to be 0.25 and 4.0 to 35'-150' height
CR	Flexible residential and commercial uses; site plan for some standard method; and sketch plan and public benefits up to 100 points required for optional method.	Limited to be 0.5 and 8.0 F 35'-300' height

### CRT and CR zones

These allow two tracks for developers:

- Standard: allows builders to develop at lesser densities
- Optional: offers a range of incentives in exchange for full density. Optional method projects require an extra public plan review.



**CR zones** tie uses, density, and height together, providing greater predictability as to what can be built and how property can be used. Height and density recommendations will be developed with community input during the master planning process, then the zoning will specify those recommended densities and heights. These tools offer a more fine-grained approach to bring the community vision to reality.

**Requirements and Standards** There are requirements and standards that must be met by any project in a CR, CRT, EOF or LSC zone, including setbacks, public open space, streetscape improvements, residential amenity spaces, bicycle parking and shower facilities, parking facility design and consistency with the applicable master plan and design guidelines. All development must satisfy the standards and requirements in the county zoning ordinance, regardless of any public benefits provided.

## Required Public Benefits

### Density

Development on CR-, CRT-, LSC- and EOF-zoned land may proceed under standard or optional method development. Standard method development limits density to 0.5 FAR or 10,000 square feet (whichever is greater) in the CR and LSC zones, and 1.0 FAR or 10,000 square feet in the CRT and EOF zones.

The difference in density between the standard method and the density indicated on the zoning map is defined as “incentive density.” Any applicant wishing to develop above the standard method density—up to the maximum allowed by the zone—must apply for an optional method development approval.

During this application process, the applicant proposes to provide specific public benefits and amenities that support the project’s incentive density. The Planning Board will determine whether the proposed public benefits support the additional density requested.

### Height

The height on the zoning map (H) is the maximum building height allowed under standard or optional method.

=====

(comments by Wayne Sherwood, continued)



Based upon my reading of the above, the “standard method development” limit for the Adventist site would be a 0.5 FAR, and the details of this would be worked out during the subsequent planning process.

The FAR, or Floor Area Ratio, represents the ratio of [the Gross Floor Area of the buildings allowed on a site] to [the size of the site]. So the Gross Floor Area of all buildings that would be allowed in the area designated as #23 would be half of 1.873 million square feet, or 986,000 square feet.

I will speculate further. If one assumes that the 986,000 square feet is entirely used for residential purposes, and that the average size of the housing units would be 1,000 square feet, then 986 housing units could be built under the CR zoning provisions, using the standard method, in the area designated as #23 in the MoCo planners’ map. (In reality, it is likely that some of the gross floor area would be used for administrative or other non-residential purposes.)

If one further assumes that each housing unit would contain, on the average, 2.0 people, then that would mean about 1,900 new people would live at the Adventist site. Actual occupancy would vary from unit to unit. If you also assume that each of those units would contain – on the average – one child, then that would mean the addition of about 986 children who would be living on this site. That would have a significant impact upon the schools in this area.

Again, these are my speculations.

**The following is some additional information from the MoCo website about where CR zones would be appropriate:**





*Transit-Oriented development (TOD) reduces the pressure for sprawl and maximizes public investment dollars. TODs deserve the highest quality of design.*



*Transit proximity should encourage higher density at transit station centers to discourage auto use.*

## Transit Proximity

**Intent:** Maximizing height and density at or near transit locations reduces the pressure for sprawl in our county, dramatically decreases our carbon footprint and maximizes private investment where public investment in infrastructure is most concentrated. Locating new development at transit stops creates and maintains a more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable county and provides variety and convenience of transportation opportunities to the largest number of people.

### Zoning Ordinance Citation: Section 4.7.3.B. Transit Proximity

Transit proximity points are granted for proximity to existing or master-planned transit stops based on transit service level and CRT, CR, LSC and EOF zones. Public benefit points can only be granted for one transit stop.

1. Transit proximity is categorized according to three levels:
  - a. **Level 1** is proximity to an existing or master planned Metrorail station.
  - b. **Level 2** is proximity to an existing or master planned station or stop along a rail or bus line with a dedicated, fixed path; this level excludes a site that is within one mile of an existing or master-planned MARC station.
  - c. **Level 3** is proximity to an existing or master-planned MARC station.  
All distances for transit proximity are measured from the nearest transit station entrance or bus stop entrance.
2. A project is abutting or confronting a transit station or stop if it shares a property line or easement line, or is separated only by a right-of-way from an existing or master-planned transit station or stop, and 100 percent of the tract in a single sketch plan application is within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the transit portal.

### (WS comments continued)

In my opinion, the Adventist site does not meet the county's criteria for a CR zone.

I think that CR Zones are intended for "downtown" areas supplied by major highway and transit lines.

The Adventists site is not an appropriate place to apply that approach. **This site does not meet the County's own criteria for where CR zones are appropriate.**

I urge the MoCo Planning Board to send these zoning proposals back to staff for further analysis.

### General and Maple Avenue

The Minor Master Plan should be at a scale that is appropriate for the community.



The current draft of the Minor Master Plan Amendment for Takoma Park would allow dramatically increased density, greatly exceeding what is appropriate for these sites.

The Plan would change the existing zoning to allow:

- New 15-story high-rises at eleven locations along Maple Avenue
- 12-story high-rises on the Adventist site
- 5-story buildings along Flower, Greenwood & Maplewood
- 5-story buildings in the Erie Center

The proposed CR zoning at the Adventist site is completely out of scale when compared to recent plans passed for Long Branch, Forest Glen, Glenmont, and elsewhere.

The Plan allows the owners to **replace rent-stabilized buildings** and small garden apartments along Maple Avenue with luxury high-rises.

The Plan allows the open space important to current residents on Maple to be filled with even more high-rises, causing **overcrowding**. The proposed MMPA could result in virtually all of the current open space along Maple avenue to disappear, because it would be so valuable to develop.

New and renovated buildings are not rent-stabilized for five years according to City code, and can rent at the **market rate**.

Residents of this new housing will need to depend on car or bus transportation, including along Carroll and Flower Avenues. The existing roads are totally inadequate for handling this amount of additional development. The proposed MMPA does not include traffic studies or any explanation of how the Adventist site would be serviced by the road and transit system.

There has been NO equity analysis, and the climate/environmental impact analysis will not be issued until just before the final Plan vote.

Only a relatively small percentage of any new residential units along Maple Avenue would be required to be “affordable”. The greatest proportion of the new units would likely be luxury units. This is likely to drive up housing prices and



rents in this entire area, and make it even more difficult to provide “missing middle” housing. There is likely to be substantial displacement (by market forces) and gentrification.

=====

**[Continued comments by Wayne Sherwood about the need for affordable housing in Takoma Park]**

**I strongly support the preservation of affordable housing in Takoma Park**

I think that the MoCo planners and the city of Takoma Park should make a major effort to work together to bring in new resources for the affordable housing properties that already exist along Maple Ave. Many of these properties are over 50 years old and have suffered from years of very tight budgets.

I think that step one in meeting this area’s affordable housing needs, which I agree are substantial, should be to make major efforts to preserve the existing affordable housing in Takoma Park, by investing major resources into existing affordable housing properties to bring them up to current standards.

I recommend that we work together to seek to obtain such major additional resources/investments from State, federal and county governments, as well as from other potential investors to assist in preserving and upgrading these affordable housing properties.

I urge the Montgomery County Planning Board not to approve the proposed MMPA in its present form, but to send it back to staff for further analysis.

Respectfully,

Wayne Sherwood  
218 Grant Ave.  
Takoma Park MD  
H: 301-608-2589



Attached are my comments on the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendments (MMPA) for the Planning Board hearing of September 14, 2023

Sincerely,

Wayne Sherwood  
218 Grant Avenue  
Takoma Park MD 20912-4234  
H: 301-608-2589



August 31, 2023

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

I am concerned that the up-zoning proposed in the MMPA for Maple Ave. can potentially create unwanted development pressures —adversely affecting the residents, traffic and environment in the Maple Ave zone. A plan would be much more helpful than simply changing the zoning. If an area is zoned for a certain height and density then there is nothing under certain circumstances to prevent the demolition of exiting building so new larger buildings can be constructed.

Please focus on the priority issue which needs addressing — the Adventist Hospital site.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Duncan  
25 Pine Ave.



Members of the MNCPPC,

Takoma Park has lost the Adventist hospital and now has a chance to add to that site several different kinds of housing while protecting the affordable housing that already exists on Maple Avenue. Takoma Park and future developers also have the opportunity to add more commercial use space and recreational facilities and can protect Sligo Creek and its riparian buffers. Is this what will happen if our City Council approves the zoning outlined in the MMPA ?

I am writing to express my concern that the proposed, "one size fits all" zoning changes will create density changes in height, floor area ratio and use which are out of proportion to the needs and character of our neighborhoods. Up-zoning can definitely incentivize redevelopment of bigger and more expensive buildings with higher rents causing displacement of residents. There will be some of this, but we should have a careful urban plan which would help to create more density intelligently and protect what we already have. The City of Takoma Park residents, the City Council and MNCPPC do not know what will be built on the hospital site. We should wait and see what is planned there and developed there and then turn our attention to the zoning of Maple Avenue. We should study possible ways for current building owners on Maple Avenue to create more commercial and other amenities on land that already has rent stabilized buildings. Our city should invest in keeping these buildings viable.

A traffic study is necessary. Our roads were deemed unable to support the hospital expansion. We need a study of potential traffic and public infrastructure impacts on local roads including Carroll, Philadelphia, and Flower Avenues, as well as Sligo Creek Parkway, keeping in mind the increase of commuters using the Purple line and the Takoma Metro. This development might not affect Silver Spring's traffic, but it affects Takoma Park's.

A Climate assessment is necessary. Accelerating effects of Climate Change - more and more flooding and loss of tree canopy and biodiversity in general - require heretofore unheard of measures in a completely new scenario where old statistics and regulations are no longer truly useful. Maple Avenue is situated on a floodplain! We need to take a closer look at what makes ecological sense to build or not build. We did not do this for the new library. We need careful, up-to-date zoning and stormwater projections.

Our City employees and Council members and residents all are overwhelmed by this plan. It is not minor at all. We need to separate the three areas that the MMPA has lumped together and address them individually.

Thank you for your attention,  
Barbara Whitney  
16 Crescent Place  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear Planners of Minor Master Plan in Takoma Park,

Below is what I want to see as a Takoma Park resident:

- PROTECTED BIKE LANES along Maple Ave (for at least the stretch between Sligo and Philadelphia Aves). I see that the MMPlan has updated to include protected bike lanes on both sides at that location - thank you. However, for the remainder of the corridors, (such as Carroll Ave or on Flower Ave) don't think you're doing anyone any favors by adding "conventional" or "shared" lane markings. Drivers ignore and park in them all the time. You don't have the police force to monitor all that, and I would really like to see those areas updated to protected bike lanes. If you've ever ridden a bike on a shared or "priority" marked lane, you'll understand that it's just paint on the ground. Paint isn't going to protect you from someone in a parked car from opening their door into you, or someone from the street running into you because they're on their phone. DC has protected lanes all over - why have we fallen so far behind DC on this?
- Better public transportation to-from the Takoma Park Metro, Langley, and eventually the Purple line.
- Rezoning along Maple Ave for commercial purposes (so all those additional people don't need to get into cars to get what they need in life)
- Limit building height so we don't end up with tall buildings surrounded by huge parking lots and massive traffic problems, as this is what typically happens when you zone for taller buildings.
- Recognition of quieter areas outside of the MM-Plan and a plan to include all the residential streets that will see increased in cut-through traffic due to increase in population (see my additional comments below):

This paragraphs below is a repeat of a previous message I sent a while back. I want to be sure my message is received and recognized. Thank you for your time:

When I initially reached out to the MMP while they were doing their canvassing, I didn't really think very deeply about the consequences of increasing the population by thousands of people. I just said I wanted to see a Trader Joes, or an H-Mart closer to home. While that would still be nice, I have changed my view of this project, and at first, became deeply concerned for the amount of cut-through traffic that this would bring to our already overwhelmed streets just outside of the MMP area. At that point, I was completely opposed to the project until cut-through traffic on streets outside of MMP areas would be addressed. After some additional thought, and due to the realization that our existing public transportation (and alternate) transportation system in and around Takoma Park is woefully inadequate to accommodate the existing population. I now strongly believe that if you centered your plans more on upgrading and improving the public trans system here, you would resolve some of the many issues MMP has been stuck on, and also you would have my support.

To put this another way, I was watching the committee meeting, and saw the MMPlanners mention that parking would be a major hurdle to overcome. I believe parking is only such a huge issue because we don't have a solid public transportation system. I hope the topic of alternate transportation (including bikes and peds) is made into the primary work session topic - I've seen the most recent draft resolution (2023-16) and this issue is lumped together with the tree canopy issues. I really think it should be it's own thing. As fact, if we had better, safer transportation options in and around Takoma Park, we wouldn't need all the parking, and I believe it would also help to resolve the cut-through traffic that I see as not only a problem for my street, but all over Takoma Park. I don't think you'll be able to build enough parking lots for the proposed residential increases if you don't have other solid, well thought out transportation options.

Thanks for hearing me out,  
Ellen Marcus  
Takoma Park, Ward 2





Friends of Sligo Creek  
PO Box 11572  
Takoma Park, MD 20913

September 1, 2023

Montgomery County (Maryland) Planning Board  
M-NCPPC  
2425 Reddie Drive  
Wheaton, MD 20902  
[mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org)

RE: Minor Master Plan Amendment

Dear Planning Board:

Herein constitutes written testimony from Friends of Sligo Creek (FOSC) regarding the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) for the Adventist properties in Takoma Park and neighboring Silver Spring. We are submitting this in advance of the public hearing on September 14, 2023 and the subsequent deadline for written comments. Please see our comments and reply to our questions below.

The Friends of Sligo Creek, established in 2002, is a non-profit community organization dedicated to protecting, enhancing, and enjoying the ecological health of Sligo Creek Park and its surrounding watershed. In addition to our hands-on work to reduce litter and non-native invasive plants and improve stormwater control and water quality, we also engage in advocacy for government policies and procedures that will benefit the watershed's ecology. The project outlined in the MMPA provides an opportunity to improve the watershed. It would be a mistake to regard it only as real estate development, but rather an environmental enhancement as well.

There is a vast reservoir of expertise regarding Sligo Creek as a natural and recreational resource and its Historical Interpretation. The Planning Department and other agencies involved in this



project should actively reach out to FOSC and Historic Takoma, Inc., for input as the project progresses.

## **STORMWATER AND WATER QUALITY**

### **Sligo Creek Drainage**

#### **Construction Operations**

Sligo Creek is routinely damaged by sediment pollution from nearby construction project, due to contactors ignoring sediment control regulations and the county facing enforcement challenges. The FOSC Water WatchDog program frequently reports on such pollution to the county's Department of Environmental Protection. A project of the scope envisioned for the Adventist properties must incorporate stringent oversight of sediment runoff into Sligo Creek by the city and the county.

#### **3.d.i. Impervious Cover and 3.d.ii Water Quality and Stormwater Management**

The site poses a severe storm water runoff challenge because of the steep slope at the western boundary and the dense clay soil type that resists water absorption. To prevent a further degradation of the immediate Sligo Creek area, the design should impose strict limits on impervious surfaces, require permeable surfaces wherever possible, and incorporate natural features to manage sediment runoff. Please provide a source and any calculations supporting the Impervious Surfaces figure (Appendix D, p.8). Including protected areas such as parks in this estimate tends to lessen the severity of the runoff problem here. Various estimates of impervious surface for the former WAH campus range from 54 percent to 80 percent. Uncontrolled and untreated runoff from these surfaces discharges to Sligo Creek down slopes of up to 25 percent. In the past, Sligo Creek has been subjected to several incidences of pollution attributed to these discharges. Monitoring at local sites (Maple Avenue and Jackson Ave outfalls) has revealed elevated levels of pollutants including suspended sediment and enteric bacteria.

Water management in Takoma Park is split between Stormwater (Takoma Park jurisdiction) and erosion and sediment control (MOCO jurisdiction). FOSC has found that existing erosion and sediment practices are not adequate for the protection of the creek, especially for major construction projects such as the Purple Line and Montgomery College. FOSC recommends that Appendix D be expanded to include specific goals, objectives, and conditions for adequate erosion control and enforcement of relevant regulations during construction at this location.



### **3.d.iii Brashear's Run and the Underground Drainage Network**

FOSC acknowledges the significance of this tributary system; however, the information in this section is incomplete and erroneous. The map in this section was not prepared by a water management professional, is inconsistent with the historical record, and has not been validated.

The major implication of this analytical weakness is that, too often, the frequent spikes in water pollution in Sligo Creek from stormwater outfalls cannot be traced to their sources. This problem should be addressed before approval of the projects on both Maple Avenue and the Adventist property.

The headwaters of Brashear's Run are not well known since they are at least partially located outside of Takoma Park (District of Columbia, Silver Spring). A study performed for the city in 2012 revealed major uncertainties about Brashear's sources including drains on Piney Branch Road, the WMATA Takoma Metro Station, Belle Ziegler Park/Montgomery College, and Blair Road. This study concluded that the stormwater mapping layers in the city were incorrect or deficient and require updating. As noted above, the Brashear's Run outfall is often highly contaminated by suspended sediment and enteric bacteria in addition to other water quality indicators. A significant amount of information regarding Brashear's Run and the Maple Avenue system is available and should be consulted. FOSC recommends that this section be rewritten to reflect known uncertainties and that delineation of Brashear's Run be included as an objective of the MMPA.

Washington Adventist Hospital was a significant user of chemical and radiological products in diagnostics, treatment, and maintenance. Over the years, chemical spills were reported both within hospital buildings and in the local environment. Medical facilities in general are known sources of chemical contamination to the environment that may be present in structural materials and soils. In addition, the age of the structures suggests that contaminants such as asbestos, mercury, lead, and polychlorinated biphenyls are likely to be present at the site. Besides the inherent environmental risks, they would pose health and safety hazards to workers and would need to be handled and disposed of according to regulations for hazardous materials. FOSC is concerned regarding the potential for escape of pollutants during demolition and construction and recommends that a formal Environmental Site Assessment be required as a condition of development of this site.

A portion of the WAH site between Maple Avenue and the Carroll Avenue bridge sits atop a steep escarpment that is immediately adjacent to the Sligo SVP, Sligo trail, and Sligo Creek. In places, the slope appears to be up to 25 percent, with drops of up to 40 feet between the crest and the streambed. Currently, the area atop the escarpment is terraced and built up by buildings set back from the edge and substantially smaller than those contemplated by the MMPA rezoning. The



soil conditions under the hardscape in general and along the escarpment in particular have not been characterized (no geotechnical investigation) and were likely disturbed by cut and fill operations during the construction of the original hospital buildings. The MMPA for this location (“Site 23”) would allow buildings up to 120 ft in height. Depending on construction materials, this hypothetical building could weigh tens of thousands of tons. There is no evidence to suggest that the escarpment could support these masses. FOSC is concerned that the slope area leading down to the trail and creek is sufficiently unstable that it could result in displacement and slides from construction of large and heavy buildings without adequate stabilization and setback. FOSC recommends that a geotechnical and seismic stability assessment be conducted prior to a final decision of the rezoning of this area.

### **Long Branch Drainage**

In addition to Brashear’s Run, Long Branch is a significant tributary to Sligo Creek and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Water quality and quantity from Long Branch should be included in any complete hydrologic analysis of this MMPA.

Generally speaking, there is a topographic divide running along the WAH/WAU campuses. To the southwest, the topography slopes toward Sligo Creek and to the northeast, it slopes toward Long Branch.

The area between the campus and Long Branch is poorly served by stormwater management features. There are storm drains along Greenwood between Maplewood and Division with additional inlets at Houston and Garland. This drain discharges directly to Long Branch. There is also substantial runoff from the eastern part of the MMPA area—there is a steep slope from about 230 ft. at Greenwood down to about 160 ft. at Long Branch indicating a high potential for runoff and overland discharge. In addition to the attention focused on Brashear’s, the Planning Department should focus on mitigating these discharges to Long Branch.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES AND TREE CANOPY**

### **Montgomery Parks property**

FOSC endorses Montgomery Parks recommendation to formally “dedicate and identify” the wooded slope adjacent to the west edge of the Adventist property as M-NCPPC parkland. FOSC supports efforts by Montgomery Parks to protect and enhance this natural area in Sligo Creek Park. The wooded hillside between the WAH site and Sligo Creek is long neglected and highly degraded, plagued by rampant non-native invasive plants and isolated trees vulnerable to wind damage. In addition, the hospital installed large, black plastic pipes on top of the slope that drain



stormwater directly to the paved trail. In addition to their ineffective management of stormwater, these huge pipes created an ugly sight for park users. Better management of this wooded slope is desperately needed and Parks is the most appropriate entity to take that on.

We further recommend that the MMPA designate and require a vegetated buffer between the top of this fragile slope and all hardscape, such as buildings, roads, and parking areas. Such a buffer should be at least 100 feet wide and be planted with native trees and shrubs to protect the slope from the kind of damage it has suffered over the last few decades.

### **Tree Canopy**

FOSC recommends that the MMPA stipulate maximum retention of the existing 90 native trees currently on the Adventist property west of Flower Ave. (See appendix below for a list.) Many of these trees are large, mature, impressive specimens (up to four feet in diameter) that have long been a treasured feature of the WAU and WAH campuses. The MMPA should document those that fall under the category of “Significant Tree” in the county’s new Forest Conservation Law, defined as “a tree of any species that is 24 inches or greater in diameter at 4.5 feet above the ground,” and any that are considered under the same law as a “Specimen Tree,” defined as “a tree that is a particularly impressive or unusual example of a species due to its size, shape, age, or any other trait that epitomizes the character of the species.”

Fully two-thirds (71) of trees on this property are oaks, which are uniquely advantageous to our wildlife. Oaks rank first among native trees in the eastern U. S. in the variety of caterpillar species they host (more than 500), making them indispensable to birds that depend upon them for nutrition, especially for feeding chicks in the nest.

In addition, nearly all of the 90 native trees on this property qualify as “urban forest trees” (minimum diameter of 7 and 5/8 inches) in Takoma Park’s urban forest regulations. These rules require that any owner of private property in the city (including the Adventist site) must apply for and receive city approval before any such tree can be removed. The MMPA should confirm that no exceptions to these city rules be allowed under development of the site.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions about our written testimony on this project.

Yours,

Elaine Lamirande  
President  
Friends of Sligo Creek  
[president@fosc.org](mailto:president@fosc.org)



Appendix: Native Trees on the Adventist Property West of Flower Avenue

White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) 16  
White Oak (*Quercus alba*) 13  
Southern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata*) 13  
Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) 10  
Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) 7  
Eastern White-cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), 8  
Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*) 4  
Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) 4  
Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*) 2  
American Beech (*Fagus americana*) 2  
Tulip-tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) 2  
Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) 1  
Eastern Red-cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) 1  
Oak spp TBD (*Quercus* spp) 4  
Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*) 1  
Ash sp TBD (*Fraxinus* sp.) 1  
Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) 1

Total = 90



Dear Planning Board,

Please find attached the written testimony from Friends of Sligo Creek (FOSC) regarding the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) for the Adventist properties in Takoma Park and neighboring Silver Spring. We are submitting this in advance of the public hearing on September 14, 2023 and the subsequent deadline for written comments.

Please see our comments in the attached PDF and feel free to reach out to me with any questions about our written testimony on this project.

Thank you,  
Elaine Lamirande  
President  
Friends of Sligo Creek



Greetings,  
Please find below, my feedback on the current MMPA; as requested of local residents.  
Thank you,  
Paul Huebner  
7405-Carroll Avenue,  
Takoma Park, MD.  
20912

As both a past president of the AIA and another noteworthy local resident have said, “the MMPA is neither Minor, nor Master, nor an Amendment.” It is a massive ‘up-zoning’ and permits an insidious form of urban removal. Any approvable plan should rightly follow what residents are trying to create; low and missing-middle income housing on the old hospital site. It is instead, a blunt instrument that lacks any analysis of potential displacement of local residents, any analysis of traffic, stormwater, schooling or the climate or environmental impacts. Noticeably, it neglects *ANY EQUITY* analysis. We asked, but have not received any actual plan or number of housing units per sector; no real plan. Are they unavailable or just not done? The Plan merely acknowledges the addition of some 3,500 new housing units, which equates to some 7,000 NEW residents. Many of us are mystified as to why the Maple Avenue corridor is even in this so-called plan. The current MMPA will not just keep lower and middle-income folks out; it will push-out and displace many of the existing residents, and it will effectively keep them out for the five-year period that any rent controls are eliminated. The MMPA ‘flips the script’ on traditional Montgomery County zoning, which has been traditionally used to ADD residential units to commercial corridors. The current plan allows more and bigger commercial building into this residential area that currently provides the *LOWEST PER UNIT COSTS* of any area in Montgomery County. The allowance for these massive new heights will increase property values and likely require more expensive concrete or steel construction methods; further increasing costs to build. It will also allow the most destructive thing that could occur; tearing down the existing buildings on the Maple Avenue corridor; due to higher land values, increased density and commercial development. This plan will allow by right, any developer to build anything included in the new zoning, unless something is specifically precluded in writing!

1. Why was the Maple Avenue corridor included at all? We seek the absolute protection of ALL current residents in writing!
2. How and will you restrict the MMPA from infringing on the Maple Avenue corridor?
3. What specific protections will be afforded in writing and in the document to protect all current residents, especially those in rent-controlled units, and to protect ALL city rent controls?
4. When & how will you require a True, detailed & comprehensive Environmental analysis?
5. When and how will you require a real and detailed traffic study?
6. When and how will you discuss a realistic stormwater management plan?
7. When will you or staff release an actual detailed plan with housing units and locations?

Some may ask why am I concerned. I lived in rentals my entire life until I bought in Takoma Park. I know of the times so close to the edge and I remember what my mother said, “there but for the grace of God; go I.” Paul Huebner. 7405-Carroll Avenue, Takoma Pk. MD 20912



To: Montgomery County Planning Board  
From: Rick Weiss, 27 Pine Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 ([rickweiss99@gmail.com](mailto:rickweiss99@gmail.com))  
Re: Public Hearing: Sept. 14 - Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment

I write in support of NARROWING consideration of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment to focus SOLELY on the Adventist Hospital and University properties -- and to POSTPONE consideration of proposed zoning changes to Maple Avenue.

This Amendment process was initiated to address the new availability of the Adventist properties for development, which I fully support.

However, reconsideration of zoning for Maple Avenue -- a densely populated stretch of Takoma Park and the County that is filled with important affordable housing -- requires much more analysis and thought. In short, there needs to be a PLAN first, and THEN zoning should be adjusted to encourage and facilitate implementation of that plan.

Jumping into a rezoning process for this already developed area without a new and compatible development plan in place is putting the cart before the horse.

Thank you for your work on the Adventist properties, an area of great potential for the City and County.



Dear Chair and Board,

I am writing with respect to the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment, for which the hearing date is September 14, 2023.

I have been a renter in Takoma Park since 1996, the last 23 years of that in a rent controlled 12-unit building on a mixed single family/multifamily block. I strongly support affordable, rent stabilized rental housing. I live just a few blocks from the former Adventist Hospital site and think redeveloping it into mixed use including apartments is a great idea.

However, I am very concerned about some aspects of the TP Minor Master Plan Amendment. One big concern is the upzoning of Maple Avenue between Philadelphia Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway. This is our highest concentration of apartments in Takoma Park, which is great, because it is also walking distance to both the elementary school and the middle school. Our police station, community center, and library (currently at another location while it undergoes renovations) are also there. What we don't need there are what all the developers these days want to build - luxury high rises. Luxury buildings are just as inaccessible as houses for a lot of people. One apartment building has a little community garden tucked into a corner of its parking lot. There is a field right by Sligo Creek Parkway that is well-used by kids from the apartments as a place to play sports in organized programs. These are the types of amenities we cannot afford to lose to luxury highrises.

The housing stock in Takoma Park is expensive and already financially out of reach for many. Takoma Park is a very unique city in Montgomery County and indeed in Maryland. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else in the state. A big part of its uniqueness is its progressiveness, and that progressiveness depends on diversity, both demographic and financial, in order to be authentic. Our rent controlled apartment units are essential to preserve that diversity. There are already luxury high rise developments in Takoma DC near the Metro station, which is fine - and it is enough for the area. We don't need more luxury apartments. We need affordable apartments.

My other major concern is about the Adventist Hospital site development. This is another site where I would love to see apartments - but not luxury high rises. Not too many high rises at all, due to traffic concerns. I live on the section of Flower Avenue between Carroll Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway, and it is already much busier than you would expect for a neighborhood street, due to the easy access to New Hampshire Avenue from Sligo. The nearby intersection near the Co-op, with Carroll, Philadelphia, Ethan-Allen etc. is already complicated and backed up during rush hour. I know the Planning Board has already had to look at this intersection vis a vis the proposed development on the city parking lot next to the Co-op, and the developer's disregard for the complexity and business and size of that intersection was a disaster threatening the continued existence of our beloved Co-op and creating safety hazards. We already have this example of a developer coming in making promises they are eager to break once they have the paperwork signed. I don't want to see the over development of the Adventist Hospital site creating traffic nightmares throughout our small town and neighborhoods (particularly my street, which has quite a constant traffic flow - four vehicles came up as I typed this sentence).

So, I ask you to consider the character of Takoma Park, the needs of our less-wealthy residents, the importance of maintaining what green space we have, and traffic impacts, and I ask you to rein in this plan to a more suitable scale.

Thank you for your work.

Sincerely,  
Samantha Magrath  
7216 Flower Avenue, Apartment 1  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



The stated goals of the amendment (referred to as the Plan) are all laudable, but the process implementation has been ineffective in its accuracy and coherence, perhaps unavoidably so with the pandemic. The Plan as drafted is simply not credible. Please do not approve this Plan and give it the resources necessary for the project to succeed. It now a promotional piece only.

I will give two examples of characteristic flaws that underscore the imperative of engaging the public of Takoma Park before moving forward.

First, while the Plan's title styles its scope as "minor," it proposes a monumental and historic increase in population of the City of Takoma Park -- by almost one third. This population increase would at the same time dramatically alter the proportion of renters living in the City as compared to homeowners. In terms of governance, renters are potentially the target of coercions by landlords, and they are likely for many reasons to have significantly different commitments to community life from homeowners.

The Plan must inform its readers, including Takoma Park City government decision makers, about the challenges related to overall population growth and changes in property ownership in the community. The Plan's current promotional tone is irresponsible, selling readers visions on amenities that will be provided along Maple Avenue, in an area adjacent to the site in question -- without any serious discussion of what needs to happen with respect to development of the location of the former Adventist Hospital.

Second, in the Plan section on recreational facilities for residents of the former hospital site, page 71 ff is dead wrong in suggesting that the area is well-provided with recreational resources. According to the Takoma Park Open Space Plan, Ward 5 is among the least resourced in the City. The Plan cites the park area along Sligo Creek as a resource but Sligo Creek will not be reasonably available to residents of the neighborhood of the proposed development. Sligo Parkway does, indeed, have a trail along the creek as noted, but it is already heavily used by walkers and bikers and is no place for a family to take a leisurely walk or play. The roadway along the creek has no sidewalk at all. A single recreational park does exist in the general area, Sligo Creek North Neighborhood Park, within a 10 to 15 minute walk by one or a couple adults from the proposed development site, but for a family with children, that walk is frighteningly dangerous already at the current population density, due to the existence in the neighborhood of the narrowest streets in the area, as well as very narrow sidewalks. Flower Ave east of Carroll Ave is a very narrow street, and is the access route to the playground at the creek. It already gets heavy traffic on weekday mornings and afternoons, and also on Saturdays.

The Plan amendment makes a similar misleading claim about accessibility to parkland in the area of the schools uphill from Maple Avenue. This is fantasy. The walk across the Sligo Creek valley to any of the upland grassy areas of those schools is long and hilly. Google Maps shows the distance to be 0.8 miles and a 16 minute walk. That would be the walk time for an adult, not a parent with one or more children.

The superficial treatment of recreational space in the Plan sells a context that does not exist. It will be imperative to include recreational space on the development site of the old hospital. And that should be part of the discussion.



It isn't possible to have confidence in the Plan amendment given a legion of similar unsubstantiated assumptions of this kind. The two Plan shortcomings I have cited could have been remedied had the research behind the Plan included genuine engagement of City residents.

Respectfully,

Stephen Whitney  
16 Crescent Place  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear Chair,

I am a homeowner on Maple Avenue (corner of Edinburgh Lane) adjacent to the Minor Master boundary. I have spent a few hours reviewing the plan and the various presentations available on the website. I look forward to reviewing the climate assessment when it is available. I reserve the option to provide additional comments based on the climate assessment and certainly hope

My favorite part of the plan is the improved roadways with bike lanes and wider sidewalks. I particularly like the Green Promenade concept but I don't understand how that is to be implemented. Is the inclusion of this idea in the plan a formal commitment by the county Planning Board? Is it enforceable?

I also applaud the call for more solar charging stations as part of the mixed use development and the call for an open space on the campus of the Washington Adventist university/hospital. I would also make a stronger case to include an elementary school given the overcrowding at Rolling Terrace ES.

What I object to is the maximum height zoning of 120 feet on that campus. No open space will compensate for the dizzying height that represents. Furthermore, those heights do not seem consistent with responsible development within the ecological proximity to the Sligo Creek waterway. I also do not think that the area can accommodate 3,500 additional units of housing (even if some are ADUs or tiny houses - I do like the idea of more ADUs). Therefore I strongly request that the City of Takoma Park **pass a resolution for the maximum height zoning on the former hospital campus to be NO MORE than 70 feet.**

I do also have questions for the planning board and the City about possible provisions to integrate into the plan to go beyond a 12.5 percent affordable housing unit. The need for more affordable housing within city limits is undeniable when teachers and public servants have to live far up county. It seems the plan could call for more stringent requirements of any large development within its boundary. Why can't the City demand higher percentages or greater assurances of affordability?

Thank you for taking note of these comments.

Anne Pfitzer  
8016 Maple Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



This email is written testimony for Montgomery County Planning Board's Public Hearing on the *Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment* (TPMMA) on **Thursday, September 14 at 6 p.m.**

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board,

I am extremely concerned about the proposed **Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment** for several reasons :

1. The proposed density of the entire Minor Master Plan seems inappropriate for our small city, especially since it is not a transit center. People living in a dense development there would need to get around by car, adding 1000s more cars to our already congested streets. I understand that the plan would allow up to 3,500 UNITS to be built, which would bring a huge increase in the population of the city and would strain the city's resources and create major traffic issues.

2. Extending the **Plan Area to Maple Ave**, opens up the possibility of Takoma Park losing the rent controlled apartments on Maple Ave to developers who could replace the buildings in the Maple Avenue District with luxury high-rises or whatever they want.

3. I am also concerned that extreme upzoning is being proposed in the amendment without environmental and traffic studies having been done.

*I hope that the County Planning Board will pare down the Plan Area and focus only on the site of the old Adventist hospital and the buildings and grounds of Washington Adventist University. I also hope that the Plan will be amended to allow the city to have more control of possible development.*

*Thank you for considering my suggestions.*

*Karen Collins  
7114 Sycamore Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912*



This email is written testimony for Montgomery County Planning Board's Public Hearing on the *Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment* (TPMMA) on **Thursday, September 14 at 6 p.m.**

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*Thank you for considering my suggestions.*

*Karen Collins  
7114 Sycamore Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912*



Dear Montgomery County Planning Board,

My husband and I have lived here in Takoma Park for more than 8 years and our children have been in the local public school system for all of that time. I'm writing to express my support for the existing Minor Master Plan Amendment. New housing in Takoma Park is desperately needed, and a lot of it. High rises are the most efficient way to provide this much needed housing when the geographic footprint is limited. I am an ardent supporter of building low and moderate income housing in desirable towns such as ours. But that requires that we agree to build places for them to love, grow our town and allow it to change (for the better!), and that we truly embrace newcomers. The world is growing and changing and we cannot stay stuck in the past. I have lived in this town long enough to be sincerely disappointed by many long-time residents that proclaim to be supporters of immigrants and low income families ... but only as long as it's not in their backyard and they don't have to be inconvenienced or share their resources.

I would be in support of an amendment that required >12.5% of the new housing stock to be reserved for low or moderate income families, but I am very pragmatic and consider it completely acceptable/necessary for developers to need to make a profit on their investment (unless our government plans to take over the provision of homes with taxpayer money, which I don't see happening).

Best,  
Ashley Ward  
7007 Sycamore Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear County Planning Board,

I am looking forward to affordable housing, at the old hospital site. I understand the need for rezoning on THAT site. Ideally, in order to reduce cost, a height limit of up to 65 feet would be enforced. Beyond that height, the requirement for using steel beams increases the cost of the project, and creates the financial need to make the units luxury apartments instead of affordable housing.

Separate from the hospital site, I have several concerns/questions regarding the other sites proposed in the minor master plan.

1. There is no logic in linking the Maple Avenue corridor to the Washington Adventist site.
2. The Plan would incentivize the teardown of current rent-stabilized, affordable housing on surrounding streets and on Maple Ave, including replacing garden apartments with high-rises.
3. Tearing down existing buildings and constructing new ones actually increases the carbon footprint, and its impact on climate change. It would be more beneficial to our climate to renovate and upgrade the existing buildings.
4. Based on the last rezoning in 2000, The current zoning on Maple Avenue already includes a commercial overlay, so rezoning in the Maple Avenue corridor is not necessary.
5. The Plan would incentivize construction of new market-rate housing, not subject to rent-stabilization for five years. If new buildings are built, they will not be affordable rent control, but luxury apartments.
6. The Plan has no enforceable requirement, or proposed mechanism, for protecting current low-income residents from the resulting displacement.
7. The Plan area is majority people of color, but the Plan includes no equity analysis, nor does the City or County require such an analysis.



8. The Plan does not conform to or align with the equity goals in the current 2000 Master Plan for Takoma Park.
9. The proposed density is inappropriate for development that is not within 1/2 mile of a transit center.
10. The proposed density is way out of scale when compared to recent master plans for Forest Glen, Glenmont, Long Branch, and other neighborhoods.
11. The required climate analysis for the Plan will not be issued until just before the final vote on the Plan by County Council.
12. The Plan does not include any traffic analysis for the effects on local streets including Maple, Carroll, and Flower Avenues.
13. The Plan does not include any analysis of how Sligo Creek would be protected if high-rises are built on the former hospital site.

PLEASE MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PLAN TO ADDRESS THESE CONCERNS.

Thank you!

Mark Brochman  
8305 Roanoke Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Ward 5



Diane Curran and Ferd Hoefner  
22 Montgomery Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

September 5, 2023

Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reedie Drive, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20912

**Re: Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (submitted in advance of the public hearing on September 14, 2023)**

Dear Planning Board Members,

This letter represents our written testimony on the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan. We are 40-year residents of the City of Takoma Park and have followed the deliberations on the pending Minor Master Plan closely.

We have many concerns with the proposed amendment related to affordable housing, racial equity, climate change, stormwater management, sustainable transportation, school capacity, and city finances. As discussed below, we think those issues should be addressed in various forums. We believe however, that they should be discussed separately from the Minor Master Plan and the central issue that motivated the Minor Master Plan in the first place: the appropriate rezoning of the former hospital site to guide the work and decision-making of the university and to establish the basic requirements for any additional university or non-university development at that site. We urge you to keep to the basics and tackle this immediate issue rather than venturing off into other important, but not directly related issues.

We concur with the proposal to change the current single family housing zoning for the university/hospital site to allow uses suitable to university purposes (*i.e.*, dorms, classrooms, parking, green space, and other campus amenities). In addition, it is important for the Minor Master Plan to establish zoning requirements for the portion of the property that may not ultimately be used by the university for educational purposes. We urge you to zone the area for more dense residential uses in addition perhaps to compatible small scale commercial uses. It is imperative to ensure that the zoning for the area will be primarily residential with a high degree of affordability and a high percentage of affordable units. As you know, zoning codes and related housing programs for affordability and affordable units must be written carefully to ensure that they are effective and long-lasting. This should be a central focus of the Minor Master Plan.

**We object strenuously, however, to the proposed rezoning to a maximum height of 120 feet. This is completely out of character with the surrounding college and surrounding neighborhoods. The area near the university is not an urban center and should not be turned into one. It is also not a downtown area that might normally be considered for CR zoning. Nonetheless, it could potentially be a small neighborhood center and we urge you to treat it as such, with a height restriction of not greater than 65 feet.**



In addition to reducing the permissible height of buildings, we urge you to direct staff to make additional changes to the plan with respect to the hospital-university site to ensure maximum protection for the Sligo Creek Watershed. Balanced as this property is directly on top of the high banks of the creek, this should be of paramount concern.

We trust the university will want to retain a good deal of the tree-lined green space they currently enjoy on their campus, but whatever the Minor Master Plan can do to encourage that would also be most welcome.

We urge you to focus your attention on these matters, and not to succumb to mission creep. In this regard, we are concerned that significant portions of the Minor Master Plan amount to unproductive wishful thinking about a wide variety of topics that are not directly related to hospital site zoning considerations, many of which would require substantial new pots of public funding that does not exist currently. We encourage the City to pursue those important issues and potential funding sources, and to provide the greatest possible level of community participation, but to separate that process from the evaluation of the Minor Master Plan.

We would note that these issues have sparked great debate within the City and within the two wards most immediately impacted, as well they should. This community conversation concerning the future of the Maple Avenue corridor, the Erie Center, and related areas should continue, but should continue outside the scope of the current Minor Master Plan. Greater levels of community engagement and consensus building, including much greater levels of participation by the residents of the buildings included within the proposed plan boundaries, are needed to even begin to do justice to the goals of achieving a significant degree of community consensus and advancing racial equity.

In sum, we urge you to not approve the current draft Minor Master Plan. Instead, we urge you to instruct staff to come back to you with a narrowly tailored plan that deals directly with the issue that started this whole process – how to change the zoning of the hospital-university site now that the hospital has closed. We further urge you to instruct staff to come back with a height restriction of not greater than 65 feet, strong affordable housing parameters, and with further upgrades to stormwater management and watershed protection as part of any new development at the hospital/university site.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,



Diane Curran



Ferd Hoefner



Attached please find our letter to the Planning Board containing our views and recommendations on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. Please accept this letter as our written testimony for your public hearing on September 14.

Sincerely,

Diane Curran and Ferd Hoefner  
22 Montgomery Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
[fhoefner@gmail.com](mailto:fhoefner@gmail.com)  
301 385 6467



To whom it may concern,

Please consider my following concerns about the Minor Master Plan for Takoma Park:

1. Require (not simply recommend) a significant % of any new residential units be designated as affordable housing.
2. Require (not simply recommend) either new or renovated construction to comply with specific energy efficiency and carbon footprint reductions in response to climate change.
3. Require (not simply recommend) design and construction in any development to implement watershed conservation practices and minimize reduction in tree canopy to reduce erosion and run off during and after construction is completed.
4. Require (not simply recommend) a transportation plan that would minimize the use of personal cars and increase public transportation options.

Thank you,

*Kolya Braun-Greiner, MDiv*

7603 Central Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912

Home: 301-920-0226, Cell: 301-909-8943

*The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time. --Terry Tempest Williams*



Thank you for taking time to read my comments and concerns about the proposed expansion of the former Washington Adventist Hospital property site. I have been a Takoma Park resident at 7407 Maple Ave since the early 1980's. While there is of course a need for more housing in Montgomery County, the current proposal is totally inappropriate in size and height and would essentially eliminate the rich cultural and ethnic diversity, displace many current residents and promote a white mono-culture while removing affordable housing which is so badly needed. I strongly urge the Planning Board to reject the upzoning of this space and to remove Maple Avenue from the Plan boundaries.

Thank you for your time and care,  
Sincerely,  
Susan Page  
7407 Maple Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

--


Susan Page  
[susan.tsultrim@gmail.com](mailto:susan.tsultrim@gmail.com)



Hello,

I wanted to express my concern about the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan as well as the process of reaching this current point. Before that, I want to commend Cara Honzak on her efforts to keep the Ward Five residents aware of this plan and her willingness to meet with many of them. I appreciate her focus on the Minor Master Plan, the impact this will have on our community and setting up a number of meetings to address resident's concerns.

However, I do have concerns about the process by which this current zoning proposal was established. While there was a meeting in which the Planning Board set up to meet with Takoma Park residents to discuss some of the various features of this plan including land use, transportation, historic preservation, proposed density of new construction, sustainability, open space, etc, the residents did not get to have a say on the scope of the minor master plan. Instead, we were presented with the plan boundaries as a fixed entity. There was no discussion of why this area to be rezoned was included in the plan. It was my understanding that the Adventist Hospital site was no longer being used as a hospital. Therefore, I thought the focus of the meeting was to try to brainstorm about potential new uses for this existing hospital site and to get a sense of what the surrounding community thought. I was confused and quite surprised by the included in the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan. Certainly the area of the hospital, the adjoining Adventist University site and the immediate surrounding area of the Hospital and the School would make sense. What made no sense to me was that nothing in Ward 2 was addressed in the plan. How could an residential area right across Carroll Avenue not be considered in the planning of the Hospital envisioning and reuse? Makes no sense. Certainly Ward 2 would be affected and to say it wouldn't be affected is ill advised and negligent of the MontCo Planners part. While continuing to look at the boundaries of the site, it extends well beyond the area of the site in question west along Maple Avenue. The boundary for some reason, unknown to me, extends to Philadelphia Ave. In looking at the slide below, it is clear that there are two or three types of building within the MMP boundary. First, the hospital is clearly seen by the large structures to the east of Sligo Creek. Second, is the University Buildings and Church along Flower Ave and Maplewood Ave. And the third type of building included in this study are low rise and high rise apartments. Now, what do these residential apartments have in common with the institutional/hospital/office buildings on the other side of Sligo Creek? Perhaps because they are multi level apartments, there are some similarities in terms of density. But why does the boundary extend so far to the east? Why not extend the boundary to Long Branch Creek, after all, creeks, rivers historically have served as natural boundaries. Or at least to the boundary of Takoma Park.

 Graphical user interface, application, Word Description automatically generated

The common factor of many of the buildings west of the creek along Maple Ave are that they are affordable to a population with lower incomes. Including those affordable housing apartments raises a red flag immediately. It raises concerns that the county is targeting those apartments for some reason, presumably either to add additional housing, by altering some to the existing buildings or to add more high rise structures. It is my understanding that somehow 150 feet was the height that the planning board was appropriate for this corridor. Not sure how that came to be, because in the visioning session, I don't believe that any of the residents of Ward 5 were in favor of extending the height limit to fifteen stories. I imagine that allowing for taller buildings would add new dwelling units to the area, therefore providing greater tax residents for TKPK. I do not understand why the urge to building taller is desirable to many architects and planners.



The current height is adequate in my view. Greater height is typically more desirable for building developers – it makes their profit margin greater – but I am not sure who else benefits from this zoning change. Certainly the existing residents of affordable housing will not be benefitting. They will be relocated, but not necessarily returned to the apartments that are build to the allowable zoning. The rents will be higher. Affordable housing will become less available, not more available.

The same is the case for the increased height of buildings along Flower and Maplewood to 70 feet. Again not sure how that came to be, because in the visioning session, I don't believe that any of the residents of Ward 5 were in favor of extending the height limit to seven stories. Each of these height increases represent a lack of sensitivity the scale of the existing surrounding building stock in this residential neighborhood. It certainly illustrates that the Planners have a clear misunderstanding the character of the neighborhood, and I believe ignores what the current residents envision. As an architect, personally, I am not against building or developing Takoma Park. I just think that this existing conclusions reached in the TKPK MMP unfortunately are half baked and a broad brush effort. More detail and definition is necessary for the MMP to be a useful, forward thinking and community centered document. Right now as it stands, the plan does not properly express the unique character of Ward 5 (or Ward 2) in TKPK.

I will not go into the other issues that the plan ignores in order to be successful such as the impact this will have upon the existing infrastructure – I believe that a traffic study needs to be carried out based up full potential of growth as result of the zoning changes. It should be done now. Will the existing 2 lane roads that are currently main roadways in Takoma Park able to handle the additional vehicular needs, parking needs, etc.

The environmental impacts also have been ignored. They should be done – now. Is there any Historic Preservation overlay zone? Will existing buildings be recycled or reused or will they be demolished because a developer things it is the easier thing to do? Is that sustainable? Is that making the best use of our resources. Waiting for a developer to propose a project in this area before traffic and parking and open space studies are done is a recipe for disaster. I am not against the developer making a profit – but I would prefer that Planning Board outline specific regulations that are done for the sake of the community and for smart growth, not for the developer to have free reign and maximize their profits.

In closing, I am strongly against the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan. It is not ready be passed. I urge my council member, Cara Honzak to hear my voice and the many other voices in Ward 5 that have real objections to the Minor Master Plan. Vote against the existing Minor Master Plan!

Respectfully



**Martin Shore**

Takoma Park Ward 5 resident



Bike and transit infrastructure are key to the success of any change in zoning, as without these, many of the new residents will drive - increasing traffic and not realizing any of the potential gains from denser housing. **The recommended protected bike lanes on Maple Ave from Long Branch all the way to Philadelphia Ave are necessary before an increase in housing happens.** Striped but not separated lanes would not be sufficient to protect bikers and are frequently blocked by double-parked cars, delivery trucks, and other vehicles whose drivers were focused on not blocking vehicle traffic. Protected lanes, on the other hand, offer residents in the proposed Flower Ave district safe access to the Red Line station via bike, scooter, etc.

**Bike infrastructure should further be extended to the Langley Park transit center.** Safe access to multiple transit options will give residents the option to forgo car ownership.

Transit improvements would presumably need to reflect what developers propose to build. The MMPA should list concrete steps that will be taken as part of the development process to ensure easy access from the development site to the Takoma (or other) Red line station and the Langley transit center.

#### **Zoning changes in the Flower Ave district:**

- The Minor Master Plan Amendment revisions have the potential to create tall buildings amid a sea of parking lots, given their combination of FAR and building height. A lower maximum building height of 70 feet, dropping to 50 feet along Flower Ave, combined with the same FAR, would be preferable, as it would preserve the ability to provide new housing while reducing the amount of blank space at ground level. If developers want to propose higher buildings with a smaller footprint, they could apply for variances and the community could separately consider the impact the proposal would have.

#### **Zoning changes in the Municipal District:**

- Site 1 and Site 2 are not currently in a position to be redeveloped, so zoning changes for these sites should not be included in the Minor Master Plan Amendment. If they become available for redevelopment in the future (e.g., if PBES moves to a new location), a new zoning review process should commence so that the city can reassess its needs at that time.

- I agree with the remaining zoning recommendations. Single-family lot minimum sizes are generally too high in Takoma Park.

#### **Zoning changes on Maple Ave:**

- I agree that the Maple Ave sites should, wherever practical, be rezoned from R to CRT. There should be much more room for businesses to open within this population-dense area of Takoma Park.



My address is:  
7316 Flower Ave  
Takoma Park MD 20912



1. Taking a broad stroke in upzoning maple ave is unconscionable. I would like know the reasoning behind doing this instead of taking a systematic look at all the buildings and ensuring that there is no incentive to tear down the lower buildings, displacing the current low income residents, building a high rise that would not be able to offer all the current residents an affordable place to live.
2. Remove Maple Ave from current plan and focus on the Hospital site.
3. Restrict zoning on the Hospital site to 5 or 6 stories keeping building costs down.
4. We need to see the Climate change report and an equity statement.

Karen Elrich

8110 Roanoke Ave

Takoma Park, MD 20912





My name is Barbara Correia and my husband (Carlos) and I have a house in ward 5 off of Maplewood Avenue. My daughter and her family live there now and we all have concerns for the Minor Master Plan Amendment. First of all this summer was the first I had heard about this and only because my council member for ward 5 came to visit my daughter to let her know about a meeting in July regarding the new zoning that is part of the MMPA. Listed below are the concerns we have for the Minor Master Plan Amendment.

- Green space: by adding the tall high rises, 70 ft and 120 ft, we are losing green space. The green space specifically for Maple Ave would change from 60% to 45%. Most of the green space from the campus of WAU and the old WAH would be gone due to housing and parking. Losing green space will also change the climate of the City of Takoma Park. Less trees and more buildings/asphalt will mean a hotter climate.
- Is the city's infrastructure capable of handling the amount of growth that this plan would allow-40% growth in population? This would include not only the utilities (gas, electric, water, and sewer), but the fire and police departments. The city will also need to increase grocery stores for the increased population.
- Adding extra apartments (40% increase of people) will affect the traffic, wear and tear on the roads, (Flower Ave is a very narrow road), increase the amount of public transportation, a larger police force and a 2nd or larger fire department
- Public schools: the local public schools-elementary, middle, and high school (Blair) are already overcrowded with too many students. (Blair has 2 trailers.) With a 40% increase in population, where will the new families send their children to school?
- With the addition of high rise apartments, where will the new occupants park?
- Displacement of citizens of Maple Ave apartments: some of the citizens have lived in Takoma Park for many years. Where will these citizens (whether new to TP or been here for many years) go to live while their homes are torn down? Some will become homeless. Will they have a guarantee of a place in the new apartment building? Will they be able to afford the new apartments?
- The 2 apartment buildings on Maple Ave are below the tree tops and built in the city at the lowest point. Tall high rises (50-70 ft and 120 ft) built by ward 5 (ball field of WAU) and the WAH property will be well over the treetops blocking the skyline view. These tall buildings will be in the backyards of houses in the neighborhood which will also block the sun and view.
- With the increased population will come increased crime which is a safety issue. Many of the residents of TP walk as their mode of transportation or walk to public transportation. Families walking their pets and families walking in the neighborhood with their children (kids on bikes or strollers) will have a concern for their own safety.
- Yes, we need growth but not to the extent that tall high rise apts will provide. Instead look into 2-4 story apartment buildings or Garden type apts which will increase population, but not drastically change the look of Takoma Park



- Takoma Park has a charm and character unique to itself. Tall high rise apts will change the look and feel, making it a New York City look. Lower all the zoning heights to keep the look and feel the same.
- Property values might decrease instead of increase since new buyers might not want to buy a single family home with a high rise in its backyard. Plus the already established neighbors will lose privacy with tall high rise apts in their neighborhood.
- Has a study been done to see how many empty apartments the City of Takoma Park has? Would it make sense to build more apartments if there are some available?



Dear Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board,

I am writing in support of the Minor Master Plan that has been developed for the site of the former Washington Adventist Hospital and adjacent areas in Takoma Park. I think that requiring a developer to present a plan for the whole site makes a lot of sense, so the development is cohesive.

I would like this site to be considered for a new elementary school for the Takoma Park area as I understand that the Takoma Park area schools are bulging at the seams. This is the last substantial area that is available for development and passing up the opportunity to use it for much needed school space seems a no-brainer. I understand that MCPS does not think that they have money to purchase the site, but I would hope that the Planning Board, Council Council and MCPS can work together to make this happen.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter for Takoma Park residents.

Sally Taber  
703 Auburn Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



To whom it may concern:

My husband Dennis Flynn and I (Amber Flynn) are committed to tackling the issue of vacant property on the Adventist University Medical Campus in the MMPA, as this issue affects the community we are part of. We believe that it is important to take ownership of the issue in our own backyard and to be a part of the solution. As we are both residents (7908 Garland Ave) and business owners (7610 Carroll Ave Suite 310) in Ward 5, we feel that it is our responsibility to take action in order to improve the quality of life for our neighbors.

Question:

How will the parking situation be addressed in the context of the Minor Master Plan Amendment for the vacant property on the Washington Adventist University Medical Campus? Currently, the parking lot is unregulated, leading to no revenue or parking fees being collected from community use. Are there considerations for the Washington Adventist Professional Medical Business building owners to potentially acquire the land currently under lease? Can you provide insights into the process and implications of the building owners purchasing the land where the parking lot is situated? Additionally, how are the Washington Adventist Professional Medical Business building owners actively engaged (or engaged) in discussions regarding the plans for the hospital campus, especially in light of the potential impact on our building?

Amber Flynn M.A., LCPC [amberflynn.lcpc@gmail.com](mailto:amberflynn.lcpc@gmail.com)

7610 Carroll Ave Suite 310

Takoma Park, MD 20912

7908 Garland Ave

Takoma Park, MD 20912



To the Montgomery County Planning Board,

We own the home at 905 Maplewood Avenue and submit the following as our written testimony for the Public Hearing on September 14, 2023, regarding the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA). We would like to begin by expressing our support for the MMPA's laudable goals of building new affordable housing units, supporting alternatives to driving, and creating opportunities for new retail. That said, we have three significant concerns about the MMPA that we believe are surmountable and would like to see addressed. Before detailing those concerns, we would like to establish some important context.

If the MMPA is approved, we will have an enormous stake in Montgomery County's active role in the MMPA's implementation, for two reasons. First, our property directly adjoins the northeast boundary of the Plan Area, and we will be highly impacted by any new developments on Flower and Greenwood avenues. Second, the City of Takoma Park does not have an incentive to consider this impact, because our home is located in unincorporated Montgomery County (like many other homes in our neighborhood). So, our sole recourse is the County. We hope that the County, as a general practice going forward, will pay special attention to residents like us who live in these impacted unincorporated areas.

One concern we have is traffic. The MMPA proposes that a large swath of Flower and Greenwood avenues be rezoned to allow for higher-density residential developments, which could lead to increased vehicular traffic. We have existing problems with traffic in our neighborhood (e.g., speeding cars coupled with a lack of sidewalks), which we and a large group of neighbors have previously called the County's attention to. We would like to see the County not only take proactive steps to prevent these problems from becoming worse, but also use the MMPA as an opportunity to reduce the safety-related problems that already exist. Some actions we would like to see:

- Require that any proposed large residential development (e.g., 5+ stories) automatically trigger a traffic study for any nearby streets, and require the study to consider both current and projected traffic.
- Require that traffic calming measures be automatically implemented if certain development thresholds are reached.
- Begin to introduce traffic calming measures in anticipation of—not just in response to—new development. We are particularly interested in traffic calming on Greenwood Avenue and Maplewood Avenue (between Greenwood and Garland avenues).

Another concern we have is stormwater. This is a perennial problem that already affects homes on Maplewood and Garland avenues, largely as a result of impermeable surfaces on Greenwood Avenue. New development in the Plan Area could make this better or worse. Some actions we would like to see:

- Require any new projects to obtain a Montgomery County stormwater management permit.
- When considering potential development of Greenwood Avenue properties, recognize the existing stormwater problem that the Greenwood Avenue parking lot poses to nearby residences, and act accordingly. Prioritize the parking lot for stormwater-conscious development. If development is proposed for the parking lot, then require the developer to improve upon current stormwater management, not just maintain the status quo.

Finally, we have questions about the Promenade. One of the access points to the Promenade is in front of our house. Will development of the Promenade be required to go through the usual steps for developing land in Montgomery County? Has the County considered how this might increase demand for parking on our stretch of Maplewood Avenue? Some actions we would like to see:

- Release details about how a proposed Promenade project would be approved.
- Implement permit parking for residential streets where Promenade access points are located—particularly the stretch of Maplewood Avenue between Greenwood and Garland.



We know that the MMPA is a working draft, and we look forward to seeing how the County incorporates public feedback into the final draft. Thank you for considering the concerns and potential solutions we mentioned above.

Sincerely,

Jason and Anna Rodriguez Masi  
905 Maplewood Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



# **Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) (proposed by County planning staff)**

## **General public comments before the Takoma Park City Council**

The following is a compilation of the general public comments delivered to the Takoma Park City Council at its meeting on September 6, 2013, in person and virtually. This is the **FINAL VERSION** of this compilation, and was prepared on Monday, September 11, 2023, by Wayne Sherwood. It includes only comments from people who urged the Takoma Park City Council to reject the proposed MMPA in its present form, and called for changes.

Paul Huebner

Good Evening. Paul Huebner. Ward 3

The current MMPA is a massive ‘upzoning’ and permits an insidious form of urban removal. Any approvable plan should follow what residents are trying to create; low and missing-middle income housing on the old hospital site. This plan is instead, a blunt instrument that lacks any analysis of the potential displacement of local residents or the impacts on traffic, stormwater, schools or the environment.

Most noticeably, it neglects *ANY EQUITY* analysis and we have not received any actual plan or number of housing units per sector. The Plan merely acknowledges the addition of some 3,500 new housing units, which equates to some 7,000 NEW residents.

Many of us are mystified as to why the Maple Avenue corridor is even in the MMPA. The current MMPA will not just keep lower and middle-income folks out; it will push-out and displace many of the existing residents. The MMPA ‘flips the script’ on Montgomery County zoning, which has been traditionally used to add RESIDENTIAL units to commercial corridors. The current plan allows for more and bigger commercial building added into a residential area that provides the *LOWEST PER UNIT COSTS* of any housing in Montgomery County. The allowance



for these massive new heights will increase property values and likely require more expensive concrete or steel construction methods; further increasing costs to build. It will also allow the most destructive thing that could possibly occur; tearing down the existing buildings on the Maple Avenue corridor. This plan will allow by right, any developer to build anything included in the new zoning, unless something is specifically precluded in writing!

1. Why was the Maple Avenue corridor included at all? We seek the absolute protection of ALL current residents in writing!
2. How and will you restrict the MMPA from infringing on the Maple Avenue corridor?
3. What specific protections will be afforded in writing to protect all current residents, especially those in rent-controlled units, and to protect ALL city rent controls?
4. When & how will you require a true, detailed & comprehensive environmental analysis?
5. When and how will you require a real and detailed traffic study?
6. When and how will you discuss a realistic stormwater management plan?
7. When will they release a detailed plan with housing units and locations?

Many people say they love living in Takoma Park on Maple Avenue because it is a safe, affordable & friendly community.

Protect their homes!!

Follow-up email by Paul Huebner on the “morning after”

Good Morning Mayor & Council members,

I attach below my public comments from last evening, 9/6/23, for your information & consideration.

I respectfully request that you think deeply & wisely about the many, many thoughtful comments from so many residents last night.



This issue is one that will have generational effects on our community & neighbors. As has been the historical case, those most affected will likely be the last considered and those most dramatically affected.

Please remember those of us who have the greatest need and the voice least heard. That is why you & we who would take responsibility, need to do the right thing.

We rely on you to accept the responsibility which you have so graciously accepted. As a guy who worked for developers, I think I know what so many will do; just as Hedge Fund managers will consider the needs & goals of their 'investors' first.

This Plan will unleash the forces of 'run-amuck' capitalism on an existing, *livable community*. Those forces will do what 'zoning' ordinances were designed to do; *take the land & maximize profits as a 'bottom line'*.

I think it is your job to represent what the residents & community want and to answer to a higher order of ethics; the ones you espoused as you campaigned for office.

For those to whom much is given, much is asked.  
WE are asking now, " Protect the vulnerable from the forces of displacement".

Thank you for ALL you are doing.  
Be Well,  
Paul Huebner

Karen Elrich

I was born, raised and educated in a racist society. When I went to high school here in Maryland the black kids were bused past my high school to go to the black school. When my school was forced by the feds to integrate we spent our school years with cops in the halls, our doors locked, lockers checked, night games



cancelled, and black kids protesting because there was not one black teacher in the school.

Racism was there then and it is still here in us, around us and through us. Racism in the United States includes all people of color.

As a white person, I question my feelings, thoughts and actions on an ongoing basis to make sure that those deeply sown seeds of racism are not subconsciously guiding my actions. This is me dealing with my individual racism.

I am here today to talk about our institutional racism. Let me define it so we are all on the same page.

institutional racism refers to the policies, practices, and procedures within institutions, including government bodies, that perpetuate racial disparities and discrimination, often unintentionally.

If this Minor Master plan had been evaluated to see if institutional racism was at play, I believe the plan would have failed miserably when it was applied especially as it relates to Maple Avenue.

In the case of upzoning, it is vital to recognize that seemingly neutral policies can have disproportionately negative effects on marginalized communities, and opens the door to displacement of low income peoples and allow the possibility of developers creating new higher priced apartments. It allows for increased density in one of our most dense neighborhoods which is also where many of our low income people of color live.

I'm sad. I'm confused. I'm outraged

I see the attempt the city is making to address this plan. But to ask the planning board to “**consider ways to address**” this plan?

**Consider?!** we should be demanding that this plan be sent back and put through the equity lens and assuring our Maple avenue residents that we have their backs. Tell them that the work we have done as a city in creating rent stabilization will be strengthened by any plan that we put in place. Do not leave that door



open to market forces. Historically it has ruined many low income neighborhoods of people of color.

Susan Katz Miller

Good Evening, Sue Miller, Ward 3.

So, we are faced with three persistent questions.

***First, why was Maple Avenue added to the hospital site rezoning plan?*** One explanation given was that the Planning Board doesn't like to rezone just one property. But then we learned that it has actually rezoned for a ***single building*** before. Another explanation was that the Plan Amendment is a chance to do something about the aging buildings on Maple. Unfortunately, the way that upzoning would fix that problem, would be to put economic pressure on owners of rent-stabilized buildings to tear them down. So upzoning could remove the aging buildings, but also remove those residents. And keep in mind that only about half of the residents on Maple seem to be protected by covenants, and we're still waiting for a list of what year each of those covenants expires.

***Second, why are many residents of Maple just hearing about this now?*** County outreach in the pandemic was deeply flawed. It did not stress the actual zoning changes, the risk to affordable housing, and the risk to the open and green spaces on Maple. The flaws in the Plan are a direct result of not getting input from those most impacted. In the last few weeks, there ***has*** been a real effort by residents and City Council to try to make up for the outreach failure. But it is disturbing to hear paternalistic statements about the importance of not scaring Maple residents. The residents who rely on affordable housing are ***more*** capable of understanding what is at stake here, than those of us who are owners or market-rate renters. Not publicizing the facts about this upzoning early on was simply wrong. And now that the word is out, it is time to listen to the voices of those most at risk.

***And third, why is the County asking Maple Avenue to shoulder the burden of additional density?*** While the hospital site is in the ½ mile walkshed of ***future***



Purple Line stations, most of Maple is *not*. The quality of life on Maple is directly tied to the open space, sky, trees, and, yes, parking, that is available. It is deeply unsettling when people in single-family houses tell people in high-rises they need to absorb more density. The County may want 10,000 new housing units, but putting a third of them in this neighborhood is not equitable if Black and Brown residents get displaced. Maple would appear to be the densest corridor of affordable housing *in* the County. Takoma is doing its share, and this housing is what makes us Takoma. For many of us, the socioeconomic and racial diversity that Maple Avenue brings to the City is the entire point of living here. So tonight, the only equitable choices are to either **restrict** the plan to the Adventist properties, or **reduce** the heights and density in order to first do no harm on Maple Avenue. Thank you.

#### Naomi Edelson – Ward Five – wildlife biologist

I'm Naomi Edelson. I live in Ward Five. I'm very grateful that we have a great Councilmember Cara Honzak, and I've gotten to work with Terry Seamens distributing the food to the apartments on Maple Ave, he's tremendous, and Randy Gibson I know as a great environmentalist from my professional work.

I'm a wildlife biologist, and I've lived in Takoma Park since 2010. We love it. It's changed our lives moving here. I absolutely love living in Takoma Park with my family.

I'm a block from the hospital and in fact my house is being considered as part of the rezoning.

So I do want to talk a little, not just about Maple Avenue, but about the whole hospital redevelopment. I do believe it should be developed. I think that makes sense. But I am concerned about Sligo Creek, which is the heart of Takoma Park. And while the County manages the park and creek, it is our responsibility as Takoma Park residents as to what ends up flowing into that water from stormwater runoff. The creek is already very degraded. Kids are playing in there. That's completely inappropriate. The dogs are drinking the water. It's not safe for them to be doing that. It's a health hazard, and we have to do our part. We're the dirtiest part of Sligo Creek. I've learned that from my work as a



wildlife biologist getting people to reduce their stormwater runoff. We need to be helping the creek rather than letting more stormwater runoff going in there through more development.

I'm concerned about the dramatic change in character for the city.

I'm concerned about the height, the 150 foot buildings. I understand that now those are only happening right at METRO stops, according to Marc Elrich (County Ex). They're not happening in other places.

I think that the infusion of three to five thousand more people from 17,000 will drastically change the city, and we don't have the infrastructure built to handle it.

I understand the past hospital study, when I didn't live here, that they would never be able to handle it, because of the two lane road on Flower Avenue. Unless you were able to take away the homes along Flower, we can't handle that. And there is not a transportation plan in this plan. Why zone it if you cannot handle it?

And I'm also concerned about the issue of the environmental impact of climate hasn't been evaluated – we will have more stormwater in an era of climate change– agreeing to something without knowing – I think it's the worst case scenario to say it's OK, but then we'll do more work later and find out (via permitting).

You're setting yourself up for another fight, like the Junction. It's not good for our community.

Why would we want 150 foot housing? I just don't see that as being appropriate in this place. It's appropriate, maybe, right by the Purple Line. And I think it's more than half a mile from my house to the Purple Line. I'm not sure. I might be wrong. I thought it was more than that so not truly walkable.

So those are the things I want to say. I'm very concerned, and I think that we should separate the two pieces out from Flower and Maple, but I'm really also concerned about what could be happening at the hospital alone, and I just think we have to be considering that right now, not just thinking about the other parts.



Thank you.

Denise Jones

Hi, I'm Denise Jones. I live on Maple Avenue in Ward Five.

I am deeply disturbed by the Minor Master Plan as proposed, especially as it runs rough-shod over Maple Avenue residents.

We have heard that we want smart environmentally sound development on the old hospital land, with fewer feet than is currently proposed.

But overall, I want to talk about Maple Avenue. This is a neighborhood, a neighborhood to a great many families, several of whom are here tonight.

We don't want to live in brick city, surrounded by tall high-rises. We like to see the sun in the morning, sunsets at night. We like to see the squirrels jump around in the trees. I like to see the pileated woodpecker that comes by every now and again.

That will be gone with upzoning and 150 foot high-rises.

Especially since you our city council has decided that we need or deserve a reduction in tree canopy, a reduction from 60 percent, as is the city standard, to 40 percent for Maple Avenue. If anyone needed more benefits from the trees, it's the apartment dwellers, not the single family home dwellers.

As Takoma Park is only 2.4 square miles, and there is a grocery store in each direction up to a mile away or much closer, as well as convenience stores and other services, it begs the question why you are pushing for big development that we didn't ask for.

If you wanted to help the current homeowners with their renovations, which is what you keep saying about Maple Avenue, then do that. Do that. You don't need to roll Maple Avenue into this plan with the hospital redevelopment.



But the answer lies in the fact that you are making the current apartment dwellers bear the burden of increased density in this town for the sake of the County – potentially an additional 3,500 units – because you want the tax money from wealthier – and I'll say it – white new residents. That you won't put the brakes on this racist plan that you know unequivocally is urban displacement.

That is the message, loud and clear!

The diversity that you held up is no longer desired in the face of putting out the welcoming mat for the wealthy and white newcomers who are sure to come with new construction.

There is nothing in this proposal that protects our ability to remain in our homes, and you won't talk straight about our questions. None of you. Even my council member.

And don't think we don't see the Maple Avenue beautification project as your foray into preparing for the wealthier. We didn't ask for that either, and I sat in on many of these meetings early on.

You don't care. It seems like you don't want to see us any more. We're in the way of your plan for a whole new set of people.

We see you, and don't trust you.

You're not elected to just listen to the single-family homeowners. Each one of you is responsible for the whole town.

Mark Brotman (or Brockman -- sp?) -- Ward Five

My name is Mark Brotman, and I'm in Ward Five.



I am looking forward to affordable housing at the old hospital site. I understand the need for rezoning that site. Ideally a height limit of 65 feet would be enforced. Beyond that height, the financial need increases, creating the need to make those units luxury units instead of affordable housing.

Separate from the hospital site, I have several concerns regarding the other sites proposed in this Plan.

There is no logic in linking the Maple Avenue Corridor to the Washington Adventist site. The MMPA would incentivize the tear-down of current affordable housing on surrounding streets and on Maple Avenue, including replacing garden apartments with high-rises.

Tearing down existing buildings and constructing new ones actually increases the carbon footprint and its impact on climate change.

It would be more beneficial to renovate and upgrade the existing buildings.

Based on the last rezoning in 2000, the current zoning on Maple Avenue already includes a commercial overlay allowing for additional commercial development.

This proposed MMPA would incentivize construction of new market-rate housing not subject to rent stabilization for five years.

The proposed MMPA has no enforceable requirement for protecting current low-income residents from the resulting displacement.

The Plan area is majority people of color, but the Plan includes no equity analysis, nor does the city or county require such analysis. The Plan does not conform or align with the equity goals in the current 2000 Master Plan for Takoma Park.

The proposed density is way out of scale when compared with recent Master Plans for Forest Glen, Glenmont, and Long Branch.

We have not been provided with a traffic analysis for the effects on local streets, or the required climate analysis, or any analysis of how Sligo Creek would be protected if high-rises are built on the former hospital site.



It would be right and reasonable to allow the community to weigh in on this information before any decision is made.

I request that the City Council write a Resolution requesting the County Planning Board to address these concerns.

Thank you for your time.

Jessica Landman

Good evening. I am Jessica Landman, Ward One.

I am here to urge you to limit the scope of the minor master plan amendments to focus on the old hospital site only.

Trying to do more right now creates unacceptable fiscal and affordable housing risks.

Consider that, if the proposed minor master plan does get adopted as proposed, a very significant amount of new development could begin. **Each** proposed site plan triggers **major** responsibilities for input and analysis – and potential controversy – for our overworked City staff and for you.

Today we have **acting staff** who are **new to the community** in the all-important **City Manager** and **Deputy City Manager** positions. These hard-working people, hired for **other** roles, are now diverted to handle these key positions, which require much time and specialized expertise.

The HR leadership told the Council recently that it routinely takes Takoma Park **six months to fill any major posted vacancy. It is apparent that we will not be** fully staffed with a city manager, a deputy, or economic development, housing and public works heads fully able to focus on their roles – even to handle our **current** projects – for the foreseeable future.)



And **we already have two major construction projects pending**. One of them already faces nearly inevitable cost overruns, with its contingency fund of half a million dollars nearly gone before even breaking ground.

Therefore, our thinly-spread staff, who will not have backup for a long time to come, **can anticipate being overstretched for the foreseeable future with those development projects**. And, given our budget woes, we cannot **hire more staff to help oversee City input into new development proposals**.

There is a substantial, **foreseeable** risk, that our residents' interests in affordable housing and improved stormwater management, among other issues, **would not be protected**, because we will not have the staff or resources to ensure that our much-vaunted stricter-than-MoCo standards are being upheld, if by-right 15 story building proposals start coming fast and furious along Maple Ave.

The larger the area in which you loosen the zoning, and the wider the loopholes you create, the more we will lose the ability to control the fate of Takoma Park and protect the environmental and affordability values that you often cite.

**With our current lack of permanent senior City staff** and our budget and staffing crisis, this is **not** the right time to upzone a large area. Please only undertake necessary minor master plan revisions in the one, manageable, bite-sized portion of the City where the land-owner has a rationale for requesting some zoning changes. That's the Adventist Hospital site and immediately adjacent area. More is not better. It's risky and ill-timed.

#### De Herman – Maple Ave. – Ward Five

My name is De Herman. I've lived in Ward 5 at 8011 Maple Ave. for 35 years and have multiple concerns about the Minor Master Plan Amendment being considered by this City Council.

While my property is not within the boundaries drawn by this plan, my home and neighborhood would be affected by any development occurring on the site of the



former hospital, as well as the entire stretch of Maple Avenue under consideration.

And, I am concerned not only for my immediate neighborhood, but even more for the Maple Ave. residents who currently live in low rise buildings and are at risk of losing their residences when developers get a green light to the new zoning designation.

Residents of the Maple Avenue corridor contribute to Takoma Park's history and reputation of welcoming people from numerous ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Takoma Park's children learn from one another in our neighborhood schools, sharing their customs, their traditions, their stories, and their friendship, creating a rich tapestry that enriches all of us. We're in danger of losing this precious gift if the planned zoning passes as it is written.

The affordable rent in our city's apartments is the lowest of any sector of Montgomery County. New development under the zoning of this Minor Master Plan Amendment will displace residents without giving them any affordable place to live. This is unconscionable and amounts to nothing less than ethnic cleansing.

One argument I have heard in favor of this plan is about infrastructure problems in the old buildings along Maple Ave. I question the urge to raze old buildings to deal with these issues by constructing new ones. I, as a homeowner with a licensed apartment, have to abide by the City's housing Code and get my apartment inspected every two years by a Montgomery County inspector. Whatever problems are cited, I have 30 days to fix them, and I must have the inspector return and declare the problems resolved before the City will renew my license. Don't the landlords of multi-unit apartment buildings have to abide by the same housing code? If repairs are needed for compliance, then why are these apartments allowed to remain in disrepair?

I support the need to bring in more affordable housing to our community, and the old hospital site is a great place to start. But why does the Maple Ave segment need to be done now? The residents of Maple Ave. haven't had a chance to fully grasp and weigh in on this plan. And, without seeing climate studies, traffic studies, infrastructure and education assessments of the potential impact of the



Minor Master Plan as it is currently zoned, how can you, our representatives, vote to approve it?

Thank you for your time.

Jim Barnes -- Ward Five

Good evening, Jim Barnes, Ward Five. I'm here on behalf of myself, my wife and my child. They just got back from a protest in Michigan. When they got back here and heard about the proposed MMPA their first reaction was, "What! Here in Takoma Park??"

We're a different kind of city. I like that.

My first point is a general one. I have often heard that this process of getting the Minor Master Plan updated has been going on for a very long time. I don't buy that. For several specific reasons.

We don't have an environmental assessment. It would show up way too late for any of us to look at.

We don't have a traffic assessment. Everything I've heard says that for this kind of development, you should have big roads, with a lot of capacity. You should have very close access to public transport.

This Plan does not meet any of those requirements.

So on the face of it, it doesn't make sense to me.

As a father of teen-age girls, I would say something else. If you're planning to let your girls go out into the world, on the first date you don't let them go all the way.

This plan -- of allowing buildings up to 120 feet -- it doesn't pass the sniff test.



We should be going with the smallest possible re-zoning first, and then if it makes sense we can talk about going further than that.

I am at ground zero. I am technically not within the Plan area, but I'm right across the street from it.

It seems to me, based upon everything I've heard, that 120 feet is too high. Forty-five feet would make a lot of sense.

Part of living in Takoma Park is that we're not dense. I don't see why people can't live in reasonably sized garden apartments. That would keep everyone on the same kind of footing.

I do know that it's desirable for everyone to have a nice place to live.

But I do feel that this process has been rushed, and I would like to see it thought out more deliberately, working with an informed community. And to be informed, we need more information.

### David Reed – Ward Two

Good evening, all. My name is David Reed. I live in Ward Two.

I've been actively involved in this MMPA process for over two years now, first as President of the Long Branch/Sligo Community Association, then more recently as a founding member of the Community Equity Coalition (CEQ). And from those two years of engagement I would like to share many conclusions.

My first conclusion is that there really is no Plan. There are no specific objectives. There's no implementation stages. No financing. No leading organizations. There's no mapping of new units. There's no climate impact assessment. There's no analysis of the transportation impact. Look, there's no Plan. Let's be honest and stop calling it that.



My second conclusion is that the rezoning process will attract private investment that wants to build multi-family housing on the hospital site, and is heralded by the Washington Business Journal – This is a big deal for the County!! Investment dollars are going to flow and it will transform the area! And for better or worse, we shall see.

My third conclusion is that the approval or rejection of this proposal will be determined by the perceptions held by the City and County leaders regarding its impact on Maple Avenue. Will leaders embrace or reject a proposal that is the continuation of a five decade long legacy of racism and urban displacement?

Over past months, Council members have offered many reasons why they think that this plan will address the major issue on Maple Avenue, which is obviously rehabilitating the apartment buildings.

But the bottom line comes down to two irrefutable facts.

One, upzoning does not mobilize private sector investment without raising the cost of housing. Rent increases are inevitable.

Two, upzoning does not promote renovation without major dislocation of tenants unless it is accompanied by public funding. Absent such public funding, displacement of many vulnerable people is inevitable.

If the City Council is committed to improving the housing stock on Maple Avenue, it would sever Maple Avenue from this one-size-fits-all upzoning process. Instead, staff would be order by you to bring forward a tailored urban design that would one, propose a phased rehabilitation program, two seek a public housing ownership opportunities, three seek additional public funding from state, federal and county programs, to ensure the relocation of residents as buildings undergo renovation.

I really do feel that approval of the Plan at this stage would result in profound, long-term damage to the city's social life while violating our commitment to racial equity.

Thank you.



Fred Feinstein – Sycamore Ave.

My name is Fred Feinstein. I have lived in Takoma Park on Sycamore Avenue for 45 years. Over those years I have seen many changes in the city I love.

One of the big changes, as we all know, is the cost of housing has skyrocketed. I, like many of my neighbors, would never have been able to move here when I did, if the housing market was anything like it is today. I share the hope that we can make it more affordable for people to move here as I was able to do many decades ago.

But even more important is assuring that those who currently live here can continue to afford it. I have been proud of the city's commitment to affordable rents for those who live here. The housing policies in place have been a model of protecting against the displacement of people in a community when the real estate market around them is soaring. Our city has stood firm in enforcing these policies that have kept our community diverse and thriving, unlike some other neighboring communities.

The Minor Master Plan under consideration today could significantly affect these important policies. I urge you to be careful as this city has in the past. I was pleased that the (first) Council resolution identified seven areas for the County Planning Board to address but I don't believe it goes far enough. The City Council should make it explicit that if the existing plan is not modified to satisfactorily address the concerns, the Council will oppose it.

Perhaps my biggest concern is that the Minor Master Plan proposes significant changes to two very different areas of our city. On the one hand it applies to the former Washington Adventist Hospital grounds. If done properly, I am optimistic that quality affordable housing and other welcome amenities could be built on this site that would be consistent with maintaining the diversity and character of our city.



However, it's not at all clear why the plan also applies to an important part of our city that is entirely different from the former hospital grounds. Changing zoning regulations to accommodate construction on land where no housing currently exists is very different than applying these same "up zoning" changes to one of the most densely populated parts of our city, potentially upsetting an important set of policies. Why are we lumping them together? Why are we possibly jeopardizing important policies because we have a chance to build affordable housing on the former hospital grounds?

I believe there is real potential to reach a broad consensus on the sensible development of the former hospital grounds that would unify and excite our community. Let's get this important accomplishment done.

Then we could take on the very different and more complex "up zoning" of a densely populated part of our city.

Thank you.

## **Jackie Moore**

Good evening, my name is Jacqueline Moore and I live in Ward 2.

I have been closely following the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) for Takoma Park and the plans for Maple Avenue. It has become more and more apparent that the city is not ready or able to effectively tackle both of these projects at this time.

Tonight I am calling for you to sever the proposal for Maple Avenue from the MMPA process. The residents of Maple Avenue have not been kept in the loop regarding the potential changes that will have an impact their lives.

The Maple Avenue portion of the MMPA is being rushed through, and there is a real risk of displacement of the current residents. Many of these residents are recent immigrants. Why create a situation where their lives will be upended once



again? That is not neighborly behavior, especially not from a council that included creating a feeling of welcoming in our city in their council priorities.

Speaking of the MMPA, it also concerns me that one of the former Ward 6 council members shared an odd reasoning for wanting new development on the hospital site while a guest on the August 20th Talk of Takoma show on WOWD 94.3 FM. After speaking highly of the vibrant Latin American businesses in Wards 5 and 6, he said he is in favor of development of the Adventist site because there are not a lot of stores residents of “the rest of Takoma Park feel comfortable” patronizing. Please note that he does not speak for this Ward 2 resident. This divisive comment can be found at approximately the fifty-seven minute mark of the recording of the second hour of this particular broadcast of Talk of Takoma.

### Colleen Cordis

Colleen Cordes, Ward One. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

You’ve identified several areas of concern. Please be very explicit in your Resolution that if the Plan is not modified to address these concerns and the other serious issues that residents and Councilmembers will and have brought up tonight – including especially removing Maple Avenue from the Plan – that if those serious concerns are not addressed, that the City Council will oppose the Plan.

Just a few suggestions for your resolution:

First, please don’t just ask for work sessions on racial equity. Please be very specific about wanting Work Sessions, in the plural, for thoroughly evaluating the potential for negative impacts that would perpetuate racial and economic inequities, especially the potential for displacement. Ask them to do a thorough analysis of the potential for displacement.

Secondly, add to the line “retaining and improving affordable housing” – that’s not specific enough – “retaining and improving housing that is as affordable as is



currently in place, and preventing the displacement of current residents.” Please add that to your resolution.

And Ira Kowler, (on city staff) I think he tried to explain to you that what the County considers affordable housing is not the deeply affordable housing of rent-stabilized housing on Maple Avenue. I’m sure he could give you the specifics on that. The County defines affordable housing as being much more expensive than the deeply affordable housing that is available on Maple Avenue in the rent-stabilized buildings, not [only in] the deed-restricted buildings even.

Another, please add a requirement – oppose the 45-percent tree canopy goal for the Plan Area that is currently in the Draft and change that to 60 percent, which is the Council’s current citywide goal. Anything else is systemic racism.

And fourth, please ask for meaningful community engagement that produces actionable public input that is demonstratively reflected in revisions to the Plan. I think if you look at the community engagement on Maple Avenue, it’s very disappointing. It’s very weak. We don’t know what questions people were asked. We have no written report from the consultant. I asked for that information. I was told that it’s not going to be made available unless the Planning Board asks for it – I can ask the County Planning Board to please provide that information.

You need that information. The residents of Maple Avenue – whether they were interviewed or not – they need that, and the rest of Takoma Park needs that. Thank you very much.

### Virtual comments

#### Olly Swyers

Like a lot of people this evening, I'm looking forward to seeing the Adventist Site developed in a way that serves and builds our community. But my concern today centers around the portion of the MMPA that impacts Maple Avenue, as others



have said, and the apparent disregard for the existing residents whose lives will be most affected if this plan is executed in its current form.

Allowing the proposed upzoning to advance without addressing these issues will undoubtedly result in the gradual, if not immediate, displacement of a substantial portion of our longstanding community once the upzoning takes effect.

This displacement will not only disrupt lives but will also exacerbate the existing economic and social disparities within Takoma Park.

Maple Avenue is our only remaining corridor of truly affordable housing within the city.

If people have to leave because their buildings are being sold and redeveloped into high dollar apartments, those residents will be hard pressed to find housing that allows them to stay locally, or allows their children to continue to go to local schools, to maintain friendships, or allows people to live in a walkable, metro accessible neighborhood.

I want to emphasize this point: Displacement is a form of violence. It's violent. It tears people away from community, upsets people's sense of stability and shatters the fabric of a community. These impacts are well documented. The social and mental distress caused by displacement are long lasting and have generational ripples. And it is by systemic design, one that is reflected in the current plan, that most frequently these displaced people are a majority of black and brown people.

It is your duty, as our elected representatives, to stand up for and protect our community from this outcome. The focus for that corridor as it stands needs to be on improving conditions for residents. Changes need to be tailored to the needs of the community, improving walkability, improving public spaces.

I respectfully request that the City Council send a clear and unwavering message to the County. If the Plan Amendment is not modified to address these serious issues and adequately protect the residents of Maple Avenue, the City Council must oppose the proposal in its current form. Your role extends beyond merely



facilitating growth; it encompasses ensuring that growth serves the best interests of all residents, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Finally, to the individual who said that other people concerned about racist and classist proposals in this instance are acting as “white saviors”, I would like to introduce you to what is perhaps a new concept: it’s called SOLIDARITY.

Thank you.

Rachel Hardwick - Flower Ave.

Hi, I’m Rachel Hardwick, I live at 7400 Flower Avenue, which is two blocks from the corner of Carroll and Flower Avenues, and is at the corner of Flower and Jackson.

While I am in favor of additional housing, and recognize, as we all do, that the DMV needs more housing units, I am very concerned that the zoning changes will add far too many units to the hospital site, making traffic and pollution in our community unsustainable.

For over 17 years, I have complained to our city leaders, including Heather Mizeur, Colleen Clay, Tim Male, Cindy Dyballa, Daryl Braithwaite, Kate Stewart, multiple police officers, Mayor Searcy and Delegate Charkoudian about the volume of traffic, and enforcement of the stop signs along Flower Avenue between Carroll and Sligo Creek, and the fact that the majority of drivers do not stop at the stop sign at Jackson and Flower Avenues.

Flower Avenue is very narrow between Carroll and Sligo Creek. When it was built in the 1920’s, it was not meant to handle the volume of cars for modern times. If thousands of housing units and six to seven thousand people are added to a site over a mile from the Metro and over a half a mile to the Purple Line, many, many cars will travel on surrounding streets, including from Carroll Avenue to Sligo Creek Parkway, on Flower Avenue, and vice versa.

I implore you, City Council, to exercise your power to strongly weigh in at this stage, demanding that county planners and the Planning Board zone the site for apartment and condo buildings not greater than three or four stories. Yes, let’s



build more housing stock. Let's add an affordable day care center which is also badly needed. But please, please do it thoughtfully.

Before we are too far into this process, please analyze the effects on traffic, stormwater runoff, demands on city services such as the police department, the schools, and figure out how to solve problems that we know will come if 13, 14 or 15 story buildings are allowed at the site. We have a real and dangerous traffic problem now, which we have not yet solved despite many conversations, and we can only expect those problems to greatly increase. We are talking about increasing our city's population by possibly forty percent. Where will those cars go? I know where they will go, and you do, too, and those drivers will be frustrated with the volume, as well, and they won't be stopping at the stop signs, and someone will get hurt.

Finally, know that whatever the zoning allows, that is what will be built, when for-profit developers develop the site. We experienced that particular phenomenon at the Junction. The chosen developer worked very hard to maximize profit, which I understand, but it would have cost the community a lot. Let's not write that same blueprint here. Please use your power to demand better for our beloved community.

Thank you.

Enrica (couldn't understand last name) – Ward Three

[assume that she is a resident because that is a requirement for public comment]

I live in Ward Three. I have lived in Takoma Park for about 30 years.

And I am, like others, concerned about up-zoning, especially the Maple Avenue area. I understand that up to forty percent more city residents may be allowed in the city by this change in zoning.

And I am very surprised that the City Council is entertaining that kind of change for the City without any Plan or sense of how the traffic generated by this new development, the demand for city services, the demand on the school system, the



demand on the environment, the demand on the storm water. None of these is being made clear or is under discussion at the moment under this Plan.

So, like many others, I also encourage the City Council to, before it moves forward, to demand an analysis and to put the results of that analysis up to discussion by the citizens of Takoma Park.

Thank you very much.

Tom Gagliardo

1. Any meaningful modification of the existing draft by the County Planning Board is unlikely unless the supermajority provisions of state law are triggered. Only you, our elected representatives, can do that. This requires an unequivocal statement that the plan as drafted is not acceptable.

1A. Triggering the supermajority requirement is more than a legal matter. It shifts the politics.

2. What is unacceptable in the draft? Inclusion of areas beyond the WAH site and the height limits on that site. There is time to address Maple, Maplewood, Flower Avenues, etc. Let's get the hospital site moving forward. There is virtual unanimity to rezone for multifamily housing, questions are what kind and how much.

3. As elected officials your collective responsibility first and foremost is to your constituents, not the City staff, not the County staff, not Adventist Healthcare or WAU, nor anyone else.

4. Much has changed since the amendment process started. We have all learned much. My thinking has developed and changed. I started by thinking including Maple Avenue was unnecessary but did not appreciate the real threat of displacement. Now I do.



5. If nothing else, include a statement in the resolution that the height limits need to be reevaluated and reduced even if you do not specify a particular height limit. Among other reasons, this is necessary because there has been no assessment of the combined impact of development under this draft, that which will result from Purple Line completion and the development completed or underway around Takoma Metro.

6. Waiting for site review is walking into a proverbial ambush where developers with political influence, skilled land use lawyers, money and other resources and a superior ability to navigate the system will be waiting.

7. How many times have I said we're all in this together; we need to get this right.

8. It is unlikely I will see the first project that is made possible by the rezoning in an adopted amendment. My house will belong to my daughters, one of whom I expect will live there. For their sake I am asking you to take the above actions.

### Wayne Sherwood

The following comments were submitted by me to the Takoma Park City Council in advance of the meeting on September 6.

9/3/2023

It is not clear to me what the Council is thinking of doing with this Resolution. Could it be adopted on September 6 at the work session? I would think probably not. If not, would such a Resolution be sent to the Council for its consideration at its meeting on September 13? If so, would the Council expect to act on such a Resolution then, and send it to the Montgomery County Planning Board, before its public hearing on the following day, i.e. on the evening of September 14, as a Resolution? Or would it just be framed as "public comments" that the Council would submit to the Board just as anyone can make public comments? Or is this something that Council might consider sending as a Resolution to the County Planning Board only after the September 14 public hearing?



It is not clear to me whether this “Resolution” is recommending anything specific as to whether the MoCo Planning Board should approve the MMPA or not. I don’t see anything like that in here. I think that is the most important thing that the Takoma Park City Council could do. I would like to urge that our City Council fulfill its elected responsibilities by taking the lead in telling the MoCo Planning Board what the leaders of the Takoma Park community think of the proposals contained in the MMPA. It is time to stop waffling. The zoning proposals in the MMPA are totally inappropriate, and would be devastating for the City of Takoma Park, and our elected leaders should say so.

The first “Resolved” item references the Council’s earlier Resolution 2023-16, and asks that the MoCo Planning Board “address seven aspects of the plan,..” but does not say the proposed zoning is unacceptable in its present form.

The second “Resolved” item requests that the MoCoPB hold additional work sessions “during development of the Planning Board Draft Plan of the Minor Master Plan Amendment...” This seems to me to leave open the possibility that the Resolution accepts that the MoCoPB would go ahead and approve the MMPA, but then hold some additional work sessions after that to clarify a few things. I think that would be the wrong approach. I think the City Council should be clearly asking the MoCoPB not to approve the MMPA in its present form, but instead send it back to staff for further work.

Also, in this second part, it asks the PB to ask staff to evaluate the impacts of the zoning proposals on a variety of things. The planning staff has already told us they haven’t considered the impact of their proposals on anything, including the surrounding neighborhoods, gentrification, displacement, potential loss of affordable housing (due to market impacts), traffic, schools, capital improvement needs, the impact upon the city government of Takoma Park, or the services it would need to provide, or the costs of such services, and who would pay? We should not expect much from the county planning staff’s evaluations of such impacts. Not within any quick period of time anyway. I think this needs to be made much stronger. I think the City Council should reference the proposed zoning changes that the MMPA would make, and clearly point out that these changes would have a huge impact upon the City of Takoma Park, and surrounding neighborhoods, and are unacceptable, and clearly ask that the MoCoPB should not approve the MMPA in its present form.



In the third “Further Resolved” section, it also doesn’t make clear when the MoCoPB is being asked to “provide additional details” about the MMPA, i.e. about climate assessment and race equity impacts. Would this be after the MoCoPB approves the MMPA? Or before? That is important.

In sum, this proposed Resolution is polite and inoffensive, and makes a number of mild suggestions and requests for further information, etc. but says nothing about the two most important things I think such a Resolution should say, namely: 1) clearly ask that the MoCoPB not approve the MMPA in its present form; and 2) point out the huge impacts the proposed zoning amendments would have upon the City of Takoma Park, and how these are unacceptable.

There really is no plan here. There are only the proposed zoning amendments. They are the only operational part of the proposed MMPA. And the proposed MMPA cannot be said to “amend” the plan that was adopted in 2000. It totally contradicts the 2000 Master Plan, in letter and in spirit. The zoning changes proposed in the MMPA are totally inappropriate for the Adventist site and for Maple Avenue, and for the city as a whole. The Takoma Park City Council should say so.

Thank you for considering these comments.



Attached are Part Two of my comments for the Montgomery County Planning Board public hearing this coming Thursday evening, September 14, 2023, concerning the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Wayne Sherwood  
218 Grant Ave.  
Takoma Park MD 20912-4234  
H: 301-608-2589



Dear Chair and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Commission:

The draft Masterplan Amendment deals with two distinctly different issues:

- (1) The redevelopment of the Adventist Hospital and University holdings along Flower Avenue and,
- (2) our Maple Avenue residential corridor.

The Adventist Site: represents a long-awaited opportunity to redevelop this underutilized site for a variety of housing options and small scale commercial development. There is a general community consensus that this would be an appropriate and effective way to create much needed additional housing, especially affordable housing. It also provides for an introduction of new small scale commercial along Flower Ave which would serve as a link and hopefully a support for the existing small scale commercial uses and services already located along Flower. This site was the original impetus for the planning review which led to the MMPA.

While the general housing recommendations are welcome and can be accomplished without tenant displacement, important issues of scale, environmental and stormwater impacts still need greater examination and coordination before approval.

The Maple Avenue Corridor: Takoma Park is proud of its history of providing affordable housing for all. In fact, the County Executive has recently called out Takoma Park as the County's most significant and successful concentration of low income housing units. Most of this housing is found along either side of Maple Avenue between Sligo Creek and Philadelphia Avenue. It is composed of a vibrant mixture of low-rise, garden type apartments as well as mid-rise and a scattering of higher rise structures. Unlike many affordable housing locations, Maple Avenue provides access to a rich environment of educational, recreational, institutional and police services within walking distance. Many of the tenants in these structures are long-term tenants who have made Takoma Park their home.

The plan's proposed up-zoning and incentives will entail displacement of the current residents in order to accommodate new development on their existing apartment's site. Not only will the current tenants be displaced, but the new buildings will come on-line at market rents for five years. After five years, these new buildings will be subject to the City's rent stabilization program. The reality is that this program will be applied to apartments that have already established a far higher rent level than the older ones. If such rezoning is effective in inducing significant redevelopment, Takoma Park will lose a valuable aspect of its culture and history and perhaps its sense of community.

These are not "minor" losses. Good planning is based upon a shared community vision of the City should look and function in both the present and the future. The MMPA ignores the importance of preserving the welfare and the quality of life for the present residents of Maple Avenue by focusing all the benefits of change to this area on the developers and increased density. A staff imposed vision on our Maple Ave community which is designed solely to meet County wide housing needs, while ignoring the welfare of the current residents is the antithesis of good planning.

Recommendation:

1. Do not approve the rezoning proposals in the MMPA. Remand the Hospital site for immediate further analysis as mentioned below.
2. Sever and prioritize the planning for the Adventist site and provide the needed analysis of scale, environmental and stormwater impacts.
3. Develop a separate review and development process for Maple Ave which takes into account prevention of displacement of current residents, the use of rehabilitation funds for existing multi-family structures which desire to upgrade, and identify those structures which would benefit the community through redevelopment.

The City itself has had little success in managing large projects. The experience of developing a new Community Center has not been forgotten. Yet, within the past two years it has committed itself to two large construction projects – the library and the recreation center – whose initial cost estimates have already been surpassed before ground has been broken. In terms of timing, it would be prudent for the City to experience the benefits and costs of full development of the Hospital site before undertaking study of substantial change along Maple Avenue.



Respectfully submitted, Frances E. Phipps, 7210 Holly Avenue, Takoma Park, Md., 20912 A 53 year resident.



Michelle Frankfurter

905 Erie Avenue

Takoma Park, MD 20912

m: 202/329.5632

e: michellefrankfurter@gmail.com

I live on the 900 block of Erie Ave. between Greenwood and Garland.

I am not categorically opposed to the plan. Growth is inevitable, as is development to accommodate that growth. In keeping with Takoma Park's purported progressive values, affordable housing should be a priority.

I do, however, have some questions and concerns:

- How do you balance increased urban density with the proposed pedestrian-only Green Promenade and other open green spaces?
- Why are the plan's boundaries limited to a relatively small area and not expanded beyond Kennebec Ave. since there's an entire stretch of Flower Ave north of Piney Branch that could be included and reimagined (maybe those plans are already in existence as part of the Purple Line project)?
- Will the plan address permitting and construction of such spaces that are a complete waste of space, do nothing to address the need for affordable housing, degrade the environment, and add to stormwater runoff in the meantime before the implementation of redevelopment? Can the new requirements highlighted in the proposed plan be applied retroactively? Specifically, I'm referring to a parking lot on Greenwood Ave. across from the soccer field where a beautiful small park with an ancient tree previously existed?
- What about continued permitting for single family home construction by private investors who are only interested in making a profit? On my block, a small, quintessentially Takoma Park bungalow sitting on a relatively large lot was bought by a private investor. The house was razed, and in its place, a giant monstrosity of a single-family nightmare having the aesthetic of a 1980's Albanian cocaine kingpin was built. It sold for over a million dollars.
- The historic preservation of the Takoma Park aesthetic is not a priority (for me). Things change. My priorities are sustainability, functionality, affordability, AND curb appeal: basically, taking a Scandinavian design approach that maximizes functionality without sacrificing aesthetics.
- Parking – most of the properties within the plan boundaries and the neighboring streets only have street parking available. Will there be zoned, permitted parking as in the historic part of Takoma Park where in addition to homes having driveways, the streets are zoned for residential parking?
- Will new housing be a mix of rental units and privately-owned coops/condos?



- How do you ensure that rental properties are managed responsibly? There are a number of poorly managed, neglected apartment buildings within the plan's boundaries and the surrounding streets where trash often accumulates, and rodent infestations are an issue.



Dear chairperson,

Attached is my testimony for consideration in time for the upcoming hearing.

Sincerely,

**Michelle Frankfurter**

**m:** 202.329.5632 | **e:** [info@michellefrankfurter.com](mailto:info@michellefrankfurter.com)

weddings:

[www.michellefrankfurter.com](http://www.michellefrankfurter.com)

documentary:

[www.michellefrankfurterphotos.com](http://www.michellefrankfurterphotos.com)



I am very concerned about the many implications of the minor master plan rezoning. I would like to see a limit of 7 stories throughout the rezoning area. I live in Ward 5 in the area being rezoned including my house from residential to commercial.. I would like to see the hospital area developed as mixed residential/commercial but I would like to see the height and density reduced.

Right from the City's website: Takoma Park has a distinctively small town feel. That is exactly why we moved here. We looked in Silver Spring for a home but prioritized Takoma Park despite the higher taxes. What I didn't know was how much I would fall in love with Sligo Creek. I want to ensure any development includes a more sizeable green and permeable area on the current hospital area and that any development includes protections from stormwater running into Sligo Creek. Sligo Creek is a treasure for our city - everyone of all stripes and backgrounds uses it and loves it. I have worked hard with multi-faith congregations in the area to get them to plant native plants on their grounds and that of their neighbors to reduce stormwater into our local creeks including Sligo Creek. This has been in conjunction with the County RainScapes Program. I do not want to see the area right next to my very own house contribute towards the degradation of this already unhealthy creek. Montgomery County has put a lot of resources into helping Sligo Creek go from a few fish to now more than 15 species. We need to reduce not increase our pollution contribution.

I also believe that there should be a stormwater and transportation plan as part of any rezoning. I fear the worst case scenario of 30 luxury condos of 150 feet contributing to changing the nature of this small town feel with increased congestion and pollution.

I came to speak at the Takoma Park City Council meeting last week and my 3 min of comments are below.

### Naomi Edelson – Ward Five – wildlife biologist

I'm Naomi Edelson. I live in Ward Five. I'm very grateful that we have a great Councilmember Cara Honzak, and I've gotten to work with Terry Seamens distributing the food to the apartments on Maple Ave, he's tremendous, and Randy Gibson I know as a great environmentalist from my professional work.

I'm a wildlife biologist, and I've lived in Takoma Park since 2010. We love it. It's changed our lives moving here. I absolutely love living in Takoma Park with my family.

I'm a block from the hospital and in fact my house is being considered as part of the rezoning.

So I do want to talk a little, not just about Maple Avenue, but about the whole hospital re-development. I do believe it should be developed. I think that makes sense. But I am concerned about Sligo Creek, which is the heart of Takoma Park. And while the County manages the park and creek, it is our responsibility as Takoma Park residents as to what ends up flowing into that water from stormwater runoff. The creek is already very degraded. Kids are playing in there. That's completely inappropriate. The dogs are drinking the water. It's not safe for them to be doing that. It's a health hazard, and we have to do our part. We're the dirtiest part of Sligo Creek. I've learned that from my work as a wildlife biologist getting people to reduce their stormwater runoff. We need to be helping the creek rather than letting more stormwater runoff going in there through more development.

I'm concerned about the dramatic change in character for the city that I love, that my family loves, that my neighbors love.

I'm concerned about the height, the 150 foot buildings. I understand that now those are only happening right at METRO stops, according to Marc Elrich (County Ex). They're not happening in other places.



I think that the infusion of three to five thousand more people from 17,000 will drastically change the city, and we don't have the infrastructure built to handle it.

I understand the past hospital study, when I didn't live here, that they would never be able to handle it, because of the two lane road on Flower Avenue. Unless you were able to take away the homes along Flower, we can't handle that. And there is not transportation plan in this plan. Why zone it if you cannot handle it?

And I'm also concerned about the issue of the environmental impact of climate hasn't been evaluated – we will have more stormwater in an era of climate change– agreeing to something without knowing – I think it's the worst case scenario to say it's OK, but then we'll do more work later and find out (via permitting).

You're setting yourself up for another fight, like the Junction. It's not good for our community.

Why would we want 150 foot housing? I just don't see that as being appropriate in this place.. It's appropriate, maybe, right by the Purple Line. And I think it's more than half a mile from my house to the Purple Line. I'm not sure. I might be wrong. I thought it was more than that so not truly walkable.

So those are the things I want to say. I'm very concerned about the whole plan including Maple Ave (also basically my neighborhood) but I am focused specifically on what could be happening at the hospital area.

Thank you.

Naomi Edelson  
716 Erie Ave  
Takoma Park MD 20912



My name is **Fred Feinstein** and I live at:  
**7114 Sycamore Ave,**  
**Takoma Park, MD 20912**

Below is a statement for the **September 14th, 2023 hearing** being conducted by the Board.

**STATEMENT:**

My name is Fred Feinstein. I have lived in Takoma Park on Sycamore Avenue for 45 years. Over those years I have seen many changes in the city I love. One of the big changes, as we all know, is the cost of housing has sky rocketed. I like many of my neighbors would never have been able to move here when I did, if the housing market was anything like it is today. I share the hope that we can make it more affordable for people to move here as I was able to do many decades ago.

But even more important is assuring that those who currently live in Takoma Park can continue to afford it. I have been proud of the city's commitment to affordable rents for those who live here. The housing policies in place have been a model of protecting against the displacement of people in a community when the real estate market around them is soaring. Takoma Park has stood firm in enforcing these policies that have kept our community diverse and thriving, unlike some other neighboring communities.

I'm concerned that the Minor Master Plan under consideration today could significantly affect these important policies. It proposes significant changes to two very different areas of our city. On the one hand it applies to the former Washington Adventist Hospital grounds. If done properly, I am optimistic that quality affordable housing and other welcome amenities could be built on this site that would be consistent with maintaining the diversity and character of our city.

However it's not at all clear why the plan also applies to an important part of our city that is entirely different from the former hospital grounds. Changing zoning regulations to accommodate construction on land where no housing currently exists is very different than applying these same "up zoning" changes to the most densely populated part of our city, potentially upsetting an important set of policies. Why are we lumping them together? Why are we possibly jeopardizing important policies because we have a chance to build affordable housing on the former hospital grounds?

I believe there is real potential to reach a broad consensus on the sensible development of the former hospital grounds that would unify and excite our community. Let's get this important accomplishment done. Then we take on the very different and more complex "up zoning" of a densely populated part of our city.

Thank you.

Fred Feinstein



Members of the Planning Board:

Re: The **Plan's Public Hearing date of Sept. 14, 2023.**

From: **Kathy and Steve Breckbill**  
**7104 Woodland Ave.**  
**Takoma Park, Md 20912**

[breckbills@gmail.com](mailto:breckbills@gmail.com)

We have been residents of Takoma Park for over 40 years. We have seen many changes over those years. Many have been improvements, but not all. While we are not opposed to development, we are very concerned that the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment as written, will lead to changes in the City that have not been thoroughly vetted for beneficial results.

Below are some of our personal concerns.

This plan does not protect the very diverse residents on Maple Ave and the surrounding streets. **The proposed zoning increases property values and incentivizes higher rent development.** It is heartbreaking when our neighbors lose their homes! They may lose the rent control protection the City has been so good at maintaining. Language must be included to stop any action that would cause a resident to be moved from their home. This diverse population is something we are all proud of.

It also worries me that this plan does not consider the very fragile storm water situation and potential flood conditions that are already problems for Maple Ave and the Sligo Creek. The Creek is vulnerable. Steve has reported raw sewage on a number of occasions. You need only look at the increased costs of building the City Municipal Building and new Library on a flood plain to understand how important sufficient Environmental Review is. There must be Language to guarantee that any development meets the requirements of Appendix E: Policies and Regulation and of the 2019 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. Language must be included to require EPA Environmental Review.

The City is already burdened by the existing traffic overload on Maple Ave, Philadelphia Ave and all the other streets that connect to that area. The MMPA doesn't recognize the ongoing work of assessing traffic problems and looking for solutions on Maple Ave. Language must be included to require an extensive traffic study.

Our concerns are not even the tip of the iceberg. Paul Chrostowski, Carl Elefante, Bill Mallari, and Elaine Lamirande, President, Friends of Sligo Creek ([president@fosc.org](mailto:president@fosc.org)) and others, are residents with expertise and years of experience. They are far more knowledgeable than I and have provided you with information based on their actual experience and training. They have the additional qualification of living here and experiencing real time problems that have affected the area in question. Take advantage of their generosity and listen to them before you act.

Sincerely,  
Kathy and Steve Breckbill



Just some thoughts about the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan...that I am against. Please place on list serves and please read.

Thank you,  
Marty Shore

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

Begin forwarded message:

On Tuesday, September 12, 2023, 1:15 PM, Shore, Martin <Martin.Shore@aoc.gov> wrote:

A classic urban trade-off might not be our destiny. That's great news for the climate. [https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2023/01/green-cities-climate-change-density-open-space/672709/?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=social](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2023/01/green-cities-climate-change-density-open-space/672709/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=social)

I've focused on some text from this article below.

“Broadly speaking, the researchers found two ways to avoid the trade-off between density and green space. Take Singapore, one of the densest countries in the world. There, plants are installed on roofs and facades, turning the familiar gray landscape of skyscrapers and overpasses into a living matrix. By law, developers must replace any natural area that they develop with green space somewhere on the building.”

Takoma Park does not have a similar climate as Singapore...yet. It cannot expect that integrating plants into the buildings will be as successful as similar buildings in warmer climates.

There are no laws requiring developers to replace natural areas with green space on the new buildings – so they will not do so.

The Minor Master Plan does not include any environmental study to inform developers that sustainably designed buildings are required.

“In Curitiba, the largest city in southern Brazil, which has tripled in population since 1970, dense housing is built around dedicated bus lanes and interwoven with large public parks and conservation areas. Curitiba also uses planted areas to help direct and soak up stormwater, buffering residential areas from floods. In Singapore, nature shares space with the built environment, while Curitiba packs people in tightly and then spares land for other species inside the boundaries of the city.”

The Minor Master Plan does not include any traffic studies or parking impact studies requiring developers to create green streets or flood resistant landscaping.

The Minor Master Plan Process has not included engaging communities, and other stakeholders to identify priorities and resource needs for renewable energy planning, siting, and permitting.




“researchers produced a list of “green interventions” that they recommend, including adding green space along rivers, streams, roads, and rail lines; using planted areas as part of stormwater management; greening vacant lots (even if they will be vacant for only a few years); creating green roofs; and planting more trees along streets.”

The Minor Master Plan does not include a list of “green interventions”. There is nothing that stresses the importance of sustainability and the environment. There are no traffic studies provided by TKPK or MontCo Planning that require any such “green interventions”


“Shlomo Angel, an expert on urban density at New York University who wasn’t involved in the study, told me that his own research using different methods shows a stronger trade-off than this new study does. But he agrees that there are ways around the trade-off, including one that he says was not emphasized enough in the study: building high. By stacking urban residents one atop the other, land is spared for parks, trees, and gardens. That, he says, is Singapore’s real secret, not its green roofs. “In order to have more open space, you have to make it possible to build higher,” Angel said. “That’s the main way of removing that conflict.” ”.

This sounds very familiar to me –

 Inline image



## That's Robert Moses planning a highway

 Inline image

Mill Creek Housing, west Philadelphia. -th he earliest drawing dates back to 1950. Built in two phases, the development between 44th and 52nd Streets in West Philly consisted of three 17-story high rises. In 2002, the project was demolished in 2002 to make way for more public housing, this time low-rises.



 Inline image

Southwark high rise housing, 1965, demolished in 2000.

“When you enter the plaza, Southwark surprises you with the makings of a nice community. The towers look into a community center, open squares and trees, and from these extend little streets of rowhouses with hedges and yards. It is a campus-like setting full of potential...”

That was the *idea*, anyway.

In the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century, urban high-rise projects “rising out of vast expanses

of grass and greenery” came to “dominate the image of American urbanity. The “movement for tall modernism...gained support from city officials and developers who saw sleek skyscrapers as a way of modernizing the aging urban landscapes of America.”

Most developers are in the business for the money and for their profit. They will design a building and its site in a way that provides them maximum return on their investment. They will not add any amenity unless forced to by the property owner and the city/county and current building code requirements. They will spend as little as possible for architectural/engineering design just so that the project gets permitted. They will typically plop down buildings and landscapes and parking that have been used in previous projects and have successfully received permits.

Density of urban building needs to be studied more in Takoma. Exactly where should it be located. What are the setbacks required. How should the building rise to 7 stories? Should it be stepped back so that current scale of the existing adjacent building is respected. Or should the new buildings



ignore its current urban context? This version of the revised zoning outlined in TKPK minor master plan is IMHO half baked, broad brush . The planners should be not be proud of how they handled this process and how simplistic their zoning diagrams are. I do not support Minor Master Plan in its current state.

By no means, am I against density. However, I like smart growth. I agree that the hospital site should be developed and transformed into other land uses. A good example to examine is the former Walter Reed Hospital site. Quite successful, and still evolving. The requirements for that project based upon DC Planning were well considered. This TKPK Minor Master Plan unfortunately is not. I am against the current TKPK Minor Master Plan.



To the Montgomery County Planning Board,

My husband and I live at 8002 Greenwood Avenue and are providing written testimony for the Public Hearing on September 14, 2023, regarding the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA). We are writing to express our concerns with the MMPA Draft in its current form. These concerns are as follows:

First, we are worried about an increase in car congestion, both when it comes to traffic and with regard to overflow parking on the nearby residential streets. As it stands, Greenwood Avenue has a high volume of traffic and not enough parking for current homeowners and residents. These issues are also true for nearby Garland, Erie, Prospect, Flower, and Carroll avenues. Many of the homes on these streets do not have driveways, and the streets are too small to accommodate the current traffic levels. What's more, all of these streets either directly adjoin or are within walking distance to the Plan Boundary. Adding apartment buildings will exacerbate these issues rather than mitigate them.

Second, we are among many residents in our neighborhood who have called and pleaded with Montgomery County about the stormwater management issues. For example, there is a section between our home and our neighbor's home that is low lying. In the winter, this area is so full of standing water that it freezes over and turns into a large ice-skating rink. Yet, Montgomery County has done nothing about this, even after 10 years of complaints. How does the Planning Board intend to address these issues? After a decade of seeking action from Montgomery County, we lack faith that the MMPA in its current form and any resulting development will improve or sufficiently address our neighborhood's stormwater management problems.

With regard to development, it is important to us that we welcome more small businesses to the area. Restaurants like Mansa Kunda and the soon-to-open Koma Coffee, which are locally owned, are great additions to the Flower Avenue business district. We would like to see the Plan and any commercial zoning prioritize locally owned businesses. It would be a shame to see new, much-needed commercial development occupied by a Panera, Starbucks, Domino's, or other corporate business.

Fourth, we are completely confused by the MMPA's prioritization of affordable housing. Our home, which was built about 90 years ago, was affordable when we bought it. A decade later, we wouldn't be able to afford our home now. Nevertheless, we estimate that there are hundreds of affordable apartments in the neighborhood. Half of these are basement-level and attic-level units nestled into the residential streets as part of the historic homes. We are not opposed to building additional small homes (e.g., bungalows, garden apartments, two-story townhomes, etc.). But it is not clear in the MMPA how new construction would possibly be more affordable than the neighborhood's existing units. And we just don't see how higher-density developments would fit without converting all the green spaces into parking lots.

And finally, speaking of green spaces, we would be devastated if the Greenwood Avenue soccer field is developed into any other than a park or recreational field. We love walking there in the evenings and enjoying a free college match. That should remain an outdoor recreational area.



Overall, I recommend that the City of Takoma Park and Montgomery County make a narrower, more concrete plan that focuses first on the site of the old Adventist Hospital campus. Then, expand from there. I don't see a need to re-zone such a large area immediately.

Thank you for considering the concerns and potential solutions we mentioned above. We look forward to seeing how the County incorporates public feedback into the final draft of the MMPA.

Sincerely,

Laurie Yancey  
8002 Greenwood Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Please see the attached letter. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laurie Yancey  
8002 Greenwood Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



To: MCP-Chair

Re: The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (TPMMA)

From: Bruce and Candace Wolf, 7812 Garland Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912 (outside the city limits)

Candace and I, with our three children, moved into our home on Garland Avenue on January 1, 1987. When we moved in, we were the “young family”. Now, thirty-six years later, we are retirees living on a fixed income. Property taxes have spiraled at a dreadful pace. But the qualities of our neighborhood, the semi-secluded ambience, and Long Branch Park right below us, remain. Our children grew up here. We have seen, and see, other children growing up here. We don’t want to see our neighborhood endangered by the ambitions of Takoma Park City.

While the proposed amendment appears to relate to the city, in fact, it will directly impact on us living below Greenwood Ave, especially along Maplewood Avenue and Garland Ave. We have every right to be concerned regarding the plans to urbanize our area, and effectively remove access to Flower Avenue via Maplewood Avenue from the 7800 block of Garland Avenue.

Our neighbors will be bringing up the environmental and traffic issues. We want to add our apprehensions regarding the planned commercial development on Greenwood Avenue and the so-called Green Promenade stretching from Maple Avenue to Long Branch Park.

For many decades our neighbors, the college, and the hospital, have quietly and positively existed as part of our community. The hospital is gone now. The proposed commercialization of Greenwood does not fit in, and given the proposed Amendment, does not serve anyone. One does not have to be a business expert to see no good will come of it.

What is the purpose of the promenade project?

Construction alone will wreak havoc on our neighborhood. For what good purpose?

Anyone who wants to walk from Maple Avenue to the park and back (and many of us do) can do so right now. Driving people out of their homes, for a phony-baloney promenade no one needs, will be the consequence. And keep in mind, Maplewood Avenue and Garland Avenue are not only not in the so-called Flower Avenue District Zone, we are not even in the city. We were given no say, or were advised of this ill-advised plan.

It is our opinion, as residents of the county, that the city amendment be sent back for extreme revision, and that this time residents who will be affected by this master plan be allowed to give input, not in contrived meetings, but in the actual planning sessions where the real decisions are made. How refreshing that would be to have the actual people involved in the future of their community instead of certain interests gathered secretly out of the public view.

Respectfully, and determinedly,  
Bruce and Candace Wolf



MCP-Chair,

RE: Public Hearing MCPB September 14, 2023  
Subject: TP Minor Master Plan Amendment

Attached please find our written testimony in reference to the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. We plan to be at the Takoma Park Community Center to observe the live streaming of the meeting. We hope we can present our testimony there.

Thank you,  
Bruce and Candace Wolf  
7812 Garland Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
240-328-2394



As a 17-years resident in Takoma Park, I am very disappointed with the very undemocratic action of my County's Planning Board, to develop a Master Plan for my neighborhood to the detail that you did, without any prior input from the affected residents. No meeting presenting the residents with your intent for such a plan, no meeting requesting the residents' concerns, no meetings presenting the progress of your planning process, no hearing presenting the draft of your plan to the public, and finally no celebratory meeting to raise a glass to our successful collaboration.

You just announce a 2-to-3 hour-meeting on Thursday to present a thoroughly developed master plan, to a surprised public. In other words you tell us: this is the plan, tell us if you like it or not.

That is not the action of a democratic government.

Why don't you restart your process, by inviting the citizens who will be directly affected by the development of the space, to a meeting where they will hear your expert opinion on the options of the site, and the intents of the County, and where they will express their own wishes for the future of their neighborhood. That would be a good start. **I know that my proposed process will take more time than you would like to spend on this plan, but - hey - you are dealing with the livelihood of people here.**

Panayotis Eric DeVaris  
7811 Garland Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912



To the Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board,

We are writing to you as long-term residents of Greenwood Avenue with serious concerns about the rezoning of the adjacent Washington Adventist University (WAU) and Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) areas to mixed-use (including commercial) properties as outlined in the Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Our home is within sight and earshot of the proposed development, yet we (and our neighbors) have not received any direct communication about the proposed project and have not been consulted about the major impacts this will have on our neighborhood. We believe that this lack of consultation is entirely because our neighborhood lies outside of the defined City of Takoma area – even though we will be the most impacted people. It is also with some anger that we see interest groups such as Takoma for All claim to represent our community when few, if any, of their members live within our neighborhood or any appreciable distance of the proposed WAU and WAH development.

We, and our neighbors, are rightly concerned that inadequate studies have been conducted into the local environmental and social impacts of opening the WAU and WAH sites to high-rise buildings and commercial operations. If additional large-scale housing is needed within the county, it seems that additional sites should be considered rather than destroying a long-established, historic, highly diverse and inclusive area.

The additional impact of road traffic within the area resulting from 3,000+ new residents is extremely alarming. Our neighborhood streets are already overburdened for parking and traffic, with Greenwood Ave, Garland Ave and Maplewood Ave becoming appreciably busier with throughfare traffic following the recent traffic calming of Flower Ave.

We, and many of our neighbors, have had to try to address multiple local stormwater and pollution issues, often at considerable personal expense. Our homes have often been flooded without these investments. The mismanagement of stormwater in the direct area will considerably worsen with additional development, especially with new large car parks expected on the WAU and WAH sites.

I (Neil Cox) am a professional conservation biologist with a specialization in natural resource management and find it especially alarming that no environmental plan has been published that appropriately addresses the above problems. If there is any intention to lessen the climate impacts, prevent biodiversity impacts, and improve social well-being of the WAU and WAH development, these are not adequately or objectively addressed in the Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Because of the many impacts on our community and the environment, lack of communication and engagement, we remain firmly opposed to the Minor Master Plan Amendment.



Sincerely,

Neil Cox and Kerry Maguire Cox

7907 Greenwood Ave,

Takoma Park,

MD 20912

neilc2004@hotmail.com; kamaguire08@hotmail.com



Dear Chair,

My family writes to express our deep concern for the Minor Master plan for the prior Adventist hospital location. I find it deeply irresponsible to move forward with this plan without adequate traffic and environmental studies. Further, as a middle-income resident of TP I don't see any protections on retaining affordable housing and lower-price point businesses and it puts families like myself at long-term risk of being able to afford to stay in Takoma Park.

It is too broad and there needs to be additional research, residents need more input into the specific plans, and adequate protections need to be in place.

Sincerely,

Kerry and Jay Danner-McDonald  
7336 Carroll Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

--

**Kerry Danner, PhD II Georgetown University II 301-356-8254**

*The function of freedom is to free someone else.*

--Toni Morrison, Cinderella's Stepsisters



## TPMMA – Brief Community History

Montgomery County and the surrounding region have been home to Indigenous people for more than 10,000 years. Members of the Piscataway and Nacotchtank tribes stewarded local lands and waters, and originally used the area's stream valleys for hunting and collecting raw materials. The Sligo Creek stream valley contains one archaeological site reflecting this history, a low-density quartz flake scatter, which demonstrates Indigenous people's use of local stone to create tools. Concentrated European colonization of Maryland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century brought warfare, disease, and ecological disruption that drove many local Native American groups to move westward. Some members remained, and their descendants continue to live in Maryland.

Through the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the area that would become Takoma Park remained primarily rural and agricultural. Large amounts of land within and around the plan area were owned by members of the locally prominent Blair family, who enslaved a Black workforce to farm their lands and manage their households. These early Black occupants included Henry, a coachman, and Nanny, a cook. The Blairs used the Sligo Creek stream valley for recreation, where they had established a riding trail prior to the Civil War.

When the family patriarch, Frances Preston Blair, died in 1876, his heirs began to sell portions of the family land. Between 1887 and 1889, real estate developer Benjamin F. Gilbert purchased over 170 acres that were once part of the Blairs' "Falkland Manor." Gilbert was enacting an ambitious plan to purchase and subdivide land along the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad, which opened in 1873. As he assembled and sold property, he named the early railway commuter suburb "Takoma." He promoted his investment with illustrated advertisements describing a picturesque community with a beautiful and healthful natural environment featuring fresh spring water, high ground, and abundant trees. By 1886, Takoma Park had a post office and a new railroad station, which allowed Gilbert to promote its easy access to downtown Washington, DC. The Town of Takoma Park incorporated in 1890 and selected Gilbert as the first mayor.

The pristine natural environment was a key factor in the Seventh-day Adventist Church's decision to relocate their headquarters and supporting institutions to Takoma Park, and adjacent Takoma, DC, at the beginning of the twentieth century. Takoma Park's clean air and water provided the ideal setting for the Adventists, whose faith valued healthy living. In 1903, the Church purchased fifty acres of land along Sligo Creek. They opened the Washington Training College (today known as Washington Adventist University) in 1904, and the Washington Sanitarium, a holistic healthcare facility (later known as Washington Adventist Hospital), in 1907. These institutions fostered development east of Sligo Creek as they expanded and drew new residents to the area. Two sites associated with this history are recommended for designation in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation: Krestview (7625 Carroll Avenue) and the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church (7700 Carroll Avenue).

The benefits of the growing town were not shared evenly. Black residents, who had begun to settle in Takoma Park shortly after the community's founding, were socially and geographically isolated by widespread racial discrimination. In the early-to-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, discriminatory housing practices, including the use of racial restrictive covenants, channeled the Black population into three distinct areas of Takoma Park. The largest of these, "the Hill," formed around 1920 in an elevated, hilly area on Ritchie, Geneva, and Oswego Avenues. In the same period, African American residents of Takoma Park



organized the Colored Citizens Association (CCA) to advocate on behalf of their communities. As the city expanded civil services and began providing streetlights, paved roads, and public utilities, such as electricity, water, and sewage, to white communities, Black residents saw that their neighborhoods were consistently overlooked. Through decades of legalized racial discrimination in the early-to-mid twentieth century, the CCA advocated for the fair provision of public services to Black communities.

In the late 1940s and 1950s, their efforts focused on obtaining access to recreational facilities. The local parks and the Takoma Park Recreation Center, an M-NCPPC facility, were only accessible to white patrons. Private gathering places in the area – local restaurants and clubs – were also predominantly segregated, leaving Black young people few places to socialize. After nearly two decades of activism, the City of Takoma Park constructed the Heffner Park Community Center (42 Oswego Avenue) in 1959 for the use of Black residents. This site is recommended for designation in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation for its association with this significant civil rights struggle and with influential Takoma Park resident Lee Jordan, who led this advocacy as President of the CCA and championed the power of sports to bridge racial divides.

Takoma Park experienced significant changes in the mid-twentieth century as improved infrastructure allowed for substantial new construction along Maple Avenue between Philadelphia Avenue and Sligo Creek. This area had long been subject to frequent flooding and drainage issues that made the land less desirable for development. Road improvements and the channelization of Brashears Run prompted a wave of apartment construction beginning in the mid-to-late 1950s that produced the mid- and high-rise apartment buildings that characterize this stretch of Maple Avenue today. The new buildings were advertised as deluxe, elegant residences with modern suburban conveniences: garbage disposals, elevators, large closets, and ample parking. Some barred families with younger children, a form of housing discrimination later prohibited by the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

Takoma Park's population grew rapidly between 1950 and 1960 as this multifamily housing was constructed, and an increasing percentage of the local population lived in apartments. At the same time, older, single-family homes were increasingly converted into rooming houses or divided into small apartments. The resulting influx of new residents brought increased social, ethnic, and economic diversity to Takoma Park as immigrants, students, and lower-income families sought inexpensive housing near Washington, DC and downtown Silver Spring. By the close of the twentieth century, Takoma Park and the adjacent communities of East Silver Spring and Langley Park were home to a socially and economically diverse population unique in Montgomery County, a mix attributed in large part to the supply of multifamily housing. The study area retains this diversity today: it is home to Spanish, French and Amharic-speaking residents, and a population that is younger, less wealthy, and less White than the county as a whole.





## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Marc Elrich  
County Executive

Robert K. Sutton  
Chair

September 12, 2023

Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reddie Drive, 14th Floor  
Wheaton, Maryland 20902

Dear Chair Harris and Members of the Planning Board,

On May 10, 2023, the Historic Preservation Commission received a briefing from Planning Department's Historic Preservation Office staff on the *Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment*. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) regularly provides comments to the Planning Board on master plan updates which impact historic resources, recommend resources for designation, or include significant historical elements. This plan proposes the historic designation of several important resources through a concurrent amendment to the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. As part of the HPC's role and responsibilities under Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code, I am pleased to offer the Commission's recommendations to the Planning Board.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that the Planning Board list three individual properties in the Locational Atlas & Index of Historic Sites, and recommends the Planning Board support the recommendation to the County Council to designate these properties in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. These properties and their relevant designation criteria are as follows:

- **Heffner Park Community Center (42 Oswego Avenue):** The City of Takoma Park built the one-story cinderblock Heffner Park Community Center in 1959 as a segregated recreation facility for the city's Black residents. The building and park are the results of decades of advocacy by the city's African American residents to demand recreational outlets for Black children in the years preceding the county's public accommodation law, which prohibited discrimination in public facilities in 1963. The Heffner Park Community Center satisfies three designation criteria (**1A, 1C, and 1D**) listed in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code.

1A. The historic resource has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation.

The Heffner Park Community Center is associated with the development of the historically Black neighborhood of "the Hill" within the City of Takoma Park and the community-building efforts of its residents.

As the neighborhood coalesced in the 1920s, segregation limited residents' access to social support systems and public spaces. Residents of "the Hill" built local social and community institutions to mitigate the effects of racial discrimination. The first two of



these institutions, the Parker Memorial Baptist Church (est. 1922) and the Takoma Park Rosenwald School (est. 1928), provided community services that extended beyond their basic functions. Neighborhood leaders organized events at the church and school, including regular movie nights, dances, and trips to nearby leisure destinations that welcomed Black patronage.

In addition to organizing a church and school, residents of “the Hill” worked for decades to meet the community’s need for recreational outlets and outdoor gathering spaces. Like these two institutions, Heffner Park served social and community needs that were unmet due to racial segregation. As the product of dedicated community advocacy, the park is a reflection of local Black leaders’ commitment to providing resources and connections in a challenging, discriminatory environment. Taken together, these three institutions provided a critical support network brought about through local self-help. The former Takoma Park Rosenwald School and the original Parker Memorial Baptist Church are no longer extant, but the Heffner Park Community Center survives as a representation of these critical institutions and the development of the Black community in the mid-twentieth century.

1C. The historic resource is identified with a person or group of persons who influenced society.

The Heffner Park Community Center is associated with the leadership and advocacy of Lee Jordan, who is recognized by the City of Takoma Park as one of the most influential residents in the community’s history. He is celebrated for supporting generations of Takoma Park children as a coach and mentor who bridged a stark racial divide to work for the integration of local youth sports. In addition to his advocacy for youth and sport, Jordan was a prominent leader of Takoma Park’s African American communities in a challenging time of racial segregation. As President of the Colored Citizens Association in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Jordan spearheaded the CCA’s work and advocacy for the provision of public services to Black communities, including the construction of Heffner Park.

The Heffner Park Community Center provides a direct link to Jordan’s broad community leadership as well as his particular emphasis on the importance of recreation. While the baseball field at the nearby Takoma Park Middle School was named in his honor in 1981, there are currently no designated historic sites that reflect his significant legacy. The site provides the opportunity to recognize Jordan’s life and influence on the community in a place created through his leadership and persistence.

1D. The historic resource exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, political or historic heritage of the county and its communities.

The Heffner Park Community Center stands as a reminder of racial segregation and discriminatory public policy in twentieth century Montgomery County. The center was one element in a landscape of segregated recreational facilities within the City of Takoma Park and the county at large. It was built as a separate facility for the city’s Black residents, who were unable to use the Takoma Park Recreation Center built by M-NCPPC in the mid-twentieth century. Recreation programs in Montgomery County did not begin to desegregate until the Department of Recreation, established in 1953, began to desegregate the department’s activities with the opening of the 1955 playground season. In contrast to





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*County Executive*

**Robert K. Sutton**  
*Chair*

the well-appointed Takoma Park Recreation Center, the Heffner Park Community Center was planned as a small, simple building with limited amenities. Its minimalist appearance and lack of ornamentation reflect the disparity in public resources dedicated to African American communities.

Heffner Park reflects the legacy of environmental racism which impacted Montgomery County's African American communities in the twentieth century. Environmental racism is characterized by policies or practices which disproportionately burden communities of color with noxious facilities and air, water, and waste problems. The park exists in its current location due to the decision to move the city's Public Works facility, which had been identified by its neighbors as a nuisance, into a predominantly African American community in order to clear the way for lucrative new development along Maple Avenue. The City sited this facility within "the Hill" despite residents' protest of this decision and the associated hazards. Compounding this injustice, the public works facility was constructed at the site of Black residents' only playground and park, which they had tirelessly sought and finally attained. Heffner Park reopened at its current location in 1959, and remains in close proximity to its former site and the contemporaneous Public Works facility.

- **Krestview (7625 Carroll Avenue):** Krestview is a two-story Craftsman-style bungalow constructed in 1909. The home reflects the local growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is strongly associated with Drs. Daniel and Lauretta Kress, who acquired the property in 1918. The Kresses were prominent Adventist medical missionaries and physicians who promoted faith-based healthcare. The home is also a significant site of women's history for its association with Dr. Lauretta Kress, one of the earliest female licensed physicians and surgeons in Montgomery County and a leader of obstetric care in the early twentieth century. The subject property satisfies two designation criteria (**1A and 1C**) listed in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code.

1A. The historic resource has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation.

The Kress House is associated with the growth of Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Takoma Park and their influence on the development of the local community.

The relocation of the General Conference headquarters and publishing house and the establishment of the Washington Sanitarium and the Washington Training College resulted in an in-migration of Seventh-day Adventist members to Takoma Park over the next several decades. Adventist sources estimate that upwards of 2,000 church members moved to Takoma Park in the early part of the twentieth century. Church leaders purchased and subdivided land in Takoma Park to facilitate the growth of the local Adventist community. Arthur G. Daniells and Edwin R. Palmer subdivided the lot on which the Kress House was built within six years of the Adventists' initial purchase of land in Takoma Park. It was an



attractive location for members of the church community due to its proximity to the new sanitarium and college, and the block attracted prominent church members to buy and rent homes in the first third of the twentieth century.

The house at 7625 Carroll Avenue was an early residential property built specifically by Adventist leaders on land that had been purchased for that purpose. The home was occupied continuously by members of the Adventist church from its construction in 1909 through at least 1986, when it was sold by Donald B. and Edna Jones. These owners and residents included leading figures of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, Washington Sanitarium, and the Review and Herald Publishing House, significant institutions within the local faith community and the church as a whole. The property is a strong reflection of the Adventists' influence on the development of Takoma Park and the expansion of their work to the nation's capital.

1C. The historic resource is identified with a person or group of persons who influenced society.

The Kress House reflects the work and influence of Drs. Laretta and Daniel Kress, significant Adventist leaders, doctors, and public health advocates. The Kresses were notable medical missionaries who established Seventh-day Adventist sanitariums around the world before settling in Takoma Park to lead the opening and growth of the Washington Sanitarium. As the sanitarium's first medical superintendent and first surgeon on staff, respectively, Drs. Daniel and Laretta Kress were influential figures in the success of the new institution, which remained in this location until relocating in 2019.

The Kresses were residents at 7625 Carroll Avenue from 1918-1939, a significant stretch in their careers in which Dr. Daniel Kress gained prominence for his anti-smoking advocacy and Dr. Laretta Kress significantly raised the profile of the sanitarium's maternity care program. Dr. Laretta Kress has special distinction as one of the earliest women to be licensed and practice as a physician in Montgomery County. Her leadership shaped the evolution of the sanitarium's program of care and its physical development, by establishing dedicated space in the acute-care hospital building (c. 1918) and a separate maternity ward (c. 1922) for the care of expectant mothers and babies.

The Drs. Kress modified their home to suit their professional needs and their role within the community: the renovation of the basement to serve as a home medical office and their dedicated improvements to the grounds made the house a gathering place for both friends and patients. Their life in the home is clearly evident and declared prominently by the name "Krestview" emblazoned above the front door.

- **The Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church (7700 Carroll Avenue):** The Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church is a three-story, wedge-shaped Streamline Moderne building of steel frame construction built between 1942 and 1944. The church is significant as the home of a progressive congregation within the global Seventh-day Adventist Church and as an excellent representation of the Streamline Moderne style. The subject property satisfies three designation criteria (**1A, 2A, and 2E**) listed in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code.





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1A. The historic resource has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation.

The Sligo Church reflects the growth of the Adventist community in Takoma Park. The Sligo Church, first organized in 1907, was founded concurrently with the nearby Washington Sanitarium (1904) and Washington Training College (1907). Its first name, the Seminary and Sanitarium Church, reflects its origins as an institution which brought the growing Adventist medical and educational communities in Takoma Park together into one congregation. The subject building, constructed between 1942 and 1944, represents Sligo Church's first standalone Church, which it has occupied continuously for nearly 80 years. The congregation's growth and endurance over time were a direct result of the success of its sister institutions.

The Sligo Church also holds significance as the site of pioneering advances towards racial integration and gender equity that are distinctive within the Adventist faith. Through the mid-to-late twentieth century, the Sligo Church acquired prominence for desegregating church membership before national church leadership was prepared to do so, and for ordaining women as ministers in direct response to a globally adopted Adventist policy against this practice.

2A. The historic resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

The Sligo Church is an excellent and distinctive example of Streamline Moderne architecture. Architect J. Raymond Mims' design employs defining features of the style: smooth surfaces, curved corners, and an emphasis on horizontality. The church's exterior is predominantly composed of smooth panels of Indiana limestone with limited ornamentation, and embellishment is found only in low-relief decorative stonework at window and door openings, a common characteristic of the Streamline Moderne style. The symmetrical wedge-shaped plan captures the style's aerodynamic aesthetic, while the projecting rectangular bays on the church's façade reflect its common use of joined rectangular and curved blocks to add visual interest and dimension to the typically blocky buildings. The church's shallow roof reinforces the horizontality of the overall form. Mims' c. 1941 design captures the brief but intense popularity of this style in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

The building is also a successful example of ecclesiastical architecture that is clearly legible as a house of worship. Mims' design brings many elements of traditional religious architecture into a modern form. The church's Indiana limestone exterior and horizontal lines convey permanence and groundedness corresponding to the sincerity of religious practice, while the building's curved lines, harmonious colors and shapes, and visual symmetry lend a sense of gracefulness. The restrained ornamentation is in keeping with the



Streamline Moderne style and also befitting of Seventh-day Adventist values and design precepts, which promote simplicity, limited ornamentation, and avoidance of vanity. The limited number of windows and their stone screens reflect the idea that a sanctuary should be a space for focused worship, not distraction by the outside world. These elements combine in a thoughtful design that cascades towards the street and welcomes the community inside to worship.

2E. The historic resource represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape.

The Sligo Church has occupied its prominent location at the corner of Carroll and Flower Avenues for over eighty years. The building takes advantage of its corner lot with a distinctive wedge-shaped plan that distinguishes it from more conservative buildings on the nearby academic and medical campuses. The Washington Adventist University campus and former Washington Adventist Hospital site are characterized primarily by Georgian Revival buildings interspersed with a few restrained modernist styles dating to the later mid-century.

As a large building serving nearly 3,000 parishioners, the Sligo Church stands out in the landscape. When built, it was the largest church in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. Its scale is reflective of the importance and size of the Adventist community in Takoma Park. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has built a limited number of “megachurches,” defined as those seating over 2,000 worshippers, around the country in places where Adventist institutions are concentrated, including Takoma Park. Historically, this included the c. 1879 Dime Tabernacle in the Adventist hub of Battle Creek, Michigan, which sat 4,000 worshippers using a semi-circular seating and balcony plan like that employed at Sligo (App. 5, Fig. 19). The Sligo Church predated a national pattern of megachurch-building that emerged among evangelical faiths in the latter twentieth century.

The Sligo Church is also unusual among Montgomery County’s religious buildings for its Streamline Moderne design. The county’s extant houses of worship built in the 1940s predominantly reflect the revival styles popular throughout the country in that period; only the Sligo Church was built in the Streamline Moderne style. Most modernist churches in the county were built in the post-war era of suburban expansion and therefore reflect later design trends. The Sligo Church is also distinctive among local Adventist congregations, even those dating to the mid-twentieth century. The nearby Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, an outstanding resource within the Takoma Park Master Plan Historic District located at 6951 Carroll Avenue, was built a decade later and returned to a traditional Gothic Revival style. The choice of a Streamline Moderne building accommodated this congregation’s unusually large size and established a church where the large numbers of Adventists working at the nearby college and hospital could worship together.





## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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The HPC supports the draft recommendation that significant themes and resources within the Plan Area be studied in future Departmental efforts, including:

- Takoma Park's historic African American neighborhoods for potential future listing in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and/or the National Register of Historic Places.
- Mid-century housing developments along Maple Avenue and their role in immigration, changing demographics and increased diversity;
- Small-scale multi-family housing in the vicinity of Erie and Maplewood Avenues;
- Local LGBTQ+ pioneers and advocates; and,
- Social activism and the development of community political identity.

Additionally, the HPC supports the draft recommendations regarding interpretive signage throughout the plan area, and the support of the Washington Adventist Campus should they seek to pursue a National Register nomination for the University and its associated buildings and landscape.

Finally, the HPC recommends the attached Community History narrative be added to the Plan as part of the Planning Board DRAFT transmitted to the County Council. It is typical that all Master Plans include an updated community history and narrative; this text as drafted by staff and reviewed by the HPC would provide the framework for a new and inclusive history of the plan area. We look forward to working with you as this Plan progresses and are available for any questions during the public hearing and worksessions.

Sincerely,

Karen Burditt, Vice Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission

Cc: Members, Historic Preservation Commission



Good evening,

I am transmitting the attached letters of testimony on behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission for the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment public hearing.

The Vice Chair of the HPC, Karen Burditt, has signed up to testify in person tomorrow at WHQ as well.

Sincerely,

**Rebecca Ballo**

**Historic Preservation Supervisor**

Montgomery County Planning Department

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o: 301.563.3404



September 12, 2023

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

**Re: Master Plan Hearing Item: Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (September 14, 2023 Public Hearing)**

Dear Planning Board Members,

I am a 36-year resident of Takoma Park and over the last 5 years, I have been actively engaged in climate and equity issues at the County and State levels. Initially, I was very excited about the opportunities created by the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan (Plan) to reimagine the Adventist Hospital site and Adventist University. I saw the possibility of new mixed affordable and market-rate multi-family housing built to net-zero standards; increased missing middle housing; new small businesses desired by residents and students near the Adventist University and on Maple Avenue; improved stormwater management/retention where there are poorly-designed parking lots; and improved bike and pedestrian access from the campus to the Municipal District (library, community center and school). While the proposed Plan includes many statements consistent with this vision, the proposed zoning conflicts with these goals, as I will discuss in more detail below. I strongly urge the Planning Board to reject the Plan as written and ask staff to make changes consistent with my recommendations below.

**Housing**

The goals of the Plan should be to: 1) preserve and improve existing affordable housing; 2) add new housing including mixed affordable and market rate multi-family housing; and 3) add missing middle housing. The proposed Plan falls short.

First, the one-size-fits-all 150' zoning in the Maple Ave. District would add height and density incompatible with elements of the multi-family residential neighborhood there today, as well as the adjacent, upslope multi-family and single-family neighborhoods and Sligo Creek Park. Currently, there are 1,300 housing units in the Plan area, of which 1,000 units are affordable. The proposed zoning could add another 3,500 units, a 3.7-fold increase. These 3,500 units represent 35% of the 10,000 total housing units the County projects are needed by 2030. However, these 3,500 units would be built on less than .06% of the County's land area; i.e., 132-acre Plan area of 216,800 acres in the County (excluding the Agriculture Reserve).

In addition, the proposed Takoma Park Master Plan zoning is unlike other County plans, with more nuanced zoning that fits with the existing neighborhood, yet adds the opportunity for more housing. For example, the [Forest Glen/Montgomery Hills Sector Plan](#) does not use a one-size fits-all zoning approach. It retains some of the current residential zoning and reserves the greatest height (CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-120') for parcels adjacent to the Metro. The Plan for Takoma Park would greatly benefit from this type of customized approach. A more finely-tuned zoning would allow flexibility for existing non-profit affordable housing property owners to add more housing as appropriate, (e.g., Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) Forest Glen Apartments redevelopment); treat existing 3-7 story condominium properties differently than high-rise apartment properties (e.g., 7611 Maple & Hilltop Condominiums); retain the residential zoning for the existing 2-4 story garden-style multi-family buildings on Maple and Lee Avenues or apply a less dense CRN zoning similar to the Flower Avenue District; and add commercial development in service of residential development rather than in



lieu of it. The Planning Board should not approve a one-size-fits-all, by-right zoning for development of a scale and type that the residents of Takoma Park do not want to see. The Plan should be more sophisticated and nuanced to achieve a vision Takoma Park residents do want to see.

Second, the proposed zoning in the Maple Ave. District could threaten existing affordable housing and risk displacement of many low-income and senior residents, without a commensurate addition of affordable housing. While a number of properties on Maple Ave. are owned by non-profit affordable housing providers (e.g., see properties currently owned by Montgomery Housing Partnership and Enterprise in Table 1 below), this is not true of all the properties. The proposed upzoning (and associated increase in property values) may incentivize building owners to sell their properties, with the resulting demolition of older smaller buildings. The new buildings could be taller, however, only 12.5% of units are required to be moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) and the City's rent stabilization law would not affect rents for five years. At the extreme, the 1,000 existing affordable housing units (30% - 80% AMI) could be replaced by only 437 MPDUs (80% AMI).

Third, because the proposed upzoning will make properties more valuable (and expensive), it will be harder for tenants to take advantage of the City's right-to-purchase law, because the cost could be out of reach for many tenants. Therefore, **I recommend that the zoning in the Maple Ave. District be changed to factor in the buildings there today as described above and shown in Table 1 and similar to the Forest Glen Sector Plan, in order to avoid incentivizing the loss of existing affordable housing.**

**Table 1. Maple Ave. District – Current and Proposed Building Heights and Zoning**

Map #	Current Buildings	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning	Current Floors	Proposed Floors
8	Pepco Site	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	1	15
9	Edinburgh (MHP)	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	10	15
10	Sherwood, Lee Ave. Coop, Hancock Gardens (MHP)	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	3 & 4	6 or 7
11	3 story apartments	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	3	15
12	The Takoma	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	3 & 4	6 or 7
13	Park Ritchie	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	15	15
13	7610 Maple (MHP)	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	10	15
13	The Deauville	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	6	15
14	1 story stores	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-35	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	1	15
15	7611 Maple	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	7	15
15	Park View Towers (MHP)	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	11	15
16	Opal Daniels Park	R-60	R-60	NA	NA
17	The Franklin (MHP)	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	6	15
18	Maple View	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	12	15
19	Hilltop Condominiums	R-30	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	3	15
20	Essex House (Enterprise)	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	12	15
21	Sligo Creek Park	R-60	R-60	NA	NA
22	Sligo Creek Park	R-60	R-60	NA	NA

**MHP & Enterprise** = owned by Montgomery Housing Partnership & Enterprise – non-profit affordable housing providers

**Yellow highlight** = Buildings > 25,000 sq ft subject to Building Energy Performance Standards regulations



## Commercial Development

The proposed CR zoning is perplexing, because it would allow existing residential buildings to be replaced with 100% commercial buildings and new buildings to be 100% commercial, regardless of the height and location. This appears contrary to the Plan's statements in the Housing section of developing "targeted strategies to minimize gentrification and displacement because of development, while promoting social integration" and "[in] the event of redevelopment"... "striving to achieve no net loss of affordable housing." In addition, the proposed Plan offers no concrete means to incentivize the types of businesses that residents said they want in the engagement sessions (e.g., grocery). Additional commercial development should serve and enhance residential development not replace it. Rather than zoning Maple and Lee Avenues CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150 and CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65, respectively, and the Flower Ave. District CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.75 H-55, CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R1.0 H-50, CR-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-120, and CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70, **I recommend that the CR zones should be strictly limited to commercial density of C-0.25, C-0.5, or at most C-1.0.**

## Climate

Retrofitting existing buildings is better for the climate than building new buildings, because a relatively small amount of embodied emissions result from renovation activities. In essence, "the greenest building is the one that is already built." While the Plan states on page 67 that "[g]iven that many rental properties in the City were built 40 or more years ago, there is a need for reinvestment in these buildings to ensure quality, safe, affordable housing," the Plan only "recommends that the City explore incentives and policy changes to encourage building improvements that extend the life of housing units and provide improvements like increased energy efficiency." The Plan makes no mention of the County's Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS) law which requires buildings greater than 25,000 sq ft to reduce site energy use intensity. There are at least 10 buildings in the Maple Ave. District which will have to reduce energy use through weatherization, energy efficiency, and electrification in the next several years. Furthermore, the Plan fails to mention the unprecedented resources available to achieve these building improvements through the federal Inflation Reduction Act, Montgomery County Green Bank, and state programs. Having these new resources makes it more possible for both BEPS-regulated buildings and smaller multi-family buildings to make the kinds of improvements that will extend the life of the buildings and the improve the comfort of residents. Given these unique opportunities to retrofit existing buildings, which is helpful for the climate, the Plan's proposed upzoning becomes all-the-more concerning and perplexing. In addition, the proposed zoning will incentivize property owners to sell and they may be reluctant to make any energy efficiency and other investments if the building will be sold and demolished. **I recommend the Plan describe the opportunities and requirements for building energy efficiency and electrification retrofits consistent with County goals and laws (see Table 1 for BEPS-regulated buildings) and revise the zoning in the Maple Ave. District as described above.**

With regard to stormwater runoff, a growing problem due to climate change, the redevelopment of poorly designed parking lots could vastly improve runoff to Sligo Creek. There are a number of parking lots on Maple Ave. which could be redesigned/redeveloped with infill development for additional residential or new small commercial uses, as well as greatly improved stormwater management and treatment. However, the proposed zoning does not incentivize this kind of infill development versus demolition of existing buildings. Additionally, the hospital parking lot upslope from Sligo Creek could be part of the redevelopment and also result in improved stormwater management and treatment if new development is designed and built properly. **I recommend that the Plan and zoning be changed to encourage appropriately-sized infill development on Maple Ave. parking lots and redevelopment on the hospital site to reduce stormwater runoff to Sligo Creek.**



The Plan also represents an opportunity to envision the kind of climate-friendly development desired by Takoma Park residents and consistent with the City's and County's climate emergency resolutions. The [Hillandale Gateway](#) project is an excellent example of this type of forward-looking, climate-friendly development. Not only does the Plan not encourage all-electric, net zero, or passive house construction, it does not mention such requirements forthcoming with updates to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and International Green Construction Code (IgCC). **I recommend the Plan encourage all-electric, net zero, and/or passive house construction for new development, at a minimum consistent with County goals and regulations.**

Finally, while the Climate Assessment is not technically due until 7 days before the County Council hearing, it would be extremely beneficial for both the Planning Board and the public to see it before the Board makes a final decision on the Plan. **I recommend a draft Climate Assessment be completed and made available before a final Planning Board decision and that the Plan be modified accordingly to address the findings of the Climate Assessment.**

### **Transportation**

While the proposed Plan includes "visionary" elements of a green promenade and community spaces, these are entirely optional based on the development proposed and the willingness of private property owners to grant rights-of-way to accommodate pedestrian greenways and bikeways. The Plan is deficient in more actionable elements for pedestrian and bikeways connecting the three districts. Additionally, the Plan lacks an analysis of the transportation impacts of the development allowed by the proposed zoning. Adding up to 3,500 new housing units (and at least double that many new residents), will come with impacts to traffic and pedestrian and bike safety. **I recommend that the Planning Board require a more comprehensive transportation impact analysis.**

In summary, Takoma Park is a wonderfully diverse community precisely because the city has a unique and diverse stock of affordable housing and rent stabilization. The rezoning proposed in the draft Plan threatens the City's affordable housing rather than ensuring additional affordable housing. I strongly recommend the Planning Board reject the one-size-fits all approach to rezoning, and that the proposed Plan be revised to better protect existing affordable housing, expand new affordable housing, and address the City and County's climate goals. I also recommend the Planning Board direct staff to conduct missing analyses as I have suggested before moving forward with the Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Laurie McGilvray  
7010 Woodland Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Laurie.McGilvray@gmail.com



Dear Chair and Planning Board Members -

I am submitting my written comments on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendments (attached). I have signed up to testify in person as well.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Laurie McGilvray  
7010 Woodland Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
[Laurie.McGilvray@gmail.com](mailto:Laurie.McGilvray@gmail.com)



To the Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Hearing: September 14, 2023

I am writing as a resident of the Flower District of Montgomery County District 4. My husband and I moved to the neighborhood seven years ago and this community has become our home in both geography and feeling. The future of our neighborhood matters deeply to us, as we intend to raise our children (currently age 2 and 6) here and have found friendship and a sense of community amongst our neighbors unlike any place we have lived before. I am writing because I care deeply about the future of our home and that of our neighbors.

I would like to start by saying that I value the commitment to equitable housing and diversity in our community, as reflected in the MMPA. I appreciate the effort to improve access to amenities and ensure our neighborhood remains a place with affordable housing options. For these reasons, I do not oppose the MMPA in its entirety, but I believe there are some real concerns that must be addressed to ensure the plan is truly supporting the kind of community we all value, and one which will respect and preserve our special neighborhood.

**1. Green Promenade on Maple Avenue** - The impact of the Green Promenade on the families residing on Maplewood Avenue is concerning and unclear. This street is populated by smaller, older homes with families and renters, many whom would be unable to afford the increasingly larger and more expensive houses being built and renovated around the city. As part of this plan there is messaging that individual families won't be displaced, yet there is no clarity or reassurance for the residents Maplewood, as the Green Promenade is currently mapped to run down the street. Any adopted plan needs to ensure the well-being of the families on this street, but the current details are vague and offer no reassurance that families won't be disrupted.

**2. Traffic** – The plan does not address what would certainly be a substantial increase in residential and commercial traffic and parking impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and our small residential streets. The county has already failed to heed our concerns about street traffic and speeding, which occurs regularly and is dangerous for our walkable neighborhood. I have had multiple frightening encounters with reckless driving while walking my kids down the street, and the even after community attempts and request for attention, nothing has changed. With the county already failing to address these problems and the plan offering no reassurance about the impacts on our streets, I'm concerned that problems will only get worse.

**3. Lack of planning for risk and mitigation of environmental impacts.** Several years ago construction on Greenwood Ave changed the gradation of the street which has resulted in constant and sometimes severe flooding for the residents of Garland Ave. While this plan touts all the many benefits of development there is little reassurance that new development and construction won't exacerbate current issues or cause new ones. While providing maximum flexibility by painting the Flower District with a broad brush of mixed-use zoning, there is no reassurance that the neighborhood will not be saddled with a host of issues the county may continue to ignore.

The MMPA has been drafted in such a way that impacted individuals are having a hard time sticking to the facts and making heads or tails of what will really happen to them and the place they call home. I was disappointed to read the plan and find that explanations about why decisions were being made (e.g. zoning) were vague and not backed up by data sources or research. These are huge gaps in information that would help the community come together and understand the purpose behind many of these choices. Instead, one must wade through over 100 pages of zoning jargon. There has been a failure of community engagement and communication that is leaving those in the Flower District worried and scared.

**Please do not adopt this Amendment before the needs and wellbeing of those currently residing in the planned areas are fully accounted for.**



Hanna Lentz  
7904 Greenwood Ave, Takoma Park MD  
[Laurhann2@gmail.com](mailto:Laurhann2@gmail.com)



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

Re: Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment Comments (September 14, 2023 public hearing)

Dear Planning Board Members,

My name is Jessica Landman; I reside at 232 Park Avenue in Takoma Park MD. I welcome the prospect of adding to the City's housing stock, especially in the form of additional affordable housing, having lived here since the mid-90's. (I have a licensed ADU and provide an affordable housing unit in my own home.) The Minor Master Plan Amendment unfortunately does not focus on doing this in a way that protects existing, deeply affordable housing in our unique city; nor does it adequately assure that some of the other good ideas to which it nods encouragingly, such as protections for Sligo Creek and enhanced bikeways, will come to pass. There are statements about the new small businesses desired by residents and students near the Adventist University and on Maple Avenue; improved stormwater management/retention where there are poorly-designed parking lots; and improved bike and pedestrian access from the campus to the Municipal District (library, community center and school), but the proposed zoning conflicts with these goals. **I strongly urge the Planning Board to reject the Plan as written, and ask staff to make changes consistent with the recommendations below.**

#### Housing

The goals of the Plan should be to: 1) preserve and improve existing affordable housing (which Takoma Park has in deeply affordable form, uniquely in the County, and which needs to be assiduously protected); 2) add new housing, including mixed affordable and market rate multifamily housing; and 3) add missing middle housing.

The proposed Plan falls short.

First, the level of increased density is excessive in certain areas, and it is incompatible with the size and scale of the City of Takoma Park. It may jeopardize existing affordable housing. Currently, there are 1,300 housing units in the Plan area, of which 1,000 units are affordable. The proposed zoning could add another 3,500 units, a **3.7-fold increase**. These 3,500 units represent 35% of the 10,000 total housing units that the County projects are needed by 2030. However, these 3,500 units would be built on less than .06% of the County's land area; i.e., 132-acre Plan area of 216,800 acres in the County (excluding the Agriculture Reserve). And this is not an area on top of a Metro station or a dense commercial district well-served by transportation or commercial amenities.

The one-size-fits-all 150' zoning in the Maple Ave. District that is recommended paints with a broad, undifferentiated brush that would add height and density incompatible with the multifamily residential neighborhood there today, or with the adjacent, upslope single-family neighborhoods, and Sligo Creek Park. Moreover, the analysis provided by certified engineer Paul Chrostowski under separate cover indicates that there is serious question as to whether the soil characteristics and slopes even make these building sizes safe for some of the sloping areas adjacent to the creek – to say nothing of the stormwater management issues that he calls upon the staff to evaluate further before moving forward with any plan.



The proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan rezoning also is inconsistent with other recent County plans, even in Metro-accessible areas, where lower maximum heights and densities have been found appropriate (all of which have a maximum height of 120', with the sole exception of one parcel – not an entire Minor Master Plan area -- adjacent to the planned Purple Line Station off Brookville Road). The Planning Board should not approve such oversized by-right zoning for development of a scale and type that the residents of Takoma Park do not want to see. Parcel by parcel evaluation and rezoning should be undertaken.

Second, the proposed zoning in the Maple Ave. District would threaten existing affordable housing and risk displacement of many low-income and senior residents, without a commensurate addition of affordable housing (e.g., see properties currently owned by Montgomery Housing Partnership in Table 1 below).

The proposed upzoning (and associated increase in property values that will inevitably result) will incentivize building owners to sell their existing properties, with the resulting demolition of older smaller buildings (2-12 floors). The new buildings could be taller; however, only 12.5% of units are required to be moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) and the City's rent stabilization law would not affect rents for market rate units for five years. Existing rents in Takoma Park are hundreds of dollars below typical market rates in surrounding MoCo jurisdictions. In short, the 1,000 existing affordable housing units (30% - 80% AMI) could be replaced by only 437 MPDUs (80% AMI). The net result will be fewer affordable units, and the 'affordability' will begin at a higher rate. Since development will be 'by right,' the City will have absolutely no leverage to seek either larger units or more deeply affordable units from developers, as it would under other zoning scenarios.

Third, because the proposed upzoning will make properties more valuable (and expensive), it will be harder for tenants to take advantage of the City's right-to-purchase law, because the cost will be out of reach for many tenants.

For all of these reasons, I recommend that the zoning in the Maple Ave. District closely mirror the buildings there today (see Table 1 below) rather than setting a blanket 150' commercial ceiling along Maple Ave. and 65' on Lee Ave. This will avoid incentivizing the demolition of existing, affordable housing. Instead, the County and City should focus on incentivizing the retrofit of energy efficiency for these valuable assets and on incentivizing construction of suitably-sized new affordable multifamily housing on the sites that are currently awaiting development on the other parcels that are part of this overall Plan area, on the former WAH property, at a scale that is proportionate to the surrounding modest apartment buildings and homes.



<b>Table 1. Maple Ave. District – Current and Proposed Building Heights and Zoning Map #</b>	<b>Current Buildings</b>	<b>Existing Zoning</b>	<b>Recommended Zoning</b>	<b>Current Floors</b>	<b>Proposed Floors</b>
8	Pepco Site	R-60	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	1	15
9	<b>Edinburgh (MHP)</b>	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	10	15
10	Sherwood, Lee Ave. Coop, <b>Hancock Gardens (MHP)</b>	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	3 & 4	6 or 7
11	3 Story Apartments	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	3	15
12	The Takoma	R-10	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65	3 & 4	6 or 7
13	Park Ritchie	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	15	15
13	<b>7610 Maple (MHP)</b>	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	10	15
13	The Deauville	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	6	15
14	1 floor stores	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.25 H-35	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	1	15
15	<b>Park View Towers (MHP)</b>	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	11	15
16	Opal Daniels Park	R-60	R-60	NA	NA
17	<b>The Franklin (MHP)</b>	R-20	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	6	15
18	Maple View	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	12	15
19	Hilltop Condominiums	R-30	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	3	15
20	Essex House	R-10	CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150	12	15
21	Sligo Creek Park	R-60	R-60	NA	NA
22	Sligo Creek Park	R-60	R-60	NA	NA

MHP = owned by Montgomery Housing Partnership

### Commercial Development

The proposed CR zoning is inexplicable. It would allow existing residential buildings to be replaced with 100% commercial buildings, and new buildings to be 100% commercial, regardless of the height and location. This appears contrary to the Plan's statements in the Housing section of developing "targeted strategies to minimize gentrification and displacement because of development, while promoting social integration" and "[in] the event of redevelopment"... "striving to achieve no net loss of affordable



housing.” With this zoning, a 150-foot high U-Store-It building could be built in a parking lot! In addition, the proposed Plan offers no concrete means to incentivize the types of businesses that residents said they want in the engagement sessions (e.g., grocery). Rather than zoning Maple and Lee Avenues CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150 and CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-1.5 H-65 and the Flower Ave. District CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.75 H-55, CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R1.0 H-350, CR-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-120, and CRT-1.25 C-1.25 R-1.25 H-70, I recommend that the CR zones should be strictly limited to commercial density of C-0.25, C-0.5, or at most C-1.0.

## **Climate**

Retrofitting existing buildings is better for the climate than building new buildings, because a relatively small amount of embodied emissions result from renovation activities. In essence, “the greenest building is the one that is already built.” While the Plan states on page 67 that “[g]iven that many rental properties in the City were built 40 or more years ago, there is a need for reinvestment in these buildings to ensure quality, safe, affordable housing,” the Plan only “recommends that the City explore incentives and policy changes to encourage building improvements that extend the life of housing units and provide improvements like increased energy efficiency.”

The Plan should focus on the County’s Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS) law which requires buildings greater than 25,000 sq ft to reduce site energy use intensity; instead, it fails to mention this law. There are at least 10 buildings in the Maple Ave. District which will have to reduce energy use through weatherization, energy efficiency, and electrification in the next several years. Furthermore, the Plan fails to mention the unprecedented resources available to achieve these building improvements through the federal Inflation Reduction Act, Montgomery County Green Bank, and state programs. Having these new resources makes it more possible for both BEPS-regulated buildings and smaller multifamily buildings to make the kinds of improvements that will extend the life of the buildings and the improve the comfort of residents. Both the City of Takoma Park and the County place great importance on climate resilience and achieving net zero – but this plan fails to reflect that fact.

Given these unique opportunities to retrofit existing affordable housing buildings, which is helpful for the climate, the Plan’s proposed upzoning becomes all-the-more concerning and seems arbitrary and capricious because it incentivizes new emissions rather than protecting against unnecessary emissions from demolition and construction. In addition, the proposed zoning will incentivize property owners to sell and they may be reluctant to make energy efficiency and other investments if they foresee near term demolition.

For climate resilience purposes I recommend that the zoning in the Maple Ave. District closely mirror the current building heights, and the Plan be revised to focus on energy efficiency retrofits and green infrastructure, including enhanced tree cover to lower ambient temperature and improve quality of life and walkability, consistent with other key County and Takoma Park climate goals, with perhaps minor revisions to further encourage small scale retail shops in existing buildings to reduce reliance on cars for grocery shopping. (see Table 1).

With regard to stormwater runoff, a growing problem due to climate change, I refer you again to the comments of Paul Chrostowski which I adopt by reference as my own. It is critical that the Planning Board have a complete climate assessment and stormwater impact assessment in hand before reaching



any final decisions – and that this information be made available to the public sufficiently in advance for us to also make use of it in reviewing the proposal and to use the information for our own comments.

### **Transportation**

Adding up to 3,500 new housing units (and at least double that many new residents), will come with impacts to traffic and pedestrian and bike safety. I recommend that the Planning Board require a more comprehensive transportation/traffic impact analysis.

While the proposed Plan includes “visionary” elements of a green promenade and community spaces, these are entirely optional based on the development proposed and the willingness of private property owners to grant rights-of-way to accommodate pedestrian greenways and bikeways. The Plan is deficient in more actionable elements for pedestrian and bikeways connecting the three districts. Additionally, the Plan lacks an analysis of the transportation impacts of the development allowed by the proposed zoning.

In summary, Takoma Park is a wonderfully diverse community precisely because the city has a unique and diverse stock of affordable and deeply affordable housing and rent stabilization. The rezoning proposed in the draft Plan threatens to displace those who currently reside in those housing units and offers no roadmap for how their interests will be protected. It also opens the door to such a large percentage of the County’s needed new housing units being built in such a small area of the County’s available space, and much of it on space that is NOT located withing a transit’s half-mile walkshed, that it violates the County’s own general policies about density and siting.

I strongly recommend the Planning Board set aside this broad brush and (1) await detailed climate and traffic assessments; (2) focus on zoning and policies that incentivize retrofitting existing large multifamily affordable housing buildings that are uniquely affordable and (3) revise the proposed to better protect existing affordable housing, expand new affordable housing, and address the City and County’s climate goals in line with the chart I have included here.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Jessica Landman  
232 Park Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Phone: 301-312-4193  
  
Email: jlandman@mulland.net



Attached please find my comments regarding the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Thank you.

Jessica Landman 232 Park Ave.

Takoma Park MD 20912

Please call with any questions: 301-312-4193



To: MCP-Chair

Re: The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (TPMMA)

From: Carlos Fernandez, 7706 Garland Avenue, Takoma Park MD / Ward 5.

I have lived at this address since 2004.

My comments are on four subjects:

1. Greater attention is paid to insuring green spaces.
2. Reducing height limits around the edges of the planning zone.
3. Recognition of the storm water problems that exist and will be exacerbated by the massive construction to come and a commitment by the county and city that existing homeowners won't be left to battle each individual construction project on our own.
4. Concern that without requirements to ensure no net loss of low income and affordable cost housing the rezoning will result in many current residents within these categories being forced out of Takoma Park and perhaps out of the Montgomery County.

Because my address (Garland Ave) places me directly adjacent to the University and the Flower District portion of the plan my first three comments and requests will focus on the Flower District, but I believe these concerns apply to all sections of the City and the plan.

#### 1. Green Space

Although one of the desired outcomes of the plan is to maximize green space, without specific attention to that it will be lost in the monetary desire for use of space. An example, the City right-of-way between Carroll and Maplewood behind the back of the Garland Ave properties and the back of the University property on Greenwood is a tree filled green corridor connecting by other green spaces to the Sligo and Long Branch green areas. Animals use this corridor to move among green areas. Among the animals that live or use this area are owls, deer, rabbits, foxes, racoons, opossum, and a large variety of trees and insects which are fundamental to the eco-balance of the area. The new Zoning Plan comes right up to this City right-of-way with authorization for 55 ft high construction. This will likely result in the destruction of this green corridor and the loss of tree cover and wildlife habitat.

I request that the zoning plan be amended to indicate this existing green space and other similar spaces will be protected and to limit the height of adjacent construction to be compatible.

#### 2. Height limits around the edges of the rezoning plan.

The section of Garland Ave directly behind the college property on Greenwood is a long-established neighborhood of one- and two-story homes. The proposed zoning change would allow for construction up to 55 ft in height which is not compatible with the existing neighborhood.



I request that the plan maintain the current zoning regulation for single family homes.

### 3. Storm water management

I believe storm water management issues are a problem in many areas of the City, but I will speak from personal experience here on Garland Ave behind the University. Over a period of many years the residents of this neighborhood have had several meetings with City and University representatives about the problems we have had with storm water runoff from the University, in particular with runoff from a parking lot the University constructed several years ago.

I request that the County and the City include in the zoning plan a commitment to provide oversight on this issue and ensure existing property owners have recourse to the County and City for assistance on resulting problems.

My fourth comment concerns the Maple Avenue portion of the rezoning plan.

### 4. Net loss of low income and rent stabilized units.

There is considerable concern that much of that will disappear and those citizens of Takoma Park will be forced out if there is no provision in the Minor/Master Plan for no net loss of such housing.

I request that this be addressed in the Plan to avoid pushing citizens out of Takoma Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Minor/Major rezoning plan.

Carlos Fernandez



To: MCP-Chair

Re: The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (TPMMA)

From: Carlos Fernandez, 7706 Garland Avenue, Takoma Park MD / Ward 5.

I have lived at this address since 2004.

My comments are on four subjects:

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2. Reducing height limits around the edges of the planning zone.
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I request that this be addressed in the Plan to avoid pushing citizens out of Takoma Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Minor/Major rezoning plan.



**TO: Planning Board Chair & Commissioners, 9/13/23, MMP, 9/14/23**

**Ronald S. Senseman FAIA Tribute & Illumination!**

**Minor Master Plan Hearing, 9/14/23, Planning Board, by Marcie Stickle, Silver Spring Historical Society Advocacy Chair, 301-587-5955, marcipro@aol.com**

Ronald S. Senseman FAIA shaped WAU's architectural design from moment he burst upon Washington Adventist Missionary College Scene as a Teen in the 1930s! He arrived with expert architectural and drafting experience and skills! College Leadership seized upon his expertise and repeatedly asked him to use these skills to create Campus buildings from his arrival and into the 1960s to serve the College!! Senseman deserves laudatory attention, vociferous applause, in the Minor Master Plan! **Heritage Trail Signs with photos and text on campus can applaud and share Senseman's superb architectural prowess, versatility, ever serving others expertise through his 88 years! "In Service to Others" is the Adventist creed! Senseman established his own practice at age 22! See Section 8 Photos, PPs 40, 41!**

- **MIHP Designation form for Senseman's S.S. Baptist Church, Comprehensive Coverage, Photos Section 8, PPs 40, 41 especially:**

**[https://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2011/documents/20110623\\_SS\\_Attach3.pdf](https://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2011/documents/20110623_SS_Attach3.pdf)**

**Historic Preservation Planner Clare Kelly includes many Senseman references & photos in her "Modern Montgomery," & in her Essay,**

**[https://montgomeryplanning.org/historic/montgomery\\_modern/RonaldSenseman.shtm](https://montgomeryplanning.org/historic/montgomery_modern/RonaldSenseman.shtm)**

**Section 8:**

**Aerial View, 1936-1960s Senseman's Structures:**

**HMS Richards Hall/Normal Bldg/Religious Center/First Sligo Adventist Elementary School, 1934**

**Sanitarium Hospital Brick Additions**

**Campus Library, 1942 ["Marble Interior"! 7600 Flower Ave. "Montgomery Modern"]**

**College Press Building**

**Halcyon Hall [Women's Dormitory] with Interior Arboretum open to the sky!**

**Wilkinson Hall Campus Center ["Rust Brick" & Fieldstone, "Montgomery Modern"]**

**Morrison Hall [Men's Dormitory]**

One of the first in 1930s is the "Normal" Bldg, very first Sligo Adventist Elementary School, with excellent adaptive reuses over the years, now The Religion Center, HMS Richardson Hall. It's a charmer! It looks like an original school house with its red brick [schoolhouse] walls, its myriad glass school windows, capturing sunlight for the students, its rich interior Wooden Paneled walls, likely due to Senseman's work in The College Mill, & its wide hallways!

**In 1964, Senseman designed the newest Sligo Adventist Elementary School with its Zig-Zag Portico, also of stone & brick, 9300 Carroll Ave. TP 20912, beautifully described & photographed in Clare Kelly's "Modern Montgomery," P. 142.**

His charming & versatile original "school house" of brick, glass, & steel needs to be joyfully retained, continue to be vibrantly enlivened, protected, designated on Locational Atlas [or Master Plan], proudly tout a vibrant Heritage Trail Sign, as a living Tribute to Senseman, & on its continuing joyful vitality serving all of us!!

**Marcie Stickle, Silver Spring Historical Society Advocacy Chair, marcipro@aol.com, 301-587-5955, 510 Albany Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912**



TO: Planning Board Chair & Commissioners, 9/13/23, for 9/14/23 MMP Hearing

**The Silver Spring Historical Society endorses the Historic Preservation Commission's & Historic Preservation Office's recommendations to designate these 3 very significant historical properties onto the Master Plan for Historic Preservation:**

**<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/TPMMA-Public-Hearing-Draft-Final-6.21.pdf>**

- **The Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church (7700 Carroll Avenue)**
- **Heffner Park Community Center (42 Oswego Avenue)**
- **Krestview (7625 Carroll Avenue)**

**Thank you! Marcie Stickle, Silver Spring Historical Society Advocacy Chair, marcipro@aol.com 301-587-5955, 510 Albany Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912**



Kerry-Ann Hamilton  
7712 Garland Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
[kahphd@me.com](mailto:kahphd@me.com)  
202.230.6219

Artie Harris, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reedie Dr 14th Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

Subject: Concerns Regarding the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan

Dear Chair Harris,

I hope you are doing well. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan. As a Black family, my wife and I, along with our toddler, cherish the diverse and inclusive community that is Takoma Park – we feel honored to help to shape and preserve the vitality of the neighborhood both for the well-being of people as well as the flora and fauna that is so abundant in our community.

Firstly, I would like to extend my appreciation to the planners. As an engaged resident of Montgomery County, I respect the Planning Board's dedication to fostering vibrant and sustainable neighborhoods. The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan's objectives, aimed at enhancing our quality of life and promoting a strong sense of community, are genuinely praiseworthy.

### **Green Space**

However, I want to express my concerns about preserving and expanding green spaces. These natural habitats provide solace to residents and serve as crucial ecosystems for our local wildlife, including deer and fox populations. We must protect and preserve these green spaces, as they are integral to maintaining the delicate balance of our environment and sustaining the biodiversity that enriches our community.

### **Building Height**

In addition to preserving green space, I would like to address the building height issue proposed in the master plan. While acknowledging the importance of progress and growth, it is equally vital to maintain Takoma Park's unique character and charm. Striking a balance between architectural advancements and preserving our community's identity is paramount. The section of Garland Ave directly behind the University's property on Greenwood is a long-established neighborhood of one and two-story homes. The proposed zoning change would allow for construction up to 55 ft in height, which is incompatible with the existing community. We respectfully request that the plan be changed to limit construction height in that area to 40 ft. I also ask the construction heights to be revisited around the edges of the zoning plan to determine whether the flowers are appropriate considering existing homes. I would welcome the opportunity to host planners in our backyard to experience the potential harm of the current plan.

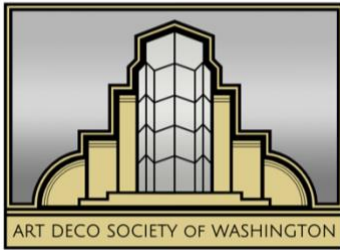
### **Traffic**

Lastly, I wish to bring to your attention the potential challenges associated with increased traffic that may arise from implementing the master plan. As our community grows, it is crucial to address the implications on transportation infrastructure proactively. We must ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate congestion and prioritize the safety of all residents and pedestrians.

We have shared values in creating a vibrant and healthy community for all. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully and in partnership,  
Kerry-Ann Hamilton





PO Box 42722 – Washington, DC 20015

September 13, 2023

Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reedie Dr., 14th floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

**Re: The Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church (7700 Carroll Avenue), set for  
Hearing on Sept. 14, 2023**

Dear Chairperson Harris and Members of the Planning Board:

The Art Deco Society of Washington supports the addition of the Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church to the County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. The Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church is a three-story, wedge-shaped Streamline Moderne building of steel frame construction built between 1942 and 1944. It is also a rare and unique county religious structure in the Streamline Moderne style that meets three designation criteria (1A, 2A, and 2E) listed in §24A-3 of the Montgomery County Code:

- 1A. The historic resource has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation.
- 2A. The historic resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.
- 2E. The historic resource represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape.

If you have any questions or are interested in further input from the Art Deco Society on this matter, please feel free to contact me or ADSW President Steve Knight.

Sincerely,

Deborah Chalfie, Preservation Chair  
The Art Deco Society of Washington

cc: Rebecca Ballo, Planning Supervisor, Montgomery County Historic Preservation Office  
Steve Knight, ADSW President



Dear Chairperson Harris and Members of the Planning Board,  
Please find attached a letter from the Art Deco Society of Washington in support of adding the Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church building in Takoma Park to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Deborah Chalfie, Preservation Chair



**Christine Kenngott**  
7711 Garland Ave, Takoma Park, 20912  
[chriskennngott@gmail.com](mailto:chriskennngott@gmail.com) / 202-549-0067

**From:** Christine Kenngott, 7711 Garland Ave, Takoma Park, Ward 5  
**Re:** Comments for the MMPA hearing on Sept 14, 2023, at 6 PM  
**Date:** September 13, 2023

**To: Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board:**

My family of four (two moms, two teenage daughters) moved to 7711 Garland Ave, Takoma Park, MD in 2017. We've been here for six years. Our house includes two rental units.

The Garland/Maplewood/Greenwood neighborhood is uniquely affected by this MMPA yet many neighbors were not told of this because they are "outside" of the zone. We came together and discussed our concerns. These are my personal concerns based on talking with many people in our neighborhood.

While I am for development, affordable housing, and commercial/retail space, I have the following concerns that I feel are not adequately addressed in the MMPA. I would like to see the MMPA updated to address these issues:

- Building trust with the community and current residents by addressing current and future problems created by WAU development;
- Recognition of the stormwater problems that exist and will be exacerbated by the massive construction to come and a commitment by the county and city that existing homeowners won't be left to battle each individual construction project on our own;
- Reducing height limits around the edges of the planning zone;
- An honest assessment of current road infrastructure and matching it to any new population increase rather than the other way around -- build now, deal with fallout (or not) later.
- Ensuring an increased tax base for Takoma Park to enable us to sustain the increased population
- Greater attention to ensuring green spaces and sports fields
- Affordable housing -- Concern that without requirements to ensure no net loss of low-income and affordable cost housing the rezoning will result in many current residents within these categories being forced out of Takoma Park and perhaps out of Montgomery County. And that future development will minimize affordable/middle class housing

**Lack of Trust**

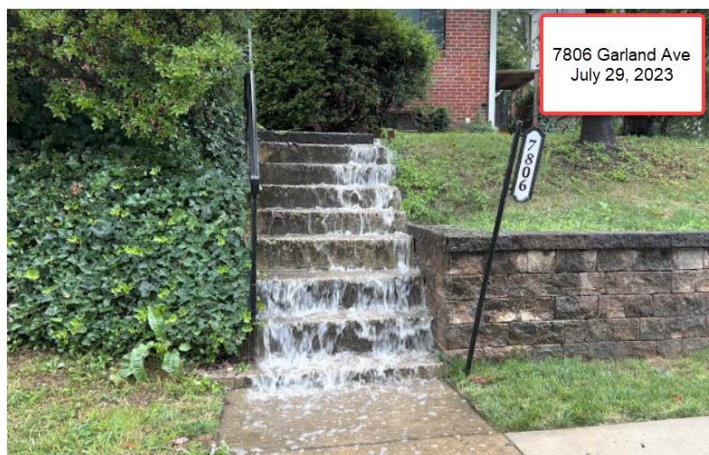
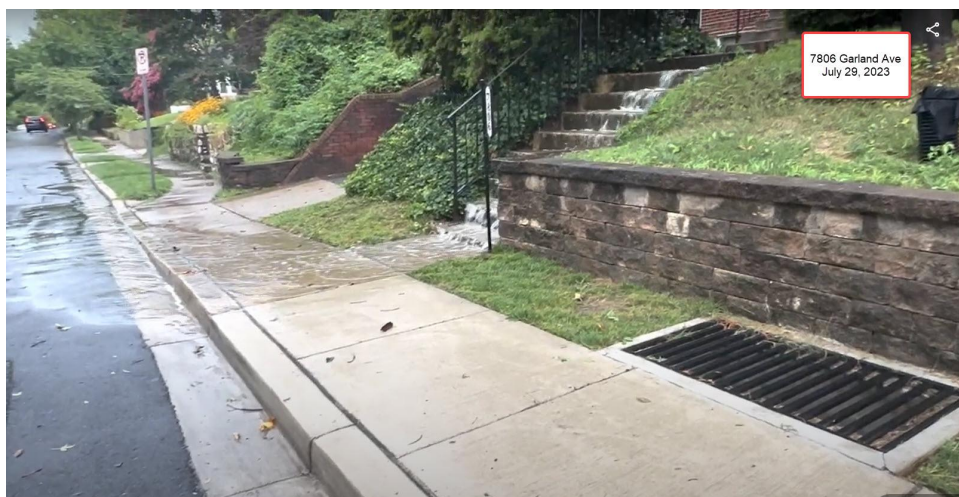


I want to start with this issue. You have a trust problem with our neighborhood: Garland/Maplewood/Greenwood. Due to a previous development project (parking lot) that created a major and ongoing flooding crisis for houses on Maplewood and Garland, and caused homeowners to spend thousands of dollars and it's STILL NOT FIXED -- there is lack of trust in any development. The water is ongoing for years causing swamp land in backyards, water damage to houses, and mosquito farms, flooding on the street, and polluted water to the creek. At times when the City, County and WAU could have made it right, it chose to ignore the problems. Takoma Park came to look, promised to follow up and never came back. There is nothing about development from MC/TKPK and WAU that fosters a feeling of trust from us. Instead, we are concerned that once again, you are rushing into something without first considering all the consequences and environmental impact while letting neighbors deal with the fallout on their own (WAU will only deal with individuals and not deal with problems as a whole).

**How will you work to create trust with those of us who already live in this area and will deal with the impact/fallout?** If you want us to trust you, fix this problem first!

You can see the seriousness of the rain runoff here from July 29, 2023:





You can see videos here: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/rzTYtdjKTqLAHjLg9>

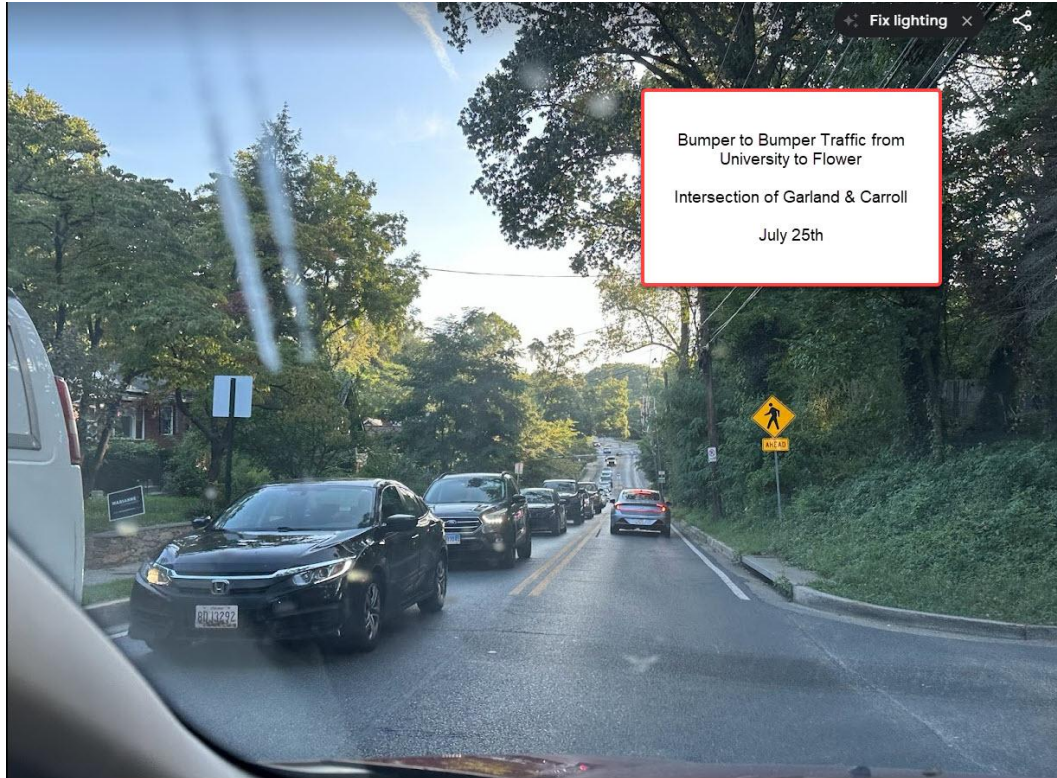
**Building Size -- the size of buildings will increase the population of Takoma Park by 30% --**



- Congestion – Takoma Park **does not have** the infrastructure of Silver Spring with Georgia Ave or Colesville Road. We don't have room to add double-lane roads. The traffic during rush hour is already at its max with bumper-to-bumper cars along Carroll from University Blvd to Flower. It's hard to turn off Garland Ave to Carroll and we often get stuck sitting with no view to turn left because of the line of cars up the hill. **Carroll Ave is also already dangerous along this route with at least one fatality since I've lived here and many accidents. Traffic has started to use Garland as a passthrough gouging through our bad dated speedbumps. This is also a city bus route and a school bus route. That's a lot for a single lane road.**

The current plan seems to be "build now, deal with congestion later" with no real plan of how to incorporate the additional traffic.



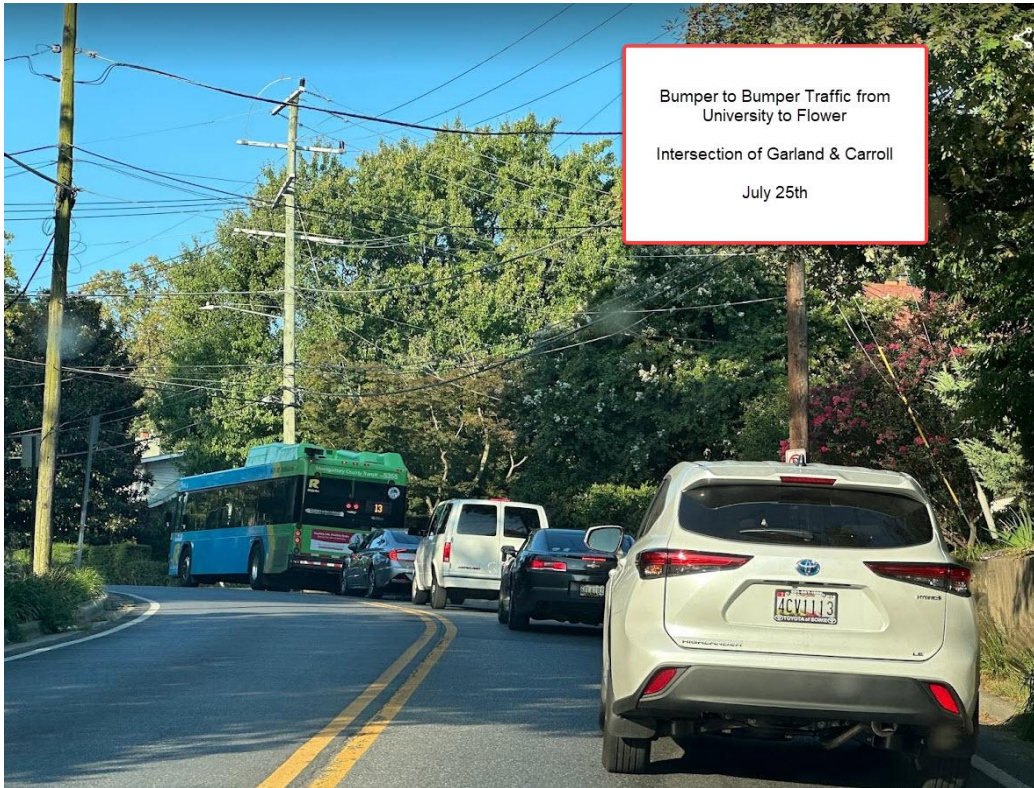


Bumper to Bumper Traffic from  
University to Flower

Intersection of Garland & Carroll

July 25th









- Transportation
  - Streets are at max during rush hour
  - As I understand, a walkable area is considered within half a mile of the metro. Even with the purple line, the metro stops are a mile to a mile and a half.
  - Parking is already very tight on all streets in Flower District
- Five stories on the edges with no buffer -- these buildings will tower over our houses and yards blocking light and will be aesthetically out of step with our neighborhood. On the Garland/Maplewood side -- we're downhill so having uphill tall buildings will make even a more profound difference. Lower these to 3 stories with an added green buffer.
- 15 stories -- the hospital is on the peak of a hill so 15 stories will tower over the area including our park, blocking light and possibly taking away open space. Lower to 10 with green buffer from single family houses and park.

### **No guaranteed tax base**

Current residents cannot afford the current tax increase. Takoma desperately needs to increase its tax income. I am concerned that the MMPA will allow WAU to build freely while remaining nonprofit status. The increased population will need to be supported by an already overburdened tax group. It will simply be too expensive for us to live here if we can't tax new development homeowners. Takoma would need to support the increased population without a source of additional tax revenue from homeowners or renters.

**Green Space and Lack of Sports Facilities** Down County currently has a crisis with grass and turf fields. We do not have a sports complex like many of the other parts of the county. Yet even the field on the campus is slated for a large building. This space should include more fields not less.



**Schools**

I wish this space would be used for desperately needed new school but since that won't happen - the majority of Ward 5 goes to Silver Spring International and Rolling Terrace -- both desperately need to be upgraded and have been skipped and delayed for other schools causing the cost to rise and further delays. Adding more students without first creating the space and healthy up to date buildings will create overpopulation and strain on the system making it harder to teach/learn. Development should wait for these to be improved! Fix our schools!

**Affordable and Middle Class Housing**

Like most of Takoma Park, we want more affordable and middle class housing. There is a lot of concern that Maple will be updated to cost-out current residence. And new Flower District buildings will only allow for the minimum lower income and middle class.

How do we work together to put guarantees in place to keep Takoma Park diverse and affordable for current and future residents?

Thank you for your work on behalf of the community.

Sincerely,

Christine Kenngott  
Takoma Park Ward 5 Resident  
7711 Garland Ave  
Homeowner/Landlord  
Parent of School Age Children  
Takoma Soccer Volunteer (space for sports matters!)



**To the Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board:**

Attached are my concerns that I am submitting to the planning board regarding the MMPA for the meeting scheduled for Sept 14, 2023.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues.

--

Christine Kenngott  
7711 Garland Ave, Takoma Park MD  
202-549-0067



To the Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Hearing: September 14, 2023

We are writing to you [[letter](#)] as residents of the Flower Avenue Park of Montgomery County District 4 to testify and express our concerns about the Minor Master Plan Amendment for rezoning to commercial and residential "mixed use" in the Washington Adventist University area.

The plan impacts our neighborhood as many of our homes are directly adjacent to the proposed re-zoned area. Our community is economically and ethnically diverse, friendly, tranquil, home to diverse wildlife, and is therefore socially and ecologically important.

Our community members have received no consultation about the plan and most have been surprised and worried to learn of its existence. Given the invariable impacts on our community, we find the lack of communication and transparency disturbing. The plan itself is vague on multiple points, including the stated purpose of the rezoning (i.e., "greater flexibility"). We believe that the rezoning plan as proposed will be highly disruptive to the social and environmental fabric of our community for the following briefly summarized reasons:

- **Buildings:** the rezoning plan allows for major increases in the height (12 stories) and footprint of current and new buildings on the Adventist campus immediately adjacent to multiple residential streets, filling current greenspace.
- **Traffic and parking:** with the potential to add over 3000 new residents - what would be a nearly 30% increase in the population of Takoma Park - the plan does not address what would certainly be a substantial increase in residential and commercial traffic and parking impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and our small residential streets.
- **Storm drains / flooding:** many of our streets already suffer from mismanaged stormwater runoff and flooding from smaller, earlier development projects (such as the recent WAU parking lot). Many neighbors in the community have faced the damage of flooded homes and yards.
- **Pollution and waste:** the increased air pollution from personal and commercial traffic presents a clear threat to air quality. Furthermore, the natural areas, such as Sligo Creek and Long Branch Creek, already suffer from wastewater runoff and garbage.

The Master Plan is largely silent on these issues and vague on others, including the ostensive purpose of the plan in the first place: to provide more affordable housing (and do so in a "green," climate resilient way). The plan, in fact, would not solve the affordable housing issue and may, in fact, exacerbate it by bringing dramatic changes to a neighborhood that already includes more affordable housing than most of the city of Takoma Park. Moreover, full environmental and climate impacts have not been substantively assessed or communicated.

In view of the above issues, lack of consultation with our neighborhood, and other issues we have not mentioned here for the sake of brevity, we strongly oppose the Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Signed,

Residents of Flower Avenue Park, Montgomery County  
September 13, 2023



1. Tom Hilde, 7909 Greenwood Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 [tchilde@gmail.com](mailto:tchilde@gmail.com)
2. Ines Hilde, 7909 Greenwood Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 [imhilde@gmail.com](mailto:imhilde@gmail.com)
3. Neil Cox, 7907 Greenwood Ave, Takoma Park. [neilc2004@hotmail.com](mailto:neilc2004@hotmail.com)
4. Kerry Maguire Cox, 7907 Greenwood Ave, Takoma Park [cox.kerrym@gmail.com](mailto:cox.kerrym@gmail.com)
5. Michelle Frankfurter, 905 Erie Ave., [michellefrankfurter@gmail.com](mailto:michellefrankfurter@gmail.com). As I stated in a separate letter, I am not categorically opposed to the plan, however, I have questions and concerns that I would like to be considered.
6. Mike Welsh 901 Prospect Street, Takoma Park; [mwkinkoranj@aol.com](mailto:mwkinkoranj@aol.com)
7. Laurie Yancey 8002 Greenwood Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912; [Laurieyancey@gmail.com](mailto:Laurieyancey@gmail.com)
8. Megan Johnson 8001 Greenwood Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912 [megansan313@gmail.com](mailto:megansan313@gmail.com)
9. Marcia Morris 7710 Garland Ave Takoma Park MD 20912, [marcia\\_morris\\_2000@yahoo.com](mailto:marcia_morris_2000@yahoo.com)
10. Richard Craig 7908 Greenwood Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912, [richard@craiginteractive.com](mailto:richard@craiginteractive.com)
11. Erin Register, 907 Prospect Street Takoma Park MD 20912, [erin.k.register@gmail.com](mailto:erin.k.register@gmail.com)
12. Margaret Feasley 7904 Holstein St, Takoma Park, MD 20912; [mfeasley@gmail.com](mailto:mfeasley@gmail.com)
13. Sherri Sampson 7718 Carroll Avenue Takoma Park MD 20912 [sammmps@aol.com](mailto:sammmps@aol.com)
14. Ellyn Meizlish, 7908 Greenwood Ave., [ellynm65@gmail.com](mailto:ellynm65@gmail.com)
15. Matthew Roberts, 8317 Flower Ave, [mattproberts@hotmail.com](mailto:mattproberts@hotmail.com)
16. Sandy Ogunfolu - 903 Erie Ave Takoma Park 20912
17. Kathleen Koenig 806 Maplewood Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912 [kathie.2525@gmail.com](mailto:kathie.2525@gmail.com)
18. Emily Shacter, 710 Erie Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912; [emmyshacter@gmail.com](mailto:emmyshacter@gmail.com)
19. Sandra Kerr-Porcari 8009 Sligo Creek Pkwy [physical address : 8009 Edinburgh Lane] Takoma Park, MD 20912 Ward 5 [sdkerr1963@gmail.com](mailto:sdkerr1963@gmail.com)
20. Maurizio G.E. Porcari, 8009 Sligo Creek Parkway, Takoma Park MD, [mauriziogep@gmail.com](mailto:mauriziogep@gmail.com)
21. Bruce Wolf, 7812 Garland Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912
22. Joann L Schrock, 8316 Haddon Dr, [jlschrock@aol.com](mailto:jlschrock@aol.com)
23. Scott Wittenberg 7911 Garland Ave, #1 Takoma Park, MD 20912; [scottyw2011@gmail.com](mailto:scottyw2011@gmail.com)
24. Panayotis E. DeVaris, 7811 Garland Av., Takoma Park, MD 20912; [edevaris@yahoo.com](mailto:edevaris@yahoo.com)
25. JoAnn Zinn 7813 Garland Ave, [Zchiro@comcast.net](mailto:Zchiro@comcast.net)
26. Naomi DeVeaux, 8015 Barron St, Takoma Park MD 20912; [naomideveaux@gmail.com](mailto:naomideveaux@gmail.com)
27. Kerry-Ann Hamilton 7712 Garland Ave Takoma Park MD 20912 [kahphd@me.com](mailto:kahphd@me.com)
28. Suzanne Harvey 7901 Greenwood Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912; [suzanneharvey1950@gmail.com](mailto:suzanneharvey1950@gmail.com)
29. Dale Harvey 7901 Greenwood Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912; [Harveycontracting@gmail.com](mailto:Harveycontracting@gmail.com)
30. Asia Ferrin 7905 Holstein St Takoma Park, MD 20912; [asiaferrin@gmail.com](mailto:asiaferrin@gmail.com)

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Ines Hilde | C: 1.202.271.4764

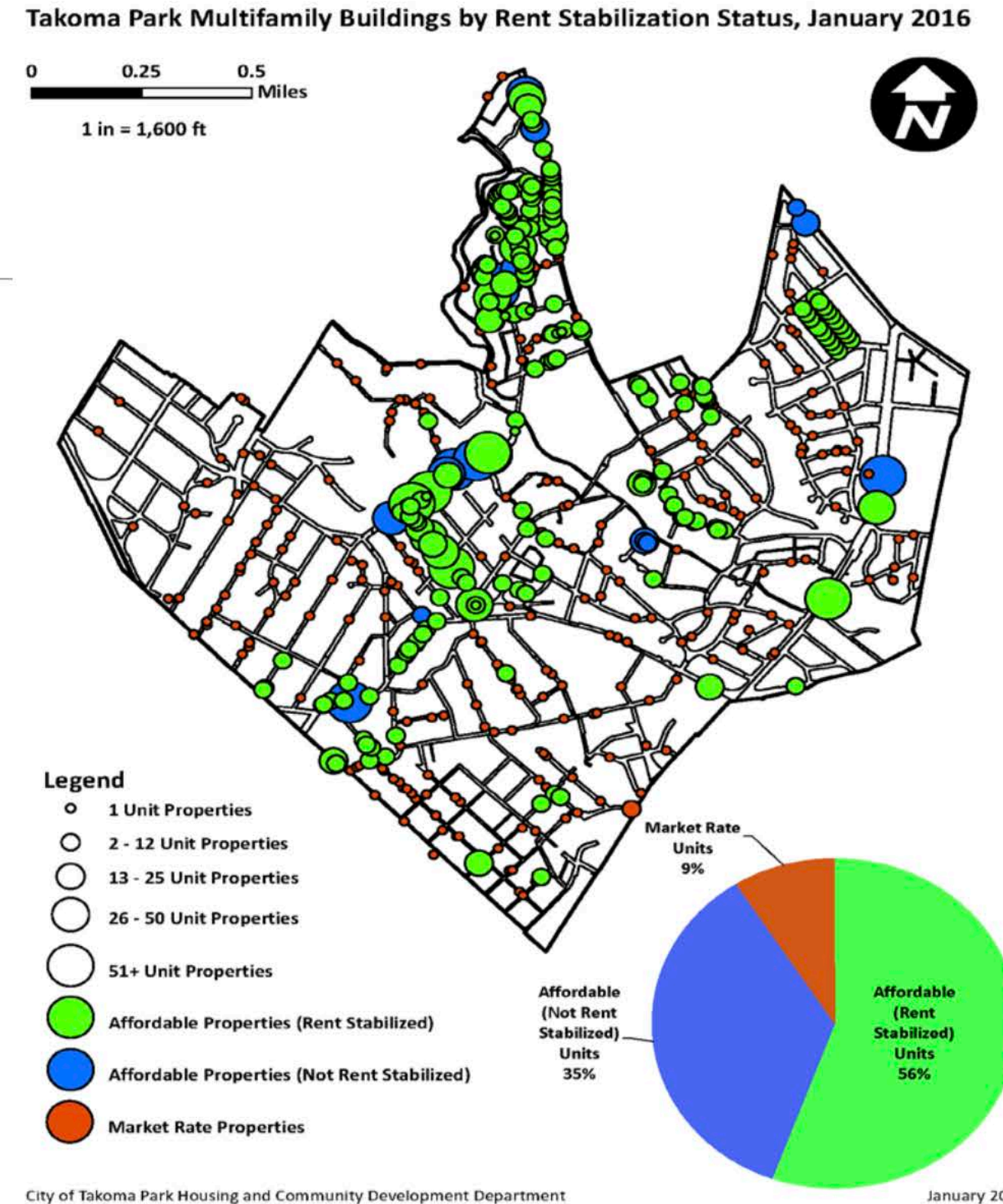
E: [imhilde@gmail.com](mailto:imhilde@gmail.com) | [www.ineshildestudios.com](http://www.ineshildestudios.com)



# Housing Weaknesses

## Rent stabilized and subsidized properties are not dispersed evenly throughout the city

These properties tend to be concentrated in certain corridors of Takoma Park, with the largest clusters in the Long Branch/Sligo Creek area and along Maple Avenue, meaning the city's neighborhoods are somewhat segregated by income. This poses a fair housing issue, as it can hinder social mobility for lower income residents. It also makes it more difficult for the City to achieve its "A Livable Community for All" priority – while Takoma Park is socioeconomically diverse overall, there is residential income-based segregation on a neighborhood level.





To the Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Hearing: September 14, 2023

I (Tom) am a professor of environmental and sustainable development policy at the University of Maryland School of Public Policy. Ines is an art director and graphic designer at Georgetown University Law Center. We are residents on Greenwood Avenue, located adjacent to Washington Adventist University in the Flower Avenue area of Montgomery County District 4. We are writing to you to testify and express our concerns about the Minor Master Plan Amendment for upzoning to commercial and residential "mixed use" in the Washington Adventist University area.

Our neighborhood was not consulted on the plan, although we will be directly impacted as we have been with each smaller project that has occurred at WAU and on Flower Avenue. We are disturbed by the lack of consultation and transparency, as well as the vagueness of the explanation given for rezoning ("greater flexibility"). The plan would achieve neither, particularly in any way that preserves our already vibrant community.

Our community is already zoned in large part for multi-family residences, which makes the community economically and ethnically diverse – far more than most of Takoma Park Inc. We love that about our neighborhood. It's not a neighborhood simply of lawyers and real estate developers. It's a neighborhood of nurses and university professors, NGO leaders and construction workers, scientific researchers and artists, government workers and homemakers, students and teachers, young families and retirees. This is a neighborhood full of residents who have committed their work and lives to issues of environmental health and conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, social and economic justice, and other important public goods.

Our community is friendly and tranquil. It is home to diverse wildlife, more so than anywhere else in Takoma Park. The community also has a rich history, which is reflected both in the earliest history of the land, in sites like the "President's Tree," and in the homes themselves, including 100-year-old Arts and Crafts bungalows such as our own. It is therefore a socially and ecologically important neighborhood. This is the kind of inclusive community many others aspire to.

To plan for adding 3500 residents into this community, with a huge increase in commercial and residential traffic, with no understanding of the economic and environmental impacts of upzoning is irresponsible. To do so without consulting community members while couching the project in the language of equity and "green" development is reprehensible moral cynicism.

In the interest of brevity, I'll list a few points we wish to highlight:

- 1) Scholarly research on upzoning by urban planning researchers, economists, and architects is at an early stage. Thus far, results are ambiguous. It can lead to more diverse communities, but it can also lead to accelerated gentrification. (See, for example, Davis, 2021. "How do upzonings impact neighborhood demographic change? Examining the link between land use policy and gentrification in New York City"). The plan does not speak to the risks of upzoning and its impact on rental and home prices.
- 2) The purpose of the rezoning to "mixed use," we are told vaguely, is greater "flexibility." A need for greater flexibility is typically a response to addressing a perceived problem or interest, not an end in itself. Those ends have not been conveyed. We want to know what possible goals require rezoning in the name of greater flexibility.
- 3) The proposed development is portrayed as "green development" consistent with the need for decreased GHG emissions and a reduction in urban heating. However, when pressed at a previous Takoma Park meeting on what rezoning allows, we were told higher buildings with larger footprints. Expanded footprints require space that is not already built on. Unless that means building only on existing spaces such as parking lots, it will mean



taking away green spaces for construction. Moreover, further vertical construction (we are told rezoning allows for buildings of 12 stories or more!) requires processes and materials along the supply chain - such as large volumes of concrete - that are leading causes of carbon emissions, no matter whether the final product is designed to attain LEED certification. We don't see anywhere a true and full environmental and climate assessment and accounting of proposed development (or, rather, the development that mixed-use zoning will permit). That accounting would include emissions not only from operations but also the supply chain and the loss of green space.

4) Our community loves the peacefulness of our neighborhood due to its green spaces, parks, and habitat for wildlife. We love living among wildlife. It is part of the character of the neighborhood and people move here precisely for this reason. We as a community help to maintain spaces, such as we can, for wildlife to flourish. The wildlife in our neighborhood uses the current green corridors between Sligo Creek and Long Branch Creek. Deer move from one park to the other using the woods and green area near the corner of Maple and Maplewood, the undeveloped "wild" area between Greenwood and Garland Avenues behind the Adventist parking lot, and other small spots of remaining greenspace. Foxes, rabbits, groundhogs, raccoons, possums, and other creatures inhabit these spaces for safety, raising offspring, and food. The neighborhood has an abundance of birds of all types and is a favorite area to birdwatch anything from great blue herons to scarlet tanagers to owls and hawks. The creeks have turtles, fish, and crayfish, their populations impacted primarily from garbage that washes down from unsecured garbage cans at apartment complexes in the neighborhood. Further construction on expanded footprints, more traffic, and more people will clearly impact wildlife in the neighborhood. Why has there been no wildlife impact study?

5) Finally, from what we can tell through websites such as Takoma for All and the few other supporters of the plan that we've encountered, much of the support comes from Takoma Park Ward 1 (for example, half of the signatories to Takoma for All's letter of support). Ward 1, in its support for greater diversity and green development, has near-zero multifamily residences and is the least economically and ethnically diverse neighborhood in the area. See the attached image from a study commissioned by Takoma Park in 2017. The study found that subsidized, multi-family properties are not dispersed throughout the city. If one looks at the map, one sees that our area is already dense in such property while Wards 1 and 3 have very little subsidized and rent controlled property. The support for the plan seems to come from residents who live farthest away and prefer their diversity distant from their neighborhoods.

In view of the above issues, lack of consultation with our neighborhood, and other issues (such as major stormwater runoff problems) we have not mentioned here for the sake of brevity, we oppose the Minor Master Plan Amendment. Our concerns are that the proposed plans are vague, inadequately studied on multiple levels, and driven by motivations that have not been fully conveyed to residents.

Dr. Tom Hilde and Ines Hilde  
7909 Greenwood Avenue

--

Prof. Tom Hilde  
University of Maryland School of Public Policy  
Head, Environment/Energy/Climate Specialization & Sustainability Pillar  
Co-Director of Indonesia Program, Center for Global Sustainability (CGS)  
Co-Director, Undergraduate Sustainability Minor  
Faculty Advisor, Sustainability, Environment, and Energy Council (SEEC)  
Senior Fellow, Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland (CISSM) and GoTech  
<https://spp.umd.edu/>



To the Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board  
Public Hearing: September 14, 2023

We are writing to you as residents of the Flower District of Montgomery County District 4 to testify and express our concerns about the Minor Master Plan Amendment for rezoning to commercial and residential “mixed use” in the Washington Adventist University area.

The plan impacts our neighborhood as many of our homes are directly adjacent to the proposed re-zoned area. Our community is economically and ethnically diverse, friendly, tranquil, home to diverse wildlife, and is therefore socially and ecologically important.

Our community members have received no consultation about the plan and most have been surprised and worried to learn of its existence. Given the invariable impacts on our community, we find the lack of communication and transparency disturbing. The plan itself is vague on multiple points, including the stated purpose of the rezoning (i.e., “greater flexibility”). We believe that the rezoning plan as proposed will be highly disruptive to the social and environmental fabric of our community for the following briefly summarized reasons:

- **Buildings:** the rezoning plan allows for major increases in the height (12 stories) and footprint of current and new buildings on the Adventist campus immediately adjacent to multiple residential streets, filling current greenspace.
- **Traffic and parking:** with the potential to add over 3000 new residents - what would be a nearly 30% increase in the population of Takoma Park - the plan does not address what would certainly be a substantial increase in residential and commercial traffic and parking impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and our small residential streets.
- **Storm drains / flooding:** many of our streets already suffer from mismanaged stormwater runoff and flooding from smaller, earlier development projects (such as the recent WAU parking lot). Many neighbors in the community have faced the damage of flooded homes and yards.
- **Pollution and waste:** the increased air pollution from personal and commercial traffic presents a clear threat to air quality. Furthermore, the natural areas, such as Sligo Creek and Long Branch Creek, already suffer from wastewater runoff and garbage.

The Master Plan is largely silent on these issues and vague on others, including the ostensive purpose of the plan in the first place: to provide more affordable housing (and do so in a “green,” climate resilient way). The plan, in fact, would not solve the affordable housing issue and may, in fact, exacerbate it by bringing dramatic changes to a neighborhood that already



includes more affordable housing than most of the city of Takoma Park. Moreover, full environmental and climate impacts have not been substantively assessed or communicated.

In view of the above issues, lack of consultation with our neighborhood, and other issues we have not mentioned here for the sake of brevity, we strongly oppose the Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Signed,

Residents of Flower Avenue District, Montgomery County  
September 13, 2023

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Ines and Tom Hilde: 7909 Greenwood Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912  
[imhilde@gmail.com](mailto:imhilde@gmail.com); [tchilde@gmail.com](mailto:tchilde@gmail.com)



To the Chair of Montgomery County Planning Board,

I am writing in solidarity with my neighbors to ask the council to block the amendment to the Minor Master plan for rezoning of the Washington Adventist University campus.

I am a resident of the Flower Avenue District of Montgomery County District 4, I live a block from the WAU campus.

Given that this amendment was brought forward without consultation of the residents of the neighborhood who would no doubt be impacted by this change, I respectfully ask that this proposal AT LEAST be tabled until the community can be engaged and consulted. This amendment would mean a huge change to our neighborhood and it seems that so far the only people who have been engaged in the process are the people that stand to profit from the rezoning.

I am attaching a letter written by my neighbors that more fully articulates the concerns of the community.

Thank you,

Megan Gabriel  
7903 Greenwood Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear Montgomery County Planning Board

I am writing to express my support of the vision and changes detailed in the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan amendment. The proposed plan amendment and the zoning changes present a positive outcome for the city and will provide real economic and quantified benefits to city and county residents.

I strongly urge you to approve the amendment.

Thank you,

David Cookson

306 Grant Ave.



Dear Chair,

My family writes to express our deep concern for the Minor Master plan for the prior Adventist hospital location. I find it deeply irresponsible to move forward with this plan without adequate traffic and environmental studies. Further, as a middle-income resident of TP I don't see any protections on retaining affordable housing and lower-price point businesses and it puts families like myself at long-term risk of being able to afford to stay in Takoma Park.

It is too broad and there needs to be additional research, residents need more input into the specific plans, and adequate protections need to be in place.

Sincerely,

Kerry and Jay Danner-McDonald  
7336 Carroll Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

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**Kerry Danner, PhD II Georgetown University II 301-356-8254**

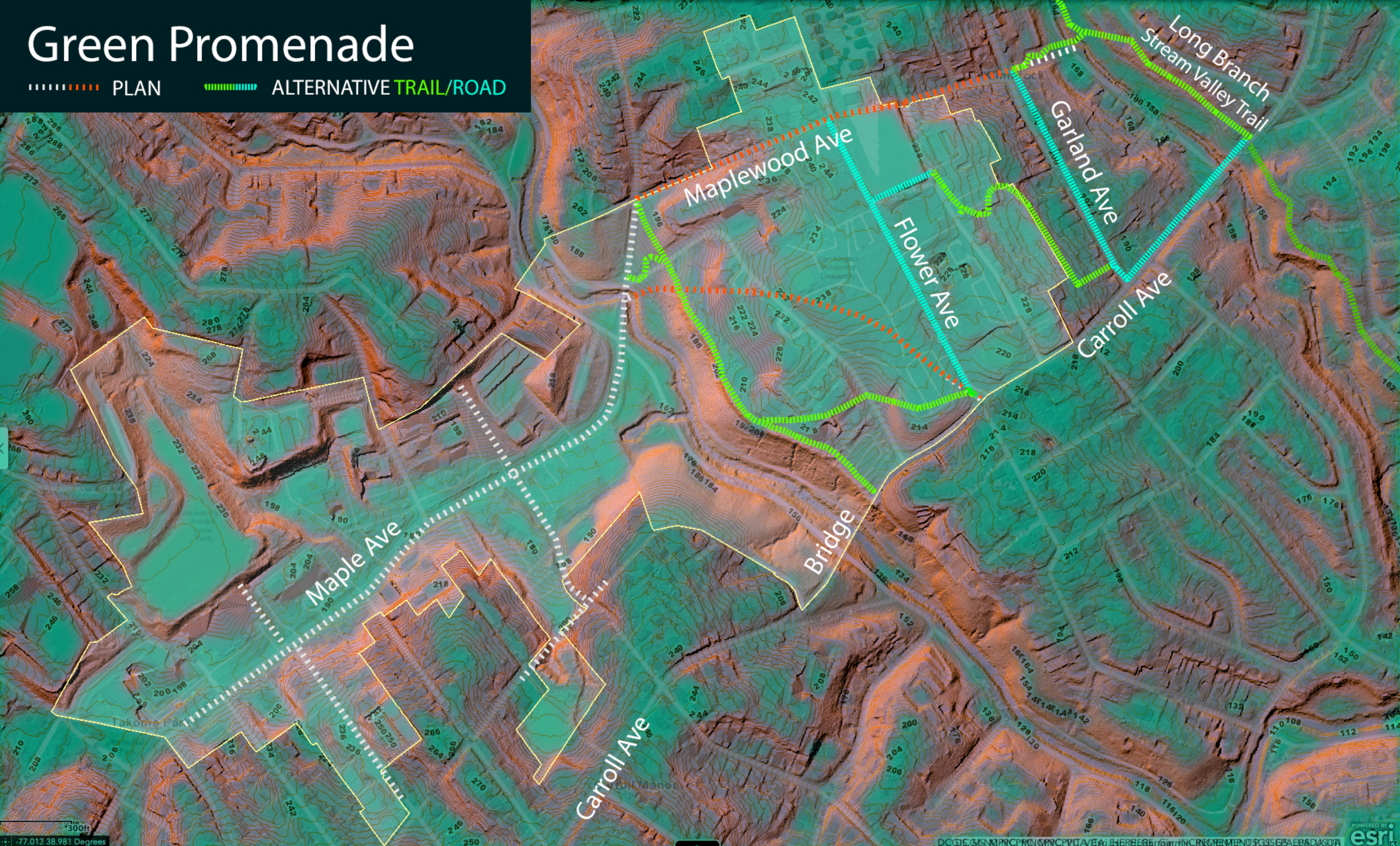
*The function of freedom is to free someone else.*

--Toni Morrison, Cinderella's Stepsisters

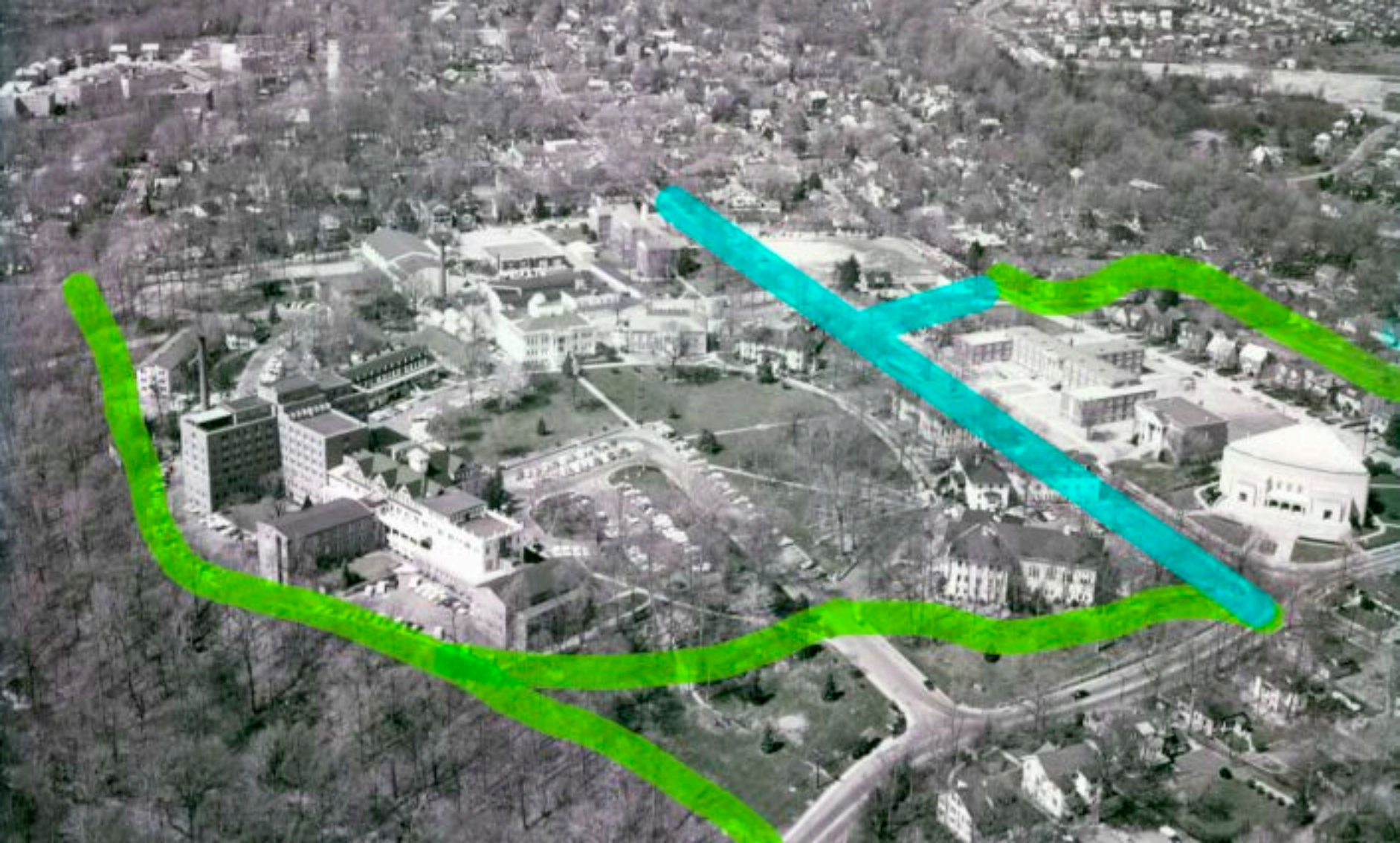


# Green Promenade

..... PLAN      ..... ALTERNATIVE TRAIL/ROAD









To the Chair of the Montgomery County Planning Board:

This is a testimony about the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan.

**Stakeholder facts:**

- \* Michael Douma, 7804 Garland Ave.
- \* Lived in Takoma Park since 2010
- \* Two children in local, public elementary school
- \* Own a property immediately east of Greenwood Avenue.
- \* Cherish the local charm, community, and diversity

**Positive comments:**

- \* Obviously a lot of work and thought went into the plan
- \* Good focus on equity, Sligo Creek, affordable housing, walkability, and amenities
- \* Fantastic concept and intent with the Green Promenade.
- \* Good recognition of the "missing middle" housing

The following are my comments/concerns:

**GREEN PROMENADE - ALTERNATIVE**

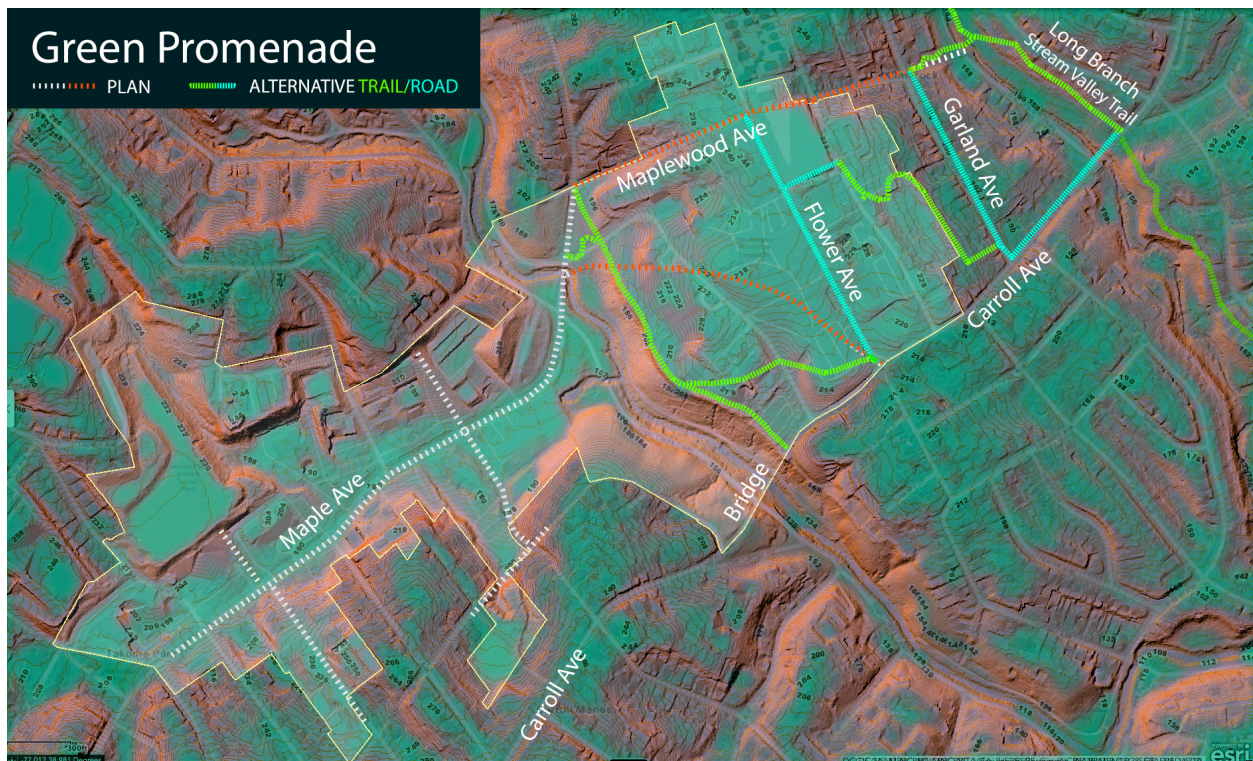
**The area is hilly.** In the draft plan, Figure 8 ("Green Promenade Diagram") proposes several unwalkable routes. In particular, it's impractical to push a stroller or bike up and down the hill of Maplewood Avenue.

There are two notes in the plan regarding integration with the beauty and naturalism of Sligo Creek: Page 91, "provide a publicly accessible **pedestrian path** at the **western edge of the site** overlooking Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park"; and page 95, "Renew the site's historic physical and visual connection to the Sligo Creek stream valley." Great!

How could that **visual connection to the Sligo Creek** stream valley be accomplished?

Attached is my draft proposal **map for an alternative green promenade**, which is informed by the hills (contour map), and many walks in the neighborhood. In this map, the dashed red line is the section of the draft's proposed promenade that is too steep. The dashed green line is my alternative proposal, which connects to existing cyan sidewalks.





I personally created the above map based on a composite of the 2-foot contours and LiDAR Terrain published on the MCAtlas. The pink areas are too steep for a useful promenade. I am happy to provide my source files for this.

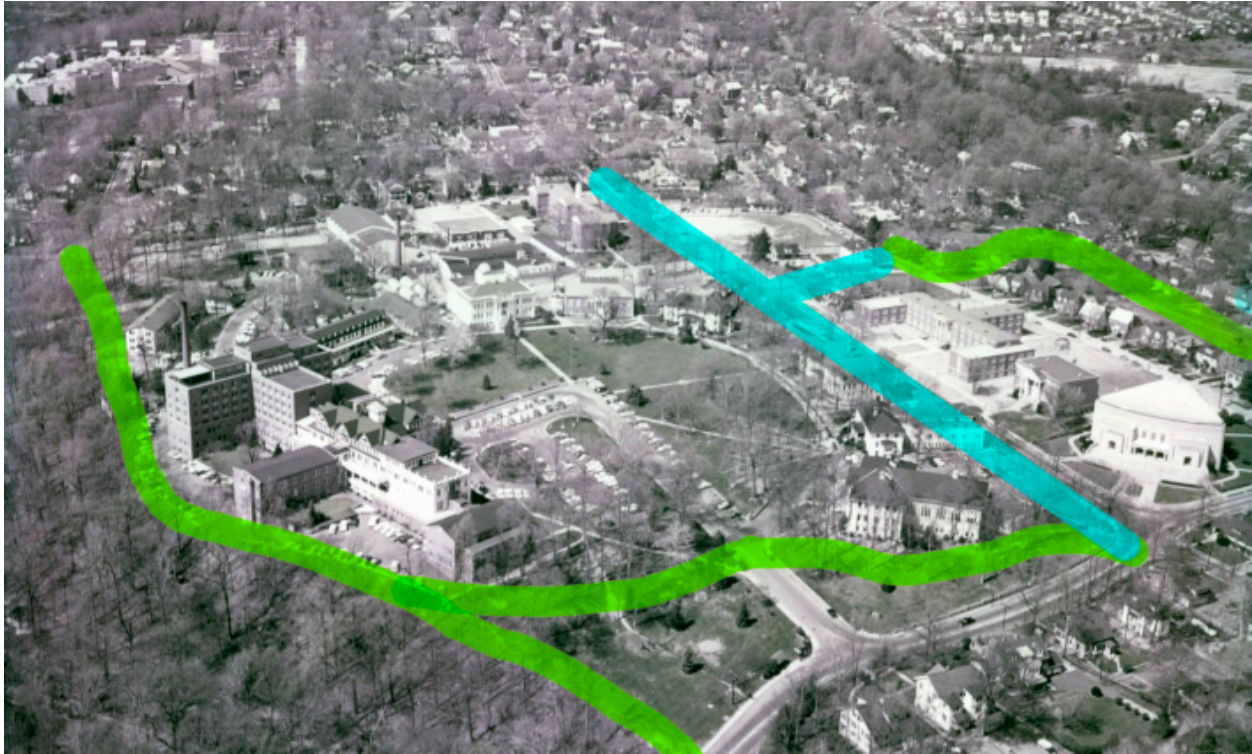
**I request that a similar type of map be created** by the county planners or GIS department to clearly show the grades of the hills and roads, and to inform the suggested walkways and bikeways.

A map clearly showing contours and gradients will inform the decisions of planners and developers, and demonstrate a sincere interest in walkability.

I request the author's notes and sentiments be extracted into a clearer and more explicit **new subsection that includes a new map**. I think a **cliff-top path** on the west side of the old hospital site is a fantastic idea (a suggested route is marked in green in my map above). This would be a powerful contribution to the connectivity for walkers/bikers because it allows for many more routes.

Below, I have overlaid the above idea on the "Historic Aerial View of Washington Adventist Campus" from the draft document.





## TAPERED HEIGHT LIMITS

I believe there should be more **reduction in the maximum building heights on the edges** of the plan, near existing residential neighborhoods. This is especially important to me along Greenwood Avenue, which is behind my house, uphill from me, where a potential 5 story building would substantially affect the feel of my backyard, and block the evening sun. This is a risk for all of the Garland Ave residents east of the plan area.

I request a **maximum building height of 3 stories on Greenwood Ave**. Not 5 stories.

## PARKING MODELLING

There has been a **long-standing parking shortage**, particularly in the "Flower Avenue District". When the hospital was operational, parking was so scarce that staff and visitors desperate for parking would park in the neighborhood streets, and WAU was compelled to build a new lot on Greenwood. (That lot is now unused since the hospital left).

How can we assure that parking will support a sustainable and functional urban space?

**I request that parking modeling/calculations** be performed, with estimates for various types of development. This should be written into a new subsection that estimates the ranges of new parking needs, the current capacity of the neighborhood



zones, and the potential capacity of different types of parking (e.g. surface parking, underground parking, multi-story parking lots, etc).

Professionally generated calculations and modeling about parking will inform future decisions from planners and developers, and reassure local residents about parking impacts.

## **HOUSING PRICES & IMPLICATIONS**

In my experience, it's a common topic of conversation among locals that there's little housing stock, and it's not affordable. By the luck of history, long-time local residents bought into an affordable neighborhood that was unique in the country for its aesthetic and pervasive social values. But the long-term health of the neighborhoods means we must be open to new residents, with similar hopes and dreams that a prior generation of residents had in the 1970's, or 1990's. If not, ironically, Takoma becomes a museum of old hippies living in million dollar homes.

Today, young families often have to leave the community because they can't afford to upgrade to one of the rare \$800k-\$1M+ houses that come on the market every month. Other stakeholders might see other goals.

I support the sentiments of the planners on page 68 about "a creative diversity of housing options" including personal living quarters and/or micro units; "missing middle" housing, and so on. This echoes the history and ethos of Takoma Park. I personally see the "missing middle" being vital for the long-term vibe, vitality and sustainability of our community.

But what does the collection of bullet points in sections §3.3.2.1-3 really mean? Unlike some other sections of the draft that are clear and readable, the anodyne jargon and non-committal language don't clearly state the policy goal in a way I can understand. Vague aspirations about housing (what MPDU types? what percentages of various AMI thresholds?), are mixed with specific new zoning limits.

A document like this has direct legal, and indirect aspirational implications. Neighborhoods are shaped by zoning, history, amenities, job opportunities, costs, discrimination in generations past, cultural and social trends — and overall visions of "master plans." So, what policy statements are being presented? Exactly which demographics of new residents is the plan targeting from an economic perspective?

### **I request two additions to the plan:**

**HISTORY CHART** — Add a chart of current and historical range of housing costs, expressed as both total and square footage costs, and how many residents live in each housing type and price range. This will tell us where we came from.



**FUTURE CHART** — Add a chart, perhaps with three scenarios that lean toward different goals, outlining the mix of housing types, square footage costs, and total costs, so we can have a meaningful conversation about where we are going. Is the drive for \$1M+ condos? For \$500k housing? For \$200k housing? etc. This chart can include other details like potential gains to the property tax-base.

## **CLOSING NOTES**

\* **Stormwater is a major issue** for many residents on the downhill slopes, including myself, and that's directly correlated with impervious surfaces and realistic stormwater management for our current climate.

\* **Build additional trust** from the community by adding data, modeling, graphs, maps, and implications because it scopes the issues, removes ambiguities, addresses many concerns of stakeholders, and provides a stronger basis for conversation.

Thank you for your team's hard work on the plans, and for considering this feedback.

Sincerely,

Michael Douma  
7804 Garland Ave.  
13-Sept-2023



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Thank you for your team's hard work on the plans, and for considering this feedback.

Sincerely,

Michael Douma  
7804 Garland Ave.



Dear Councilors,

I'm writing to register my objections to the Minor Master Plan Amendments for Takoma Park to be considered at the hearing of September 14, 2023. I live at 7516 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, near the Adventist hospital site.

When our family moved to Takoma Park in 2007, it was the character of the town that attracted us. Reading through the Minor Master Plan Amendments makes it clear how fragile that character is. Implementation of the Minor Master Plan threatens to dramatically change the character of the community.

The upzoning that the Plan proposes allows 12-story development on the hospital site, 15-story development on Maple Avenue, and 5-story development in primarily residential neighborhoods of Flower Avenue. The scale of this potential development is a serious mismatch with the community values that the Plan purports to embody.

Living on Carroll Ave. near the hospital site now, it is clear to me that the infrastructure cannot support development on this scale. Traffic sometimes slows to a stall already at busy traffic hours. Accidents already occur periodically in this corridor. This Plan will likely increase traffic significantly, and require many more city buses. But no forethought or study has been given to this significant problem.

The best feature of the area is Sligo Creek, its park, and its parkway. What will be the environmental impact on this area if this Plan is adopted? The history of many cities is that major development has created serious environmental impacts, and the frequency of more extreme weather has made these impacts increasingly hazardous. (For example, see Hurricane Harvey in Houston that caused catastrophic flooding due to the absence of right-sized zoning laws, allowing development on the land needed to absorb the rains). I don't think a development plan on the scale of this one should ever be considered until environmental impacts are carefully assessed.

Most importantly, if rent-stabilized apartment buildings on Maple Ave. are replaced with market-rate buildings with high rents necessitated by the cost of constructing high-rises, how much displacement will occur? Who will bear the cost of the displacement? Sadly, the same people--immigrants, people of color, under-resourced families--are routinely asked to bear a disproportionate cost of development. I would hope that Takoma Park would not fall into this same ugly pattern, but I see nothing in the Plan that suggests otherwise.

Some development will obviously need to occur to make good use of the site of the former hospital. But these zoning proposals are outsized for the location. And there is no need to include Maple Ave. in the Plan for re-developing the hospital site. Including it seems surprisingly exploitative of the need to consider redevelopment on the former hospital's footprint.

As a resident aging-in-place, I was sorry to lose Washington Adventist Hospital as a neighbor. I was also sorry to lose the urgent care clinic that remained. I am attracted by the idea that their site be reserved for some kind of institutional need (e.g. a school, a wellness center, or some other Takoma Park institutional need), because there are no other sites in Takoma Park that are adequate to be used for an institutional purpose. In any event, I expected some sort of community-based service to take the place of the hospital.

The proposed Plan does the opposite. It is a profound divergence from the values it espouses and from the needs of the community. Far more community input and expert analysis is needed to create a more trustworthy plan. In its absence, please heed the views of the community members who are taking time to express their views to you.

In short, I strongly oppose the Plan and urge you to vote it down. I hope a more transparent and inclusive process for redeveloping the hospital site will follow.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.



Sincerely,  
Phyllis Goldfarb  
7516 Carroll Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

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Phyllis Goldfarb  
Jacob Burns Foundation Professor Emerita of Clinical Law  
and Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs  
George Washington University Law School  
2000 G St. NW  
Washington, DC 20052  
(202) 994-7463  
Fax(202) 994-2133

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

This is to support my TkPk Council Member, Randall Gibson, cc'd above in rejecting the MMPA as it currently written.

The resolution needs strengthening to preserve the low/moderate community housing needs and to address environmental concerns. The 'up-zoning' proposal is excessively broad and lacks specific urban planning, traffic and environmental impact studies on how the proposed large buildings would affect Sligo Creek and adjacent streams and park corridors.

Please do not allow this plan to go through as currently written.

Frederica Adelman  
349 Boyd Avenue  
TkPk 20912



Dear County Planning Board,

Takoma For All (TFA) and the undersigned write in strong support of the Minor Master Plan Amendment – Public Hearing Draft (Sept 14, 2023) for the Washington Adventist Hospital site and Maple Avenue corridor.

TFA is a group of Maryland and D.C. neighbors promoting a sustainable, equitable, transit-oriented community with plenty of homes. We work to strengthen a vibrant, inclusive, prosperous, resilient and transit-friendly community and advocate for the creation and preservation of affordable and market-rate housing, commercial spaces and community amenities including schools, parks, recreation facilities and public spaces. More information about TFA at [www.takomaforall.org](http://www.takomaforall.org).

This proposed plan amendment and included zoning changes are good for the climate, good for equity and affordability, and good for local businesses. For example:

- Adding space for hundreds of new housing units with easy access to both the Takoma Metro station and future Purple Line station will mean thousands of new neighbors are able to live climate-friendly car-free or car-lite lifestyles, helping the City and County meet our climate goals. While city policies have provided existing residents with affordable housing, [no new multifamily units](#) have been built in the City of Takoma Park since the 1970s. City policies should encourage new housing to attract residents to our dense walkable community that offers protections for diverse groups of people that few other jurisdictions in the U.S. offer.
- The inclusion of the Green Promenade, bikeway improvements, pedestrian network and new Town Center along Flower Ave will significantly elevate the role of non-vehicular transportation.
- The proposed new zoning will fit in with existing 12-17 story apartment buildings in the plan area, and will also enable more people at all income levels to enjoy the benefits of living in our community, working towards the County's goal of 10,000 new housing units.
- The adoption of mixed-use zoning in the plan area will provide opportunities for additional retail businesses to serve the needs of both new and existing residents and diversify the city's revenue streams. According to the City's Housing and Economic Data Analysis from 2017, "the City is under-retailed for its population and level of income [...], indicating a capacity for additional retail."



The modest changes proposed in this plan amendment are necessary to meet the [City Council's 2023-2024 priorities](#), such as exploring to expand City revenue options to identify long-term solutions necessary to diversify the City's revenue streams and plan and prepare for development in the City and region while maintaining the special character and economic and racial diversity of Takoma Park. The plan amendment also supports Takoma Park's [Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan](#), adopted in 2019, which identifies the need to "produce more housing and opportunities for businesses to start and grow across the income spectrum and in neighborhoods across the City to meet the diverse housing and economic needs."

We have [appended a Q&A section](#) that we found useful in answering questions that have been raised regarding the plan amendment.

TFA strongly encourages the Montgomery County Planning Board to endorse the Minor Master Plan Amendment draft in full. One hundred individual members and friends have asked to include their names below, associating themselves publicly with the organization's position.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Takoma For All

Adam Jentleson, Takoma Park - Ward 3

Adam Oppenheim, Takoma Park - Ward 1

Alan Zibel, Takoma Park - Ward 1

Alexander Hadden, Takoma Park - Ward 3

Amanda Hungerford, Takoma Park - Ward 1

Amelia Coffey, Takoma DC

Ashley E. Brookshier, Takoma Park - Ward 3

Ashley Hayslip, Takoma Park - Ward 4

Ashley Ward, Takoma Park - Ward 3

Ben Glickstein, Takoma Park - Ward 1

Ben Rempell, Takoma Park - Ward 1



Beth Davidson, Takoma DC  
Birchie Seiffert, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Brendan Smith, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Bridget Cherry, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Carter Dougherty, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Christian Bangert, Takoma DC  
David Bend, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
David Koelsch, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Deborah Roose, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Diego Vera Cossio, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Dion Thompson-Davoli, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Donna Victoria, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
Edward Drozd, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Elizabeth Baer, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Elizabeth Hisle-Gorman, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Emanuel Wagner, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Erin OBrien, Silver Spring  
Eyal Li, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Fawzia Ahmed, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Fred Schultz, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
Gene Koo, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Jason Schechter, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Jay Driskell, Takoma Park - Ward 5  
Jeffrey Trunzo , Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Jeremy Hekhuis, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Jessica Wechter, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
John Cornwell, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
John Fawcett, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
John Gorman, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
John Krizel, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Johnathan Duff, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Jon Ryder, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Jordie Hannum, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Judy Mounty, Takoma Park - Ward 2



Julia Barlow, Silver Spring  
Julia Lyskawa, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Julien Katchinoff, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
Karina Santos, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Katrina Furth, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Kawsar Talaat, Takoma Park - Ward 5  
Kelly OKeefe, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Kenneth Simler, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Kerry Porter, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Kevin Finelli, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
LaLa Seidensticker, Unincorporated Takoma Park  
Laura Atwood, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Leanne Sedowski, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Liliane Winograd, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Linda Kolko, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Lucy Madden, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
Marc Pfeuffer, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Marco Konings, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Mark Drajem, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Mark Porter, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Maya Bernstein, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Melissa Burke, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Mica Bevington, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Michael Ward, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Mike Carter-Conneen, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Miriam Quintal, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Molly Wasser, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Morgan Snyder, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Nancy Augustine, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Nancy Martin, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Natalie Hopkins, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Nick Finio, Silver Spring  
Noa Baum, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Paul Mackie, Takoma Park - Ward 2



Paul Seiffert, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Pavan Auluck, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Rachel Anderson, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Rachel Lettre, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Rachel Schultz, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Rich and Laura Barclay, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Salim Furth, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Sally Taber, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Sarah Brookshier, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Scott Smallwood, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Sorrah Edwards-Thro, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Steve Teles, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Tamara L Laird, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Taunton Paine, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Tim Gronniger, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Tom Di Liberto, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Tony Camilli, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Troy Jacobs, Takoma Park - Ward 5  
Walter Scott, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
William Girardo, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Zachary Arnold, Takoma Park - Ward 4

(submitted on behalf of TFA and the above signed individuals by Ashley E Brookshier,  
7515 Carroll Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912)



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TFA is a group of Maryland and D.C. neighbors promoting a sustainable, equitable, transit-oriented community with plenty of homes. We work to strengthen a vibrant, inclusive, prosperous, resilient and transit-friendly community and advocate for the creation and preservation of affordable and market-rate housing, commercial spaces and community amenities including schools, parks, recreation facilities and public spaces. More information about TFA at [www.takomaforall.org](http://www.takomaforall.org).

This proposed plan amendment and included zoning changes are good for the climate, good for equity and affordability, and good for local businesses. For example:

- Adding space for hundreds of new housing units with easy access to both the Takoma Metro station and future Purple Line station will mean thousands
- The inclusion of the Green Promenade, bikeway improvements, pedestrian network and new Town Center along Flower Ave will significantly elevate th
- The proposed new zoning will fit in with existing 12-17 story apartment buildings in the plan area, and will also enable more people at all income levels
- The adoption of mixed-use zoning in the plan area will provide opportunities for additional retail businesses to serve the needs of both new and existing

The modest changes proposed in this plan amendment are necessary to meet the [City Council's 2023-2024 priorities](#), such as exploring to expand City revenue options to identify long-term solutions necessary to diversify the City's revenue streams and plan and prepare for development in the City and region while maintaining the special character and economic and racial diversity of Takoma Park. The plan amendment also supports Takoma Park's [Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan](#), adopted in 2019, which identifies the need to “produce more housing and opportunities for businesses to start and grow across the income spectrum and in neighborhoods across the City to meet the diverse housing and economic needs.”

We have [appended a Q&A section](#) that we found useful in answering questions that have been raised regarding the plan amendment.

TFA strongly encourages the Montgomery County Planning Board to endorse the Minor Master Plan Amendment draft in full. One hundred individual members and friends have asked to include their names below, associating themselves publicly with the organization's position.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Takoma For All

Adam Jentleson, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Adam Oppenheim, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Alan Zibel, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Alexander Hadden, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Amanda Hungerford, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Amelia Coffey, Takoma DC  
 Ashley E. Brookshier, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Ashley Hayslip, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
 Ashley Ward, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Ben Glickstein, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Ben Rempell, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Beth Davidson, Takoma DC  
 Birchie Seiffert, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Brendan Smith, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Bridget Cherry, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Carter Dougherty, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Christian Bangert, Takoma DC  
 David Bend, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 David Koelsch, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Deborah Roose, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Diego Vera Cossio, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
 Dion Thompson-Davoli, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Donna Victoria, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
 Edward Drozd, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Elizabeth Baer, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Elizabeth Hisle-Gorman, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Emanuel Wagner, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
 Erin OBrien, Silver Spring  
 Eyal Li, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Fawzia Ahmed, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
 Fred Schultz, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
 Gene Koo, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
 Jason Schechter, Takoma Park - Ward 4



Jay Driskell, Takoma Park - Ward 5  
Jeffrey Trunzo , Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Jeremy Hekhuis, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Jessica Wechter, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
John Cornwell, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
John Fawcett, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
John Gorman, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
John Krizel, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Johnathan Duff, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Jon Ryder, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Jordie Hannum, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Judy Mounty, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Julia Barlow, Silver Spring  
Julia Lyskawa, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Julien Katchinoff, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
Karina Santos, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Katrina Furth, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Kawsar Talaat, Takoma Park - Ward 5  
Kelly OKeefe, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Kenneth Simler, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Kerry Porter, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Kevin Finelli, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
LaLa Seidensticker, Unincorporated Takoma Park  
Laura Atwood, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Leanne Sedowski, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Liliane Winograd, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Linda Kolko, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Lucy Madden, Takoma Park - Ward 6  
Marc Pfeuffer, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Marco Konings, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Mark Drajem, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Mark Porter, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Maya Bernstein, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Melissa Burke, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Mica Bevington, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Michael Ward, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Mike Carter-Conneen, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Miriam Quintal, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Molly Wasser, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Morgan Snyder, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Nancy Augustine, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Nancy Martin, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Natalie Hopkins, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Nick Finio, Silver Spring  
Noa Baum, Silver Spring - Sligo Park Hills  
Paul Mackie, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Paul Seiffert, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Pavan Auluck, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Rachel Anderson, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Rachel Lettre, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Rachel Schultz, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Rich and Laura Barclay, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Salim Furth, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Sally Taber, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Sarah Brookshier, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Scott Smallwood, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Sorrah Edwards-Thro, Takoma Park - Ward 3  
Steve Teles, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Tamara L Laird, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Taunton Paine, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Tim Gronniger, Takoma Park - Ward 4  
Tom Di Liberto, Takoma Park - Ward 2  
Tony Camilli, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
Troy Jacobs, Takoma Park - Ward 5  
Walter Scott, Takoma Park - Ward 1  
William Girardo, Takoma Park - Ward 2



Zachary Arnold, Takoma Park - Ward 4

(submitted on behalf of TFA and the above signed individuals by Ashley E Brookshier, 7515 Carroll Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912)



IN REPLY REFER TO:  
NCPC File No. 8496

September 13, 2023

Ms. Tanya Stern  
Director  
Montgomery County Planning Department  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
2425 Reedie Drive 14th Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

**RE: Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (Public Hearing Draft)**

Dear Ms. Stern:

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) staff appreciates the opportunity to review the **Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (Plan)**. NCPC staff comments provided below focus on the NCPC's role as the federal government's central planning agency and the plan's potential impact on federal properties or other federal interests in the National Capital Region (NCR). Overall, we find the recommendations in the **Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment** to be consistent with the planning principles and policies of the *Comprehensive Plan of the National Capital: Federal Elements* (Comprehensive Plan).

**Stewardship of Capper-Cramton Lands**

The Plan Area covered by the **Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment** includes Sligo Creek Park, a Capper-Cramton parkland. The Capper-Cramton Act (CCA) of 1930 (46 Stat. 482) was enacted for the acquisition, establishment, and development of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and stream valley parks in Maryland and Virginia to create a comprehensive park, parkway, and playground system in the National Capital. In addition to authorizing funding for acquisition, the act granted NCPC the review authority to approve any Capper-Cramton Park development or management plan to ensure the protection and preservation of the region's valuable watersheds and parklands.

The Plan provides several recommendations for enhancing environmental conditions throughout the plan area – including within the Sligo Creek Stream Valley. The plan encourages private development to reduce impervious surfaces, increase planting and landscaping, minimize the development of surface and use other green infrastructure best practices to mitigate or reduce heat islands, soil erosion, and other stormwater runoff challenges. In addition, the proposal of a Green Promenade improves the bicycle and pedestrian connection between the Sligo Creek trail and the Long Branch trail, and connects residential, institutional, and commercial uses throughout the district. NCPC staff supports the enhancements and improvements to improve the overall health of the Sligo Creek and stream valley and park accessibility.



The Plan recommends increasing the development intensity, particularly for lands immediately abutting Capper-Cramton lands. Currently, much of the land in the plan area is zoned residential, with a maximum build-out height (by-right) ranging from 35' to 100', and maximum lot coverage from ranging from 35% to 90%. The zoning changes would increase the maximum build-out height to 50' to 150' and increase the lot coverage to 90% throughout the plan area. While the zoning and land use proposals are outside of Capper-Cramton lands, they directly abut Capper-Cramton lands, and the increase in development could adversely affect the health of the stream valley. **NCPC staff recommends evaluating the land use and zoning change impacts on the Capper-Cramton's soil quality, stormwater runoff, flooding, and pollution.**

### **Equity**

The Plan conducts a thorough evaluation of the historic and contemporary equity impacts of legacy planning practices including the impacts on the transportation network, historic preservation, housing, and health. Of note, we appreciate the recommendations to bring forward underrepresented histories and create opportunities for more residents of Takoma Park to connect with the breadth and diversity of local heritage. Additionally, the recommendations to expand the informational tools available to identify and address local environmental inequities, are in alignment with our Comprehensive Plan and work to reduce health disparities in our region.

### **Next Steps**

As a reminder, any improvements on Capper-Cramton land require NCPC review. We encourage additional coordination between NCPC, the City of Takoma Park, the Montgomery County Department of Parks, and the Montgomery County Department of Planning to review the agency's submission guidelines and requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on **Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment**. We look forward to working with you to continue advancing our shared regional goals in the future. Please contact me (202-482-7254) or Project Officer Brittney Drakeford (202-482-7237) [brittney.drakeford@ncpc.gov](mailto:brittney.drakeford@ncpc.gov), if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Michael A. Sherman*

Michael A. Sherman, AICP  
Director, Policy and Research  
National Capital Planning Commission



Good morning, Melissa,

I am sending this email on behalf of Michael Sherman, Policy and Research Division Director of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). Please find attached staff comments from NCPC on the Public Release Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. If you have any questions, please have a member of your staff contact me at 202-482-7210 or [Brittney.Drakeford@ncpc.gov](mailto:Brittney.Drakeford@ncpc.gov).

Warm regards,

---

**Brittney Drakeford | Urban Planner**

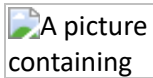
Policy & Research Division

National Capital Planning Commission

401 9<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Suite 500 | Washington, DC 20004

W: 202.482.7210

[Brittney.Drakeford@ncpc.gov](mailto:Brittney.Drakeford@ncpc.gov)

A picture  
containing

*The Federal Planning Agency for America's Capital*

[www.ncpc.gov](http://www.ncpc.gov)



Hello,

I would like to submit written testimony for the public hearing tonight, September 14th.

As a new resident of Takoma Park, I was intrigued and disturbed to hear about the Minor Master Plan. I have learned about aspects of the plan that will reduce runoff into Sligo Creek, decrease impermeable surfaces, and create improved bike lanes along Maple Ave. I support these sections of the plan as I see these will improve the environment I live in and provide direct improvement of quality of life for me and my neighbors.

However, I am greatly concerned about the aspects of the plan that allow up to 3,500 new units to be added to the Maple Ave area. I question the motives of those who proposed this, possibly prioritizing profit over quality of life of residents. This must not happen. My greatest concern is not for my own risk of overcrowding, but for the disregard this plan pays to the African American community that has historically resided in this area. To overcrowd their homes and environment and provide woefully inadequate protections for their ability to stay there long term is nothing short of systemic racism. I expect better of Montgomery County.

I urge you to adjust the plan to include expansion only on the Adventist Hospital property and provide environmental improvements on Maple Ave without increasing the housing and business density. My hope is that a voice from a resident of the specific area that will be affected will carry weight and that you will protect our community with the power you have been granted.

Stay tuned,  
Elizabeth Rosenberg  
7611 Maple Ave  
Apt #202  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
[elizabergrosenbeth@gmail.com](mailto:elizabergrosenbeth@gmail.com)  
(202) 425-3922





September 14, 2023

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
2425 Reedie Drive  
Wheaton, Maryland 20902

Dear Chair Harris and members of the Planning Board:

My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Regional Policy Director for [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit that works to advance racial, economic, and environmental justice in land use, transportation, and housing throughout Greater Washington. We enthusiastically support the draft recommendations in the [Takoma Park Minor Master Plan](#).

Washington Adventist Hospital has been gone for four years, and this plan is a huge opportunity to reimagine its 15-acre campus. I live about a mile from the plan area, and I pass by it frequently, usually when walking my dog. I think about this place a lot, especially in light of the redevelopment of the former Walter Reed Hospital a few miles away in Takoma, DC. That hospital is now home to hundreds of new homes, including deeply affordable homes for seniors; significant amounts of public open space and a big plaza; and new retail, including a daycare, a grocery store, and restaurants. It is becoming a community destination and gathering place.

We can, and should do the same with the former Adventist Hospital. This plan lays the groundwork to do so.

This section of Takoma Park is home to a significant portion of the city's market-rate and income-restricted, subsidized affordable housing, an important asset in an increasingly expensive community. We need more homes, and more permanently affordable homes. This plan addresses that, by rezoning the hospital for housing, as well as adjusting the zoning along Maple Avenue to preserve the apartment buildings that are already there and identifying opportunities to provide more affordable homes, ensuring that long-time residents have the chance to stay here.

This plan also creates opportunities for more shopping and retail at the hospital site, including the potential for a full-service grocery store, something that Takoma Park does not currently have.

The Washington, DC region is great ➡ and it can be greater.





Residents in one of the city's most vulnerable communities could have access to healthy, fresh food without having to travel a long distance.

The plan also identifies ways to make this community more resilient in the face of climate change. Flooding is already an issue here and will get worse in the future (I can speak to this personally, as someone whose basement flooded multiple times a year until I got it waterproofed.) This plan recommends expanding the tree canopy, reducing impervious surfaces that cause stormwater runoff, restoring natural areas along steep slopes to reduce erosion, and expanding access to green space. It also discusses the possibility for an outdoor gathering and performance space, something that this community could also benefit from.

As an advocate for more equitable and sustainable communities, and a neighbor, I urge that the Planning Board approve this plan. Our organization looks forward to working with you and the County Council to find ways to make these recommendations a reality sooner rather than later. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Dan Reed  
Regional Policy Director



Dear Chair Harris and members of the Planning Board:

I'm submitting testimony on behalf of Greater Greater Washington for tonight's (September 14) hearing on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan.

Our mailing address is: 80 M Street SE, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20003.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Best regards,  
Dan



**Dan Reed, AICP (they/them)**

Regional Policy Director

Greater Greater Washington

<https://gqwash.org>

(202) 256-7238

Think cities are great? Want them to be greater? [Support our work](#) and be part of the change!



Good morning

Unfortunately I used my work email in error when signing up to testify, ([Michael.english@oig.dot.gov](mailto:Michael.english@oig.dot.gov)) and I wish to sign up using this email instead, as this will be my opinion in my personal capacity, not that if the department of transportation or as my role as an employee of it.

Thank you and sorry for the confusion

Please feel free to call me if helpful (203) 241-3585



September 14, 2023 public hearing  
Takoma Park Minor Master Plan

To whom it may concern, Good afternoon. I understand Takoma Park wants to increase retail and housing on the Maple Ave strip, the hospital site and focus is on all unused spaces and small buildings that don't house a lot of people. I imagine there is going to be major construction activity and many more residents around us. Personally, I would love more retail and don't mind a few more neighbors, but I'm concerned if Takoma looks like every other congested city with people living on top of each other. I'm concerned of increased crime, impact on the environment and most important to me is an increase in my taxes and being unable to afford to live here. I have lived in Takoma Park for 23 years and 15 of them on the Maple Avenue strip. I chose this city for its green initiatives, small town feel, public transportation infrastructure and affordability. I read in the Takoma paper, they are not forcing anyone to move, but with this new venture rezoning, etc., most likely taxes will go up and not being able to afford to live here is still a subtle force out. Our Hilltop Condominium community is small, comprised of multiple retired seniors, fixed income, blue collar and medium /low income earners that are struggling to pay the mortgage and high condo fees along with paying taxes. Many of us cannot even afford to move anywhere else in the DMV with the same amenities and feeling of safety. I hope this is not the gentrification of Takoma Park and residents are forced out because they can't afford it. Please consider a plan that revitalizes the hospital site and community center but does not financially cripple your long time residents or ostracize renters on the Maple Ave corridor with high taxes or unaffordable rents.

Thank you,

Yolanda Shabbaz  
7730 Maple Ave #19  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



I, Karen Elrich will be at Wheaton.



This letter is to express my concerns re the Minor Master Plan Amendment for rezoning to commercial and residential so-called mixed in the area of the former Washington Adventist Hospital. I live in the Flower District of Montgomery County District Four. The plan proposes extremely dense housing that would be highly disruptive to the surrounding community. I am not a "NIMBY" but it is not up to Takoma Park to solve all the housing problems of Montgomery County. The proposal would have the potential to add 3,000 new residents to Takoma Park which is approximately a 30% increase in the population of Takoma Park. Our already inadequate streets would be incapable of accommodating this huge increase. There would be a drastic decrease of green space.

It would be perfectly reasonable and appropriate to plan to housing in this area, however on a much more modest scale.

Another aspect of this discussion that I have found puzzling is the complete absence of the voice of the former hospital. It is ultimately up to them to whom they sell the property and it would seem they are completely not forthcoming on their thinking.

Thank you for your considering on the above.

Carrie Beall

Homeowner and voter.



Greetings,

I will be testifying at the **Takoma Park Community Center**, rm 7500 for the Montgomery County Planning Board public hearing on the MMPA for Takoma Park.

Thank you,  
Paul Huebner





September 14, 2023

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

Re: Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment

*Submitted Electronically*

This letter is submitted on behalf of members of the Purple Line Corridor Coalition (<https://purplelinecorridor.org/>), a long-standing partnership of community organizations, state and local governments, nonprofits, philanthropies, and businesses. PLCC is responsible for creating the 2017 Purple Line Community Development Agreement (<https://purplelinecorridor.org/agreement/>). With its administrative home at the University of Maryland's National Center for Smart Growth, PLCC has developed a number of research-supported plans, policy priorities, and other related goals across our equitable development focus areas within the coalition.

We are writing today to offer support for, and comments and suggestions relating to, the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment to further promote and achieve these priorities in this Purple Line community. We believe these recommendations are grounded in research and also fully consistent with Montgomery County's [THRIVE 2050](#) goals and priorities, the PLCC community development agreement to which Montgomery County is a signatory, as well as the those of the [Maryland Housing Needs Assessment](#), to promote equity in communities, increase access to opportunity, support economic and environmental sustainability, allow for context-sensitive solutions in existing neighborhoods, and respond to the need for a more balanced housing and small business supply.

Summary of recommendations:

**We support adoption of the Amendment as essential to the quality of life and opportunity for current and future residents, small business owners, Purple Line riders, and other community members in Takoma Park. This is a generational chance to meet holistic goals that are inclusive, sustainable, and appropriate for Takoma Park, Montgomery County, and our regional transit corridor.**



We have highlighted selected elements below for additional consideration, which we believe will further enhance the goals and outcomes for all stakeholders. They are organized into these issue areas:

- Include more demographic data on existing racial and economic inequities within the plan geography, and how the plan works to address and positively impact those inequities.
- Provide more explicit acknowledgment of existing small businesses including those inside multi-family buildings and those outside designated retail corridors, and identifying strategies to help sustain, expand, and perpetuate more community-serving small businesses in the plan area
- Expand the plan elements to provide a more comprehensive and detailed approach for housing needs of current and future residents
- Ensure that the strong multimodal connectivity and safe streets elements emphasize the Purple Line as an explicit destination and link within these parts of the plan.

### Recommendations:

**We recommend the consideration and inclusion of the racial and economic equity impacts of the proposed rezoning** in the amendment. As we better understand the relationship between rezoning, and up-zonings, to residential displacement, it is important to both acknowledge and work intentionally to mitigate the threat of displacement of current renter or owner residents, whether due to housing cost and property tax escalations, property disposition that changes housing access, temporary or permanent loss of units through construction, or other factors that may impact housing stability for current residents. These issues are particularly relevant and impactful for lower-income homeowners and renters, including BIPOC households.

We recommend acknowledging through plan data and narrative the current and emerging diversity of the population in the plan area and nearby communities – including but not limited to Latino and Ethiopian residents, for example. We note that the plan area is more ethnically and racially diverse than the county. It has a higher share of Black/African-American residents (50%) compared to 19% in the county as a whole as of 2019. We appreciate that the plan area includes historically African American neighborhoods and sites highlighted for further study to enable historic designation, and the acknowledgment of racially restrictive covenants, which represent a legacy of deeply discriminatory and racist practices in land use.

It is both relevant and important for the amendment to acknowledge additional dynamics of institutional racism that continue to impact housing markets, from segregation and unequal public benefits investments to disparities in homeownership rates, access to credit and mortgages, and other public policies that have affected these neighborhoods over time. In addition, the plan should document data that quantifies existing racial and economic disparities among households in the plan area, and opportunities for the plan amendment to lessen, respond, or otherwise close those disparities.

**We recommend including more explicit information, context, and articulated protections and provisions for local, small, or culturally relevant retail/businesses** in the amendment.

We appreciate that the plan highlights opportunities to increase neighborhood-serving retail. We recommend more emphasis on existing small businesses, including those not as visible or well-known as



those in the main commercial district. We also support identifying the conditions needed to support them and new small businesses in locations where mixed use locations and corridors can mutually sustain communities and residents. Examples include:

- The Silver Spring Master Plan included a chapter on its legacy businesses. The current plan amendment could better highlight existing, community-serving Takoma Park businesses including those located within or outside commercial/retail districts, as well as identify strategies to help sustain, expand, and perpetuate more small businesses to respond to community needs.
- We also recommend looking at retail and other business or mixed use district elements as potential sites for new, small-format square footage spaces for future smaller businesses. One consideration is to ensure a portion of smaller format business spaces in mixed-use developments, ground floor block design storefronts designed to accommodate a range of retailer types, sizes, and perhaps opportunities for incubation space as well.
- Smaller format retail and business space can also permit existing businesses that may be temporarily or permanently displaced for new construction projects to have somewhere to relocate within the neighborhood, district, or community.
- We know that in a few locations (e.g. one portion of Maple Avenue, another on Erie Avenue, and some scattered-site businesses located within existing residential buildings) the business sizes are a much smaller scale than is typically envisioned in master plan amendments. These businesses remain relevant to the character and community needs for existing Takoma Park neighborhoods. We hope they can be accommodated in additional languages to support small businesses.
- Another opportunity to support local, small, and/or culturally relevant businesses is through public benefits agreements or programs. Examples include below-market leases, long-term leases with favorable rents, significant tenant improvements, and relocation coordination during construction.

Additional strategies can be found in the county Planning Department's [Retail in Diverse Communities Study](#).

**We support and recommend expansion of the plan to provide a more comprehensive and detailed approach for housing needs of current and future residents.**

As you may recall, the PLCC Housing Action Plan calls to preserve or produce at least 17,000 homes currently affordable to households that earn \$72,000 annually or less. This includes retaining 8,500 homes with current rent protections that keep them affordable. The areas around Purple Line rail stations remain one of the last affordable communities in the Metropolitan DC region for low-and moderate-income households.

- The plan calls for retaining existing affordable homes and “striving to achieve” a no net loss goal of affordable units in redevelopment projects. We encourage stronger recommendations on the mechanics of how no net loss may be achieved, for example with 1:1 replacement. The 1:1 replacement would apply from rental to rental and from ownership to ownership – that is, the tenure of the unit being replaced should be matched by the replacement unit as well.



- We also recommend outlining where homes are located within the plan districts, relative to other proposed changes in use, rezoning, amenities etc. We recommend that the plan amendment include examples of proactive tools to retain affordability within the plan districts.
- We recommend specifying levels of affordability desired to meet needs, and the best opportunities within the plan to increase the supply of and/or protect existing affordable homes. The plan currently calls to prioritize homes for households at or below 50% AMI on public land/properties redeveloped on public land. It would be valuable and appropriate to offer more examples of these types of housing and affordability priorities in other parts of the plan.
- We recommend reconsideration of the 12.5% MPDU requirement for applicable projects in light of other recent plans. Bethesda and Silver Spring both include a 15% MPDU requirement. Given both the significant value of the proposed land use and zoning changes in this plan, it is unclear why Takoma Park would not also adopt a comparable requirement above 12.5%.
- We acknowledge that rental MPDU and condo MPDUs might not have the same income targets - for example, the relative cost of achieving a 50% area median income home ownership unit requires substantially more subsidy than a comparable rental unit. However, the contribution share of MPDUs from an eligible project could be increased to parallel other locations, and independent of tenure.
- In consideration of the fact that 40+ percent of households around the plan area have incomes below 50% AMI, we recommend a more explicit discussion of the importance of equitable access to home ownership preservation/retention, as well as to future affordable home ownership production and opportunity. The plan could also include examples of programs and benefits to support affordable home ownership preservation and production, and locations within the plan area where BIPOC home ownership “no net loss” provisions might be most needed.
- We support the plan’s provision of “financial and other incentives” to boost affordable housing production. We suggest including more information, including any recent market studies that may have been performed, on the rationale or need for financial support for market-rate housing.
- We recommend identifying which properties receive subsidies through programs such as the LIHTC and when those subsidies are set to expire, in order to develop property-specific strategies for the preservation of the subsidized stock, which may include working with property owners to apply for additional LIHTC funds prior to the expiration of existing credits or support affordability protections following the purchase of units with expiring subsidies.
- As with small businesses, any housing-related public benefit priorities are not clearly defined, and perhaps could be expanded, especially to facilitate the preservation of affordable homes or protect residents from displacement - whether as renters or home owners (ref: page 80). We would welcome more resources being deployed to qualifying residents in this plan area.

**We strongly support provisions for multimodal connectivity and safe and complete street design in the plan,** and recommend emphasizing the Purple Line as an explicit destination and link within recommendations. The Purple Line stations at Long Branch and Takoma-Langley Transit Center will be key points of accessibility for any new development in the minor plan area. These stations are within a one mile walkshed of the plan area, and frequent bus service on Flower and Carroll Avenues will enable easy transit access to those stations, taking residents to Silver Spring, College Park, and beyond.

- It is not clear in our reading of the amendment whether the bike and sidewalk improvements proposed are explicitly focused on creating connections to existing bus service and planned Purple



Line stations or other common, nearby destinations. We recommend emphasizing this connectivity in the plan, especially along Flower, Maple and Carroll Avenues.

- The plan calls for the large-scale, surface parking lots in the Maple Avenue District, envisioned to be the residential center. It would be helpful to also include what is known about parking supply needs in the plan area. We understand that parking needs at several larger residential locations in the plan area reflect households with multiple vehicles, including workers with vehicle-based employment, e.g. It would be helpful for the plan to articulate the relationship between known parking studies, demand, e.g. with the recommendations for parking accommodations.
- As well, are there opportunities to either provide shared parking facilities or explore ways to provide flexible parking requirements (such as an affordable home for parking space swap option) in some locations? This question has an impact on the plan area's heat island effect as well – how much paved surface area will be dedicated to this use, even taking into account the mitigation factors noted in the plan.

Taken as a whole, our proposed recommendations to the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment would help to ensure communities along the Purple Line will remain diverse, inclusive, with equitable access to transit and other public infrastructure.

**Again, we support adoption of the Amendment as essential to the quality of life and opportunity for current and future residents, small business owners, Purple Line riders, and other community members in Takoma Park. This is a generational chance to meet holistic goals that are inclusive, sustainable, and appropriate for Takoma Park, Montgomery County, and our regional transit corridor.**

Thank you for the opportunity to present these views, and for your consideration to include them in the final Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. We would be happy to discuss these recommendations further at any time. Please reach out to PLCC Director Sheila Somashekhar, SSomashe@umd.edu, to schedule a conversation.



Montgomery County Planning Board members:

I am submitting the attached testimony on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment, on behalf of members of the Purple Line Corridor Coalition. I am the point of contact for any questions or follow up you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,  
Sheila Somashekhar

--

Sheila Somashekhar (she/her)  
Director, Purple Line Corridor Coalition  
National Center for Smart Growth  
University of Maryland  
[ssomashe@umd.edu](mailto:ssomashe@umd.edu)



Hello,

I would like to submit written testimony for the public hearing tonight regarding the Minor Master plan , September 14th.

As a resident of 7611 Maple Ave in Takoma Park I feel personally involved because the impacts of the plan will be happening right outside of my living space.

While I haven't been a resident for as long as some other members of my building or the surrounding area I believe it is a common shared intention amongst the area to keep a calm, peaceful environment that is safe for inhabitants.

As an avid biker I take no issue with the proposed plans to improve bike lanes and combat damage to sligo creek. I would hope any plans to do so however would be completed quickly because currently the purple line project already impedes riders or walkers ability to navigate the trail without a need to take forced detours. This would not be my intention as much as is possible.

Regarding the part of the plan that discussed creating more high rise living accommodations I couldn't disagree with that aspect more. I think the advantage of the area is people's abilities to actually afford to live in it as it currently exists. So any plans to expand would fundamentally change the aesthetic and push current residents out in order to accomplish nothing but unnecessary development or force them to live in a far more compressed version of the ideal way they were already living.

This seems to be a topic that is wildly pushed for by non-members of the community. I highly urge you to actually to visit the area the proposed project concerns and discuss the proposed changes with people who live there and whose lives will be impacted the most if you have not already.

The gravest concern is not how we line our pockets with quick cash at this juncture but how we make choices that secure a future for current and future residents that provides them with bare necessities over made up wants and respects the natural offerings around the area that in no way require development and never will.

Thank you,  
JLW



To the Planning Board:

I write to oppose the proposed Minor Master Plan Amendment in its current form.

I strongly object to the stealth aspect of proposing this amendment in August, when many folks are on vacation and otherwise not able to grasp what's being proposed.

It smacks of the same sneaky tactics in Ohio where Republicans tried to make a major change to referenda procedures at a time when they thought relatively few would be able to oppose it.

Another procedural aspect is inadequate notice to the affected community. It's disingenuous to suggest that all concerned parties were notified. If that is legally true, then you need to broaden what's defined as a concerned or affected party.

This amendment would have the effect of increased traffic in the surrounding community. But it does nothing to ameliorate the already dangerous traffic hazards to pedestrians on the streets east of Flower Ave. There are zero sidewalks on Garland, and grossly inadequate or non-existent crosswalks on Greenwood and Garland.

The County must address these issues.

Thank you.

Thomas Gabriel  
715 Erie Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912



Hello,

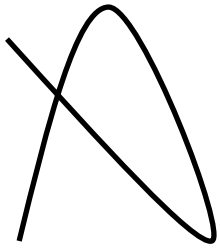
The plan largely looks within reason with the exception of the density at Adventist. Developing high rises in that area would lead to congestion not suited for the surrounding areas nor does it fit in architecturally. While the promenades are a great idea to connect Takoma Park together, the density recommendations are not in line with the needs, wants, or desires of many Takoma Park residents.

Thanks for accepting my testimony.

-Deepak

7405 Garland Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912





# Alliance for Regional Cooperation

*"Keeping it Regional"*

14 September 2023

To: **Montgomery County Planning Commission**  
Re: **Minor Master Plan Amendments**

Jim Schulman, Exec. Director

631 E St. NE, WDC 20002  
JSchulman@ARCdmv.org  
www.ARCdmv.org

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*(affiliations listed for  
identification purposes only)*

**Bicky Corman, President**

Bicky Corman Law

**Devin Deaton**

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Community Purchasing Alliance

**Susanne Lowen**

Climate Action Coffee

**Rodney North**

Independet Co-op Consultant

**Janine Finnell**

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Mencer 'Don' Edwards, J&S Assoc.

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Jessica Graham, JG Global Advisory

Samuel Jordan, BTEC

Larry Martin, Grid 2.0, LLC

Vernon Oakes, Everything Co-op

Gaby Seltzer, DC Central Kitchen

Stella Tarnay, Capital Nature Steven

Shaff, Com. Vision Partners Michael

Shuman, Neigh. Assoc. Corp. Eddie

Tuvin, FSC First

Peter Whitehead, SMC Concrete

Distinguished Commissioners,

My name is Jim Schulman and the Alliance for Regional Cooperation (ARC), which I lead is a non-profit organization focused on sustainable regional economic development. We work with independent businesses, social enterprises, farmers and cooperatives to help them obtain, from within the region, the goods and services they need to run their businesses. I am also an Architect practicing in Maryland and DC, so I have a sensitivity to issues of scale. ARC promotes self-reliant approaches to metropolitan planning and development, addressing the region's ability to meet residents' basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, education, health care, water, and energy in environmentally and community friendly ways. These human needs can best be met through governmental policies that stress equity and regional self-reliance.

The proposed plan amendments under consideration address many factors that can heavily impact quality of life for residents. And ARC does observe that there are a number of elements in the plan that support community sustainability, including the green promenade, revitalizing the hospital site, the goal of protecting Sligo Creek, and allowing food production and processing as permitted uses on the former hospital site.

Given, however, the various eco-crises it is now obvious that human civilization faces, any plan that does not stringently stipulate the preservation of mature trees, does not incentivize the adaptive reuse of buildings, is disconnected from sound transit and infrastructure planning, or otherwise works counter to Montgomery County's strong Climate Action Plan, should be considered by this Commission to be dead on arrival.

As ARC has testified before similar Boards in Arlington, Virginia and the District of Columbia, we are not opposed to the greater provision of a variety of housing types, mixed-use or mixed-income neighborhoods, the adoption of alternatives to auto-dominated land-uses nor land use policies that will actually serve those with great financial need, whether or not they happen to own property.





Nevertheless, ARC has strong concerns about the Zoning that has been proposed. We consider the proposed across-the-board up-zoning to be a form of quality-of-life confiscation that will eventually deliver an unprecedented increase in property values & tax dollars - yet will displace the very people it claims to protect - folks historically marginalized by government policies. Land value inflation will only increase gentrification.

Most importantly, we feel that any commercial zoning added to properties with existing predominant residential uses be limited to one or two floors, to prevent the wholesale conversion of Maple Avenue into a commercial strip.

ARC endorses concerns that have been or will be brought to your attention by my esteemed design colleague, Carl Elefante, who has submitted written testimony. ARC also endorses concerns articulated by the Climate Action Coffee, the Community Equity Coalition, and Community Vision for Takoma.

We appreciate your willingness to hear our concerns. Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jim Schulman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning of the first name.

Executive Director, Alliance for Regional Cooperation



Ms. Coello,

Please find attached the written testimony I will present in person, tonight, in Wheaton. I look forward to meeting you.

Thank you!

-- **Jim Schulman**, Executive Director



631 'E' ST NE, Washington, DC 20002

[JSchulman@ARCdmv.org](mailto:JSchulman@ARCdmv.org); 202/544-0069

ARC website: <https://ARCdmv.org>

ARC works with local small businesses, cooperatives, and social enterprises to promote sustainable regional economic development, helping them obtain the goods and services they need to run their businesses from within the Washington Metro region. ARC is currently partnering with another non-profit, the Coalition for an Inclusive Economy of Greater Washington, DC, to introduce the Localight rewards app to business associations, anchor institutions, and government agencies.

**“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.”**

-- Ida B. Wells

**"No magic bullet, not even the Internet, can save us from population explosion, deforestation, climate disruption, poison by pollution, and wholesale extinction of plant and animal species. We're going to have to want different things, seek different pleasures, pursue different goals than those that have been driving us and our world economy." -- Joanna Macy**



This letter is to express my concerns re the Minor Master Plan Amendment for rezoning to commercial and residential so-called mixed in the area of the former Washington Adventist Hospital. I live in the Flower District of Montgomery County District Four. The plan proposes extremely dense housing that would be highly disruptive to the surrounding community. I am not a "NIMBY" but it is not up to Takoma Park to solve all the housing problems of Montgomery County. The proposal would have the potential to add 3,000 new residents to Takoma Park which is approximately a 30% increase in the population of Takoma Park. Our already inadequate streets would be incapable of accommodating this huge increase. There would be a drastic decrease of green space.

It would be perfectly reasonable and appropriate to plan to housing in this area, however on a much more modest scale.

Another aspect of this discussion that I have found puzzling is the complete absence of the voice of the former hospital. It is ultimately up to them to whom they sell the property and it would seem they are completely not forthcoming on their thinking.

Thank you for your considering on the above.

Carrie Beall

Homeowner and voter.



Dear Chairman Harris and Members of the Planning Board:

We are opposed to the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA). It is a "one-size-fits-all" approach to redeveloping our City in a way that is racially inequitable and incompatible in height and density with the small-town character of Takoma Park's residential and commercial areas.

While we welcome the redevelopment of the Washington Adventist Hospital grounds, especially the possibility of new affordable and "missing middle" housing, we believe the new zoning proposed in the amendment would allow too much density (2 million sq ft.) and height (12 stories). This level of permitted development could turn a potentially beautiful neighborhood of new, small-scale buildings adjacent to Sligo Creek into an oversized concrete canyon.

We are particularly concerned that the proposed amendment could result in the racially inequitable displacement of residents on Maple Avenue, many of whom occupy the rent-controlled or affordable apartments that already exist there. Several of these buildings are owned by non-profit affordable housing entities, including the Montgomery Housing Partnership. While efforts to encourage the updating of these multi-unit buildings is a worthy topic for planners, we believe it should be addressed more carefully, in a separate review process, not through the much broader proposed MMPA which includes the hospital grounds and the Erie/Flower/Greenwood corridor.

As a general matter, we are very concerned about the MMPA's plan to change zoning rules to allow significant increases in floor area ratio (FAR) - or density - and building height. Five-story buildings along Flower, Erie, Greenwood, and Maplewood Avenues, like 15-story buildings on Maple Avenue, would radically and negatively alter the landscape there. Please don't let Takoma Park be turned into an unattractive, over-developed suburb! We understand that many of our sister communities - Kensington, Lyttonsville, Glenmont, and Forest Glen have much lower height limits unless near a Metro station. Why not look at these areas to compare and inform the proposals for Takoma Park?

We are further concerned that there has been no call for a traffic study, despite the plan to authorize as many as 3500 new housing units in Takoma Park, a town now of approximately 17,000 residents. How many new cars will this bring to our already congested roads?

Simply put, we believe the MMPA incentivizes redevelopment of bigger and more expensive buildings with higher rents, resulting in a racially inequitable impact on residents of existing affordable housing, excessive amounts of concrete with "heat island" effect, worsening stormwater runoff into Sligo Creek, and an overall negative impact on the beauty and liveability of the City of Takoma Park.

We urge you to send the amendment back to the staff for a more thoughtful evaluation.

Thank you,

Christine Simpson  
John Lorenz  
7300 Cedar Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Public Hearing of 9/14/2023



Introduced by: Councilmember Small

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**RESOLUTION 2023-33**

**CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE PUBLIC  
HEARING DRAFT OF THE MINOR MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT  
(MONTGOMERY COUNTY)**

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) is a County plan developed by Montgomery County Planning Department, in partnership with the City of Takoma Park, to amend certain elements of the Takoma Park Master Plan (last updated in 2000); and

WHEREAS, the MMPA provides an opportunity to reexamine elements of the Takoma Park Master Plan in respect to unanticipated economic and land use changes; and

WHEREAS, the unexpected relocation of the Washington Adventist Hospital opens an opportunity for the City of Takoma Park to consider resources on the campus and surrounding area and recommend changes, including the Washington Adventist University campus, and the multi-family housing areas along Maple Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has been apprised of the MMPA at each step of the process to date, and has reviewed and discussed the proposed draft plan recommendations as presented by Montgomery County Planning in consultation with City of Takoma Park staff; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park City Council supports the re-envisioning of the Washington Adventist Hospital campus and the enhancement of critical civic, economic, and housing resources in the surrounding neighborhoods along the Maple Avenue corridor in a manner that enhances the quality of life of area residents and is environmentally and financially sustainable; and

WHEREAS, the MMPA covers an area within one of the City's most racially diverse communities and consists of a high number of the City's affordable housing units; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the City Council passed Resolution 2019-47, adopting the City of Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan which outlines the City's vision for housing and economic development for the next decade; and

WHEREAS, this plan outlined three overarching goals for future development in the City: preserve existing businesses and affordable housing in Takoma Park, including in



revitalizing areas; produce more housing and opportunities for businesses to start and grow across the income spectrum and in neighborhoods across the City to meet the diverse housing and economic needs; and protect renters, homeowners, and local businesses from discrimination and displacement, and our environment from destruction; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines many strategies to achieve these goals, one of which is to encourage the use of County allowable use and zoning provisions to create and expand housing types that are under-represented in Takoma Park and desired by existing and new residents of various incomes, needs, abilities and family configurations; and

WHEREAS, other City adopted goals, plans, policies, and ordinances address aspects of the Plan amendment; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board will hold a public hearing and accept public comments to hear testimony on the draft recommendations of the MMPA; and

WHEREAS, at the City Council's request, Montgomery Planning set the Public Hearing date for September 14<sup>th</sup>, and extended the period of the open public record to allow for additional resident feedback; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the Public Hearing Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan and City Council members have held multiple information sessions and listening sessions for residents to ask questions and provide feedback on the plan, including the July 18, 2023 and August 16, 2023 Information Sessions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that per its June 7, 2023 Council Resolution 2023-16 , the City Council continues to request that the Montgomery County Planning Board ensures that the MMPA addresses seven priorities: incentivizing the creation of a range of housing types; retaining and improving existing affordable housing; retaining existing and attracting new local businesses; creating new public space opportunities; strengthening social and environmental factors; continuing community engagement throughout the planning review process; and assessing the impact of increasing residential units and retail on the provision of public services in the plan area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to address the aforementioned priorities, the City Council requires that the Montgomery County Planning Board holds work sessions that critically examine the following topics during development of the Planning Board Draft Plan of the MMPA:



- Topic: Potential Redevelopment of the Washington Adventist Site and the Flower Avenue District
  - How do the development requirements, including set-backs, building heights and step downs, lot coverage and density of the newly proposed zoning for the Washington Adventist site impact neighboring single-family housing? The MMPA should reduce the scale, height, and apply appropriate set-backs of parcels adjoining Maplewood and Greenwood Avenues in order to preserve the character of adjacent single-family housing.
  - What specific public space and public benefits recommendations can be made for the Washington Adventist site? Specifically, how can recommendations on the site address the six key community priorities in the Public Hearing Draft? The Plan should explore recommending inclusion of dedicated public spaces on the site. Additionally, the plan's 35 percent green cover requirement should not mitigate the need for dedicated public space to the benefit of green roofs.
  - Within the green space requirements of the Washington Adventist site development, the MMPA should (1) retain the greenspace at Hospital Hill (i.e., Maplewood Ave and Maple Ave) and (2) increase the recommended ½ acre primary central public open space with a recommended unobstructed opening on Flower Avenue to better preserve the existing central commons on the Washington Adventist site, promote its continuing accessibility to the public, and respect historical legacy of the commons for public health and recreation.
  - What is the appropriate zoning for the Erie Center retail node to meet the MMPA vision of the neighborhood that serves retail without adversely impacting existing single-family homes? MMPA roadway and transit recommendations within the District should allow for local usability of the Center and well-functioning traffic conditions.
  - The MMPA should clearly map the planned dedication and demarcate the allowable line of development on Site 23 abutting Sligo Creek. Any dedication and additional development requirements should preserve the existing native forested area and provide appropriate development setbacks and stormwater requirements to protect the environmental health of the Creek.



- Topic: Promoting a Diversity of Housing in the Plan Area
  - What are the potential impacts of newly proposed zoning on the diversity of housing stock and affordability? The MMPA should recommend that any new units constructed within the Plan area help meet the City's objectives of increasing the number of units and variety of housing types across the affordability spectrum that result in economically diverse communities.
  - What funding and regulatory recommendations can the MMPA make to ensure stakeholders (City, County, etc.) incentivize and finance the creation and preservation of quality, safe, diverse, and energy efficient housing within the Maple Avenue District?
  - What are the best comparable jurisdictions to Takoma Park with regard to housing density, transit access, geographic location, etc. to the MMPA and how do their zoning densities compare to the proposed MMPA land use?
  - Where appropriate, in the Maple Avenue District, the MMPA should encourage innovative in-fill development opportunities on underutilized portions of parcels that do not adversely impact existing affordable housing units. Given the trade-offs between commercial and housing development, consider alternatives to the proposed 100 percent commercial FAR to promote increased housing creation.
- Topic: Public Space, Infrastructure, and Amenities within the MMPA
  - What is the impact of the density proposed in the Plan on access to and provision of public space, infrastructure, recreational facilities, school capacity, roads, public utilities, and healthcare? How does the MMPA ensure adequate services will be available with the proposed increased population growth, and what mitigating strategies can be considered?
  - Are there specific parcels outside the Municipal District that would be appropriate locations to incentivize the expansion or creation of specific public benefit facilities?
  - The MMPA should include more specific recommendations around the activation and creation of usable greenspace including the activation of the greenspace neighboring Essex House and identification of additional opportunities for ballfields and structured play areas.
  - The plan should clearly support improvements in multi-modal transportation, help meet City and County climate goals, and address the current and future challenges of local vehicle traffic in the plan area.
- Topic: Protecting Existing Housing Affordability in the MMPA
  - How can the MMPA stakeholders retain existing housing affordability while improving the quality of existing stock of housing?



- What protection mechanisms are in place to prevent displacement of current renters in the Maple Avenue District and are additional protections needed in the MMPA?
- How do federal, state, and local policies such as low-income housing tax credits, Moderately-Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) requirements, rent stabilization, and others advance affordable housing goals in the MMPA, including no-net loss of affordable housing? The MMPA should be more explicit about how its goal of no-net loss of affordable housing, and City housing goals, will be met in this plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council wants the Montgomery County Planning Board to address the following in the Planning Board Draft Plan of the MMPA directly or prior to the advancement of the revised MMPA to the City Council and the Montgomery County Council:

- Include language in the MMPA that explicitly explains how the plan's recommendations address the Community Priorities identified;
- Provide additional documentation and background information on the Climate Assessment as well as assess the potential impacts of the MMPA on the environment and consider possible mitigating strategies;
- Provide additional information on the race equity impacts and how they were developed;
- Provide additional details on resident engagement during the development of the MMPA's vision, including outreach to residents along Maple Avenue;
- Provide additional information on how existing tree coverage in the MMPA along with future development requirements will help meet the goal of 60% tree canopy coverage throughout the entire City;
- Work with City staff to demonstrate alignment of the MMPA with City of Takoma Park adopted plans and policies, including: the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan, the 2019 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, the 2019 declaration of climate emergency, the 2020 Climate Action Framework, the City's Rent Stabilization ordinances, the City's Racial Equity Initiative, and City policies and ordinances related to stormwater, tree canopy, safe streets, and City right-of-way;
- Address forthcoming additional list of City edits and corrections to the text of the MMPA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that during the development of the Planning Board Draft Plan, the City Council will endeavor to hold work sessions on the following topics related to the MMPA:

- School facilities within the MMPA area and the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) site selection and school construction process;
- Current state of housing within the Maple Avenue District and ways to achieve City housing goals for protection and preservation; including rehabilitation needs, partnerships, and financing opportunities;
- The County's development review process and how the City can play a role in influencing future development;



- The Montgomery County Mapping Segregation project and how the results may advance race equity in the City including the elimination of racial restrictive covenants and street renaming.

Adopted by the Takoma Park City Council this 13th day of September, 2023.

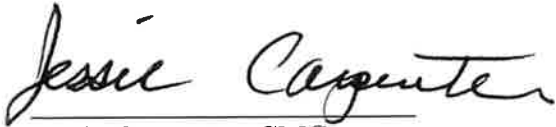
AYES: Searcy, Fulcher, Dyballa, Gibson, Honzak

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Seamens, Small

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessie Carpenter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Jessie Carpenter, CMC  
City Clerk



Dear Planning Board Chair Harris,

Attached please find the Takoma Park City Council Resolution 2023-33, regarding the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan.

If you have any questions, please let me know,

Rosalind Grigsby

Rosalind Grigsby

Community Development Manager

City of Takoma Park

7500 Maple Avenue

Takoma Park, MD 20912

she, her, hers

[www.takomaparkmd.gov](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov)



**I urge the County Planning Board to remove the "Maple Avenue District" from the Plan Area in the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment:** That would remove the threat that current residents of Maple Avenue would be displaced as a result of the Plan. It would also allow our community to shift our attention to the part of the Plan where the immediate opportunity/need for redevelopment - and the potential for substantial new housing -- actually exists: The Washington Adventist properties, including the old hospital.

I strongly support new housing on the Adventist properties, including multi-unit, missing-middle, and more affordable housing. But instead of fully analyzing that core portion of the Plan, our community has been forced to focus instead on the displacement threat to current residents from the upzoning proposal in the draft Plan for the Maple Avenue neighborhood.

***This may be the most affordable neighborhood in the entire County.*** It also offers important public amenities to its residents -- a large majority of whom are residents of color and residents with low or moderate incomes. These advantages include strong schools, three parks, bus lines, and a wide range of City services, all within walking distance. But the proposed upzoning of Maple, to allow 150-foot high rises, by right, from Philadelphia to the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, would encourage developers to tear down residential buildings there now and build new, bigger, more expensive residential housing and/or commercial buildings to replace them. **That, in turn, would threaten the deep affordability of this area and likely would displace many current residents.**

**Please remove the Maple Avenue District from the Minor Master Plan Amendment for Takoma Park**

**Sarah O'Donnell  
7002 Aspen Ave  
Ward 2**



To: Montgomery County Planning Board  
From: Jan Rein, 418 Boyd Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Re: Comments on Minor Master Plan  
Date: 9\14\2023

Dear Chair and members of the Planning Board,

I recently moved permanently from Sacramento, California to Takoma Park. What attracted me to TP was the human scale of the buildings (no boxy high rises or big box cookie cutter stores) and the abundance of lush green space and clean air. We should not go down the slippery slope of even partially losing these rare and environmentally friendly features.

The so-called minor master plan is not a plan at all. It is a zoning change which is a blunt instrument for achieving the so-called plan's stated objectives. A true plan would start out by envisioning what the resulting changes should look like, their impact on existing residents and the quality of the environment. Planners should use a scalpel rather than blunt, hope for the best, post-approval zoning changes. Wise plans would anticipate unwanted consequences and tailor the plan to avoid them.

The unwanted consequences that most concern me are:

1. ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION: The proposed zoning allows developers to build 12-15 story high rises where neighborhoods and abundant open greenspace now exist. To ensure structural stability, these high-rises will necessarily replace porous greenspace with large amounts of nonporous ground surfaces. Absent mandated underground parking, parking areas will replace even more greenspace with non porous materials. The result of this cumulative elimination of greenspace plus the attendant increase in vehicular traffic throughout the city will inevitably produce negative environmental impacts including increased air pollution and increased vulnerability to flooding on Takoma Park's now healthy environment. The proposal does not consider let alone address how these negative environmental consequences might be avoided.
2. LOSS OF CONTROL OVER WHAT CAN BE BUILT: The proposed zoning allows developers to build 12-15 floor high rises. Except for complying with city codes and setback requirements, builders can do anything they want. Based on what I've seen developers do in the 11 cities I've lived in, the results will not be pretty. Developers will build to maximize profits with little regard to aesthetics, resident well being or environmental concerns. Such buildings will be out of character with many of the neighborhoods in which they sit. Despite our climate emergency, there are no requirements for underground parking or solar



or light colored roofs. Giving developers free reign threatens to destroy the qualities that make Takoma Park a rare gem among American cities.

3. FAILURE TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES: Rather than rely on big box high rises, planners should consider the alternative of increasing housing by doing small scale infill throughout Takoma Park, using townhouses and garden apartments. Although this more modest approach may not yield as many new housing units as the minor master plan allows, it can add a lot and prevent the loss of existing affordable housing units (see 4 below). On balance the more modest approach is preferable because the city cannot absorb the potential 30% population increase 3,500 added units would likely produce. The so-called plan does not consider the capacity of schools, traffic, stormwater, greenspace or Sligo Creek to accommodate this growth or the negative impact this would have on the environment. A further benefit is that the small scale approach would preserve the rare qualities that make Takoma Park so unique.

4. THE NEW ZONING WOULD LIKELY DISPLACE LOW INCOME RESIDENTS POTENTIALLY CREATING HOMELESSNESS: The new CRT zoning would encourage replacement of town houses and garden apartments with high rises. It would also put economic pressure on owners of existing rent-stabilized housing to sell or convert their units to condos. The proposed zoning change would not protect renters from being priced out of their units because the new housing would be exempt from rent stabilization for a *minimum* of 5 years. There is nothing to stop new high rises from setting high rents at the outset. The plan does not increase (and may even decrease) the percentage of low income housing because it only requires that 12.5% of new housing units be affordable. The combined effect of these counter-productive incentives will put renters at risk of financial distress or homelessness. I've lived in many cities including New York, San Francisco and Sacramento, CA where the unhoused are forced by necessity to sleep in the streets or tent encampments or in neighborhood yards. I have not seen this phenomenon in Takoma Park. I have always treated the unhoused with respect, chatting with them and giving them money and food. But most of the unhoused would prefer to be permanently housed and they and the cities they live in would have a better quality of life if they were. To avoid creating a homeless problem, the plan should increase the the percentage of affordable housing from 12.5% to 50% and remove the 5 year exemption from stabilization for the 50% affordable housing units.



I wholeheartedly support smart development but cannot support the blunt, big box, environmentally unfriendly, development the proposed minor master plan encourages. The incentives in the plan also encourage the kind of developers that seek profit over people, the environment and quality of life. I've seen what happens when developers of this ilk move into cities.

They use their money and influence to take over and badger city government into approving zoning and big projects that serve their private, pecuniary interests, usually to the detriment of residents and the environment. I've seen this movie many times before and don't wish to see it replayed in the unique gem of a city that is Takoma Park.

I hope the planning board will completely rethink its minor master plan proposal. A good start would be to replace much of the CRT (allowing 15 stories) to CRN (neighborhood).

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Ellen Rein  
418 Boyd Avenue,  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



To: Montgomery County Planning Board  
From: Jan Rein, 418 Boyd Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912 Re: Comments on Minor Master Plan  
Date: 9/14/2023

Dear Chair and members of the Planning Board,

Below and attached as a file are my comments on the Minor Master Plan. Please also consider this as my testimony to the Planning Board at tonight's meeting which I will be watching virtually. I also ask that you include these comments in the record of tonight's meeting. I will be forwarding copies of this comment letter to members of the Takoma Park City Council.

Thank you for your attention to these comments and to my requests.

Respectfully  
Jan Rein  
418 Boyd Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Cell: 916-616-6983

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## COMMENTS RE MINOR MASTER PLAN

I recently moved permanently from Sacramento, California to Takoma Park. What attracted me to TP was the human scale of the buildings (no boxy high rises or big box cookie cutter stores) and the abundance of lush green space and clean air. We should not go down the slippery slope of even partially losing these rare and environmentally friendly features.

The so-called minor master plan is not a plan at all. It is a zoning change which is a blunt instrument for achieving the so-called plan's stated objectives. A true plan would start out by envisioning what the resulting changes should look like, their impact on existing residents and the quality of the environment. Planners should use a scalpel rather than blunt, hope for the best, post-approval zoning changes. Wise plans would anticipate unwanted consequences and tailor the plan to avoid them.

The unwanted consequences that most concern me are:

1. ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION: The proposed zoning allows developers

to build 12-15 story high rises where neighborhoods and abundant open greenspace now exist. To ensure structural stability, these high-rises will necessarily replace porous greenspace with large amounts of nonporous ground surfaces. Absent mandated underground parking, parking areas will replace even more greenspace with non porous materials. The result of this cumulative elimination of greenspace plus the attendant increase in vehicular traffic throughout the city will inevitably produce negative environmental impacts including increased air pollution and increased vulnerability to flooding on Takoma Park's now healthy environment. The proposal does not consider let alone address how these negative environmental consequences might be avoided.

2. LOSS OF CONTROL OVER WHAT CAN BE BUILT: The proposed zoning allows developers to build 12-15 floor high rises. Except for complying with city codes and setback requirements, builders can do anything they want. Based on what I've seen developers do in the 11 cities I've lived in, the results will not be pretty. Developers will build to maximize profits with little regard to aesthetics, resident well being or environmental concerns. Such buildings will be out of character with many of the neighborhoods in which they sit. Despite our climate emergency, there are no requirements for underground parking or solar

or light colored roofs. Giving developers free reign threatens to destroy the qualities that make Takoma Park a rare gem among American cities.



3.FAILURE TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES: Rather than rely on big box high rises, planners should consider the alternative of increasing housing by doing small scale infill throughout Takoma Park, using townhouses and garden apartments. Although this more modest approach may not yield as many new housing units as the minor master plan allows, it can add a lot and prevent the loss of existing affordable housing units (see 4 below). On balance the more modest approach is preferable because the city cannot absorb the potential 30% population increase 3,500 added units would likely produce. The so-called plan does not consider the capacity of schools, traffic, stormwater, greenspace or Sligo Creek to accommodate this growth or the negative impact this would have on the environment. A further benefit is that the small scale approach would preserve the rare qualities that make Takoma Park so unique.

4. THE NEW ZONING WOULD LIKELY DISPLACE LOW INCOME RESIDENTS POTENTIALLY CREATING HOMELESSNESS: The new CRT zoning would encourage replacement of town houses and garden apartments with high rises. It would also put economic pressure on owners of existing rent-stabilized housing to sell or convert their units to condos. The proposed zoning change would not protect renters from being priced out of their units because the new housing would be exempt from rent stabilization for a *minimum* of 5 years. There is nothing to stop new high rises from setting high rents at the outset. The plan does not increase (and may even decrease) the percentage of low income housing because it only requires that 12.5% of new housing units be affordable. The combined effect of these counter-productive incentives will put renters at risk of financial distress or homelessness. I've lived in many cities including New York, San Francisco and Sacramento, CA where the unhoused are forced by necessity to sleep in the streets or tent encampments or in neighborhood yards. I have not seen this phenomenon in Takoma Park. I have always treated the unhoused with respect, chatting with them and giving them money and food. But most of the unhoused would prefer to be permanently housed and they and the cities they live in would have a better quality of life if they were. To avoid creating a homeless problem, the plan should increase the the percentage of affordable housing from 12.5% to 50% and remove the 5 year exemption from stabilization for the 50% affordable housing units.

I wholeheartedly support smart development but cannot support the blunt, big box, environmentally unfriendly, development the proposed minor master plan encour ages. The incentives in the plan also encourage the kind of developers that seek profit over people, the environment and quality of life. I've seen what happens

when developers of this ilk move into cities.

They use their money and influence to take over and badger city government into approving zoning and big projects that serve their private private, pecuniary interests, usually to the detriment of residents and the environment. I've seen this movie many times before and don't wish to see it replayed in the unique gem of a city that is Takoma Park.

For the reasons stated above, I cannot support the minor master plan in its current form. I hope the planning board will completely rethink its minor master plan proposal. A good start would be to replace much of the CRT ( allowing 15 stories) to CRN (neighborhood).

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Ellen Rein

418 Boyd Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912



I included my mailing address\testimony in my emailed letter containing comments on the minor master plan. But just to make sure, here is my mailing address

Jan Rein  
418 Boyd Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



John Rogers  
7425 Baltimore Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Date of Public Hearing: September 14, 2023

Please accept the following comments in response to the proposed MMPA revision for Takoma Park. My comments are in the form of questions and answers.

**Question:**

Will there be more affordable housing in the Maple Avenue corridor than is currently the case if the MMPA is voted on and implemented as is?

**Answer:**

There is no reason to assume that there will be more affordable housing in the Maple Avenue corridor under the MMPA revision. First, whatever infill is built would start renting at then current market-rate rents and would not fall under Takoma Park's rent-stabilization rules for 5 more years. Second, the new zoning would incentivize developers to tear down existing affordable housing and erect new buildings that would also not fall under Takoma Park's rent-stabilization rules for 5 more years. Third, the proposed MMPA sets out zoning that will allow non-parkland sites on Maple to be redeveloped as 100 percent commercial use, by right.

**Question:**

Will there be more family-oriented 2 and 3 bedroom apartments in the Maple Avenue corridor than is currently the case if the MMPA is voted on and implemented as is?

**Answer:**

First, see Answer immediately above. Second, the current iteration of the MMPA recommends, but does not require more 2 and 3 bedroom apartments in the sMaple Avenue corridor.

**Question:**

Is there is a good chance that hundreds of current tenants (if not well over a thousand) in the Maple Avenue corridor are at risk of being displaced?

**Answer:**

Yes there is a good chance that a very significant number of current tenants in the Maple Avenue corridor will be displaced. The City of Takoma Park's own data shows that only 500 or so of the approximately 1,000 total rental units in the Maple Avenue corridor are protected by time-limited deeds (agreements with some government agency not to use the building for a purpose other than affordable housing for some particular length of years). So the approximately 500 rental units that are NOT subsidized and protected by deed restrictions probably represents 1,000 or more residents, including children.

**Questions:**

How is it that governmental planning staff in Montgomery County, Maryland, in 2023, can draft a plan that: (1) does not explicitly provide more affordable housing than already exists in the Maple Avenue corridor; (2) does not explicitly provide for more 2 and 3 bedroom units than already exist in the Maple Avenue corridor; and (3) will potentially displace hundreds of current tenants, if not more, in the Maple Avenue corridor?

**Answers:**

I don't know...it boggles the mind...really?



My written testimony on the draft Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment for the September 14, 2023 public hearing is below.

Mailing address:  
907 Larch Avenue  
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912  
September 14, 2023

Montgomery County (Maryland) Planning Board  
M-NCPPC  
2425 Reddie Drive Wheaton, MD 20902  
[mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org)

RE: Minor Master Plan Amendment

Dear Planning Board:

I am STRONGLY OPPOSED to the Minor Master Plan Amendment for Takoma Park as written. Let me tell you why.

First, let me tell you a bit about myself. I am a scientist and retired environmental public policy professional. I have a double major in biology and chemistry and a double minor in physics and earth science. I have a master's degree in forestry and another in public policy. I worked in a non-partisan environmental think tank in DC before starting my 35 year career with the Federal government, working at the Bureau of the Census, USDA Forest Service, and most of my career at the US Environmental Protection Agency as a senior policy analyst. I have also volunteered for the City of Takoma Park for 19 years, 17 of them chairing the City Committee on the Environment. I served on the appointed community advisory committee for the development of the [2000 Takoma Park Master Plan](#). I am currently president of our neighborhood citizens association.

I've lived in Takoma Park in the same home I own for 32 years. I reviewed and RELIED ON the Takoma Park Master Plan in place at the time I bought my house to guarantee the stability of the community I was investing in. I relied on that Plan to provide a stable single family house community where I would know my neighbors, where neighbors invested in community, not a transient community where the residents did not care about community. I also recently purchased a neighbor's home to renovate it to invest in my community in a different way to continue to keep my community strong. I also grew up in a working class family—my Dad was a carpenter and taught me a lot about construction and building a good life for people. I grew up financially disadvantaged and am very careful about the investments I make. I choose to make many of my investments in the community of Takoma Park.

I am seriously OPPOSED to the portion of the Plan dealing with the former Adventist hospital site. The site is currently zoned R-60 for single family housing. The hospital had a special exception to the zoning because of the services it provided to the community. We have lost those services despite the valiant efforts of many community members to keep at least emergency healthcare services. So now any development should be only single family housing, unless another special exception for a facility that provides community services is warranted. Zoning for that site should not be changed.

The former hospital site is NOT SUITED environmentally or in any other way for more dense development. The site is not adjacent to Metro and is miles from rail service. It is served by narrow two-lane neighborhood streets that are already clogged with vehicle and pedestrian traffic. There is no excess parking. The neighbors do not want more traffic, noise, crime, or pollution. The proposed development would make it nearly impossible to even traverse the neighborhood to access stores and services.

The former hospital site is immediately adjacent to Sligo Creek, which is a major environment and recreational asset for the community. The hospital and college have had numerous pollution and erosion problems over the years that have damaged the creek and park property. Neighbors care about the creek and have rallied whenever there has been a problem, working through Friends of Sligo Creek to report issues and have issues addressed. Neighbors volunteer twice a year with FOSC to clean trash from the creek and park. And neighbors use the park and walking path daily for recreation



and to educate their children about the environment. Dense development on that site would destroy all these community values.

FOSC's comments have detailed numerous concerns with development on the former hospital site: sediment pollution, regulatory violations from construction contractors, stormwater and runoff issues, toxic pollution on the site from past uses and pollutants such as lead, mercury, PCBs, and asbestos that would be released from demolition of current structures, steep slopes immediately above the creek that would make it difficult to contain pollutants, unstable soils that would not safely support the large buildings the MMPA proposes, stormwater runoff from the part of the site that would bring pollution to Long Branch creek, the need for a wooded buffer between any development and the creek, and the need to protect the large native trees that are currently living on the former hospital site.

In addition, it is important to limit impervious services and manage stormwater in a way that allows all of it to soak in and recharge the groundwater table. It is this water table that keep the creek alive and flowing in between storm events. Trees are also critical for making a community livable and mitigating climate change. In 1999, the Takoma Park Committee on the Environment did a study comparing environmental conditions with two identical weather stations located 1 mile apart—one in a parking lot and one in a treed back yard. We found that the treed back yard was 12 to 14 degrees cooler on a typical summer day and 2 to 4 degrees cooler at night. This is directly due to the basics physics of evapotranspiration. Dense development destroys the ability for a community to use trees for this type of climate mitigation. Don't listen to the architects and developers. They seem to think trees are lollipops they can just stick in the ground and they will fully function. Trees are resilient, but they need areas for their roots to grow undamaged. And saplings provide merely a small fraction of the climate benefits of a mature native deciduous tree.

As you probably know, no climate assessment has been released for the Plan, as had been promised so that residents would have this information in advance of your September 14 hearing. It seems the County is keeping us in the dark on any analysis that has been done. Frankly, this is completely unacceptable. The Plan should not even be considered until all relevant analyses have been completed and released to the public in time for them to digest it and incorporate the information into their comments.

From my own neighborhood in Takoma Park, I know that dense residential developments have significant negative spillover effects on adjacent neighborhoods in terms of traffic, parking encroachment, and crime. We have a large apartment building across New Hampshire Avenue in Prince Georges Avenue. The adjacent neighborhood for about ½ mile suffers constant problems from these issues. The neighborhood adjacent to the hospital site, and the rest of Takoma Park, does not want to bear the constant costs from these issues into perpetuity from overly dense development on the hospital site. These costs are a constant burden and damage property values.

From an economic perspective, such dense development in the middle of Takoma Park makes no sense. I hear people rant about "affordable housing, affordable housing!" as if the only way to get that is to build more extremely dense housing. But in reality, given construction costs, no new housing will be "affordable" for a family on a median income, unless subsidized by our tax dollars. Instead, there will be higher income renters or condo owners in new construction. And, after a post-pandemic surge in rents to make up for the precipitous drops during the pandemic, rents have stabilized and are currently flat. The only people who will benefit from such dense development as is proposed will be the developers.

(As an aside, it would be prudent for the County to help keep housing more affordable by excluding foreign and non-local entities from owning residential properties in the County.)

With a zoning change, we do not know what would be built. But we do know that current residents will have little say for any developer that makes a proposal within the zoning requirements. That is why the proposed zoning changes for the hospital site **MUST NOT BE APPROVED**.

Most multi-family housing is typically occupied by renters. But renters typically do not participate in building community. They often are not even aware of local issues. They simply aren't invested in the community in which they live. Takoma Park already has approximately 60% of its residents as renters. The City and community make constant efforts to involve renters with some but limited success. We need to protect the rental housing we have (and the diverse



renters we have who are invested in their community) but we don't need extremely increased amounts of rental housing in Takoma Park. We need stable community members who invest in building a stable, strong community. We need only single family housing on the former hospital site. That is the kind of housing that people want to live in to raise their children, be part of a community, and live out their lives.

When I served on City County appointed community advisory committee for the development of the [2000 Takoma Park Master Plan](#), we had repeated problems with MNCPPC staff not listening and incorporating our concerns and recommendations in that Plan. I urge you to not allow any end run around the community to impose a Plan with zoning changes we do not want.

Takoma Park is a special place in Montgomery County. It was built and maintained by the community. We members of the Takoma Park community care about every aspect of Takoma Park life. The zoning changes proposed by the Minor Master Plan Amendment as written are an insult and a blatant attempt to destroy our community.

Again, people who purchased property in Takoma Park RELIED ON the current zoning to guarantee a stable community and protect our community amenities and their property values. The proposed Minor Master Plan Amendment GROSSLY VIOLATES that contract that current residents relied on. As such, it would be irresponsible for any public official to support the Plan.

I urge you to OPPOSE the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan.

Sincerely,

Catherine S. Tunis



Greetings,

I'm writing to say that I support the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. I applaud the work of Mayor Searcy and the City Council so far and I would like to see this vital first step move forward. We need to foster a diverse mix of housing and do so in an equitable and environmentally conscious way. The MMPA is a way to do just - let's keep the momentum going.

Jordie Hannum  
9 Sherman Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD



September 13, 2023

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

Re: Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment Comments (September 14, 2023 public hearing)

Dear Planning Board Members,

I am a 21-year resident of Takoma Park and an immediate neighbor to the land planned for re-zoning as part of the redevelopment of the former Washington Adventist Hospital site. I and my family have concerns about the parameters of the re-zoning and their shortcomings in protecting the existing community members. Over the last several months we have been actively engaged in trying to understand the impacts of the proposed rezoning and see much that needs to be changed.

At this time, we write to urge you to oppose the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) in its current form. The proposed density increases are entirely mismatched for the area of the old Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) site. Unless substantial changes are made to restrict the potential impacts of redevelopment, especially on the near-neighborhood, the proposed rezoning will have a calamitous impact on our community. Further, I object to the lack of the information needed for an informed citizenry to assess the proposed rezoning thoroughly (specifically an accurate traffic study of the actual neighborhood [which I have been told will not be provided at all] and the required environmental impact study [which will be provided too late for this round of public comments]).

The zoning proposals in the current rezoning draft are incompatible with the priorities of a small residential city like Takoma Park. We value diversity, social justice, and responsible environment stewardship (especially of open green spaces). This plan satisfies none of those criteria.

#### Requested changes and additions

- Require deferral of any proposed changes until AFTER the traffic and environmental studies have been completed. Failure to insist on the provision of this information to the community is a fundamental flaw in the democratic discussion of this amendment. The potential addition of 3500 housing units is unrealistic in light of the substantial distance to public transit (>0.5 miles in most cases) and the existing road infrastructure.
  - In light of this, please address the potential for required demolition of existing privately-owned homes along Maple and Flower Avenues.
- Remove the rezoning's proposed density expansion in the undeveloped portions of the WAH site along Maple Avenue (commonly referred to as "Hospital Hill"). WAH agreed to provide an easement preventing development of the Hospital Hill area in exchange for expanded development elsewhere on their site several decades ago. This area has been a substantial contribution to the common good, both for permanent residents and members of the WAU student body.
- Reduce the height of the proposed rezoning on the WAH site to 45', from the proposed 120' and change the zoning from CRT to CRN to better preserve the existing character of the near neighborhood (CRT-125 changing to CRN-45).
- Remove the exemption from rent stabilization (from "at least 5 years" to 0) and increase the required percentage of affordable units (from 12.5% to 25%)



From the perspective of (at least) some residents, the existing process has been rushed. Much of the early discussion was conducted under COVID restrictions when many residents were unable to participate. Additionally, the surveys used as input to the planning process failed to include most of the permanent, near neighbors of the planned area. Admirably, the survey did capture a large number of the transitional students and other frequently under-represented populations, but when weighted by the number of years of residency, it is plain that the surveys were fundamentally incomplete. While we are too late in this process to repeat the earlier steps, it is fair to give additional weight to the longer-term residents since their opinions were under-represented in the earlier stages.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
William Barnds  
8001 Maple Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



TO: Members of the MNCPPC-MC

Now that you have held a hearing and received extensive public comment I urge you to determine that, for now, the TPMMP is not yet ready for "primetime," I, like so many others, support development especially if it produces more "affordable housing" for the long term.

I hope that Commission will consider:

\* Development decisions on the WAH property should be separated from the TPMMP rezoning decisions along Maple Ave. and other nearby neighborhoods. This would allow use of the WAH property to move forward while the far more complex questions of rezoning and changes in building height, etc., could get more analysis for the larger area of the Langley Park, Silver Spring and Takoma Park, MD transit corridors.

\* There needs to be further public discussion of the changes in building heights. I support those comments that call for keeping highrise buildings no taller than the heights of current Maple Ave. highrises.

\* Adjustments to the TPMMP for a better balance between development and maintaining the sense of scale now in Takoma Park.

\* There should be a more granular and current traffic study especially around the Flower Ave. and Carroll Ave. Corridor.

\* An analysis of the impact on the MCPS population is necessary.

\* Planning for helping displaced renters as well as maintaining rent control in the City and County should get special exception and consideration.

There is still a tremendous amount of confusion over the MMP. I served three terms on the Takoma Park City Council representing the ward that included the WAH, admittedly a number of years ago, but when there were extensive building issues with the Washington Adventist Hospital. More recently, when WAH was about to move I was also on a WAH Landuse Citizens Committee. In addition to the public comments you have received I have observed and heard questions from many others who follow issues but feel they cannot comment on the current proposal because of many unanswered questions. Having lived here 50 years (half on Flower Ave. and half on Maple Ave.) I have experienced the impact of how various land use and planning decisions have played out. I believe that there can be a better balance of community needs with adjustments to TP Minor Master Plan.

Lynne Bradley  
7305 Maple Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD. 20912

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



Artie: Great to meet you on the Plan tour. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you informally to both get to know you better as my constituent, as well as share Ward 3 perspectives on the Plan. Please advise date and times that you would be available. Maybe meet at Takoma Bev for coffee or wherever convenient.

Thanks,

Randy  
6718 Gude Ave.



**We urge the County Planning Board to remove the "Maple Avenue District" from the Plan Area in the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment:**

That would remove the threat that current residents of Maple Avenue would be displaced as a result of the proposed upzoning in the Plan, which would uniformly allow 150-foot high rises from Philadelphia to Sligo Creek parkland. The proposed upzoning would make that deeply affordable neighborhood more susceptible to tear downs and expensive new construction that current residents could not afford -- or even 100% new high-rise commercial buildings.with no residential units at all!

Removing the Maple Avenue District from the Plan would also allow our community to shift our attention to analyzing the part of the Plan where the immediate opportunity/need for redevelopment - and the potential for substantial new housing -- actually exists: The Washington Adventist properties, including the old hospital.

Adam Frank  
Takoma Park, MD



My mailing address is 408 it's Avenue, Takoma Park MD 20912

Adam Frank



## TP Minor Master Plan Approximate Analysis of Emissions

Buildings	Overall	SF	MF	MF	Notes
Number of new units			105.27	2000	3500
Million Btu/home	39.3				Assumes al
Annual kWh/home	11,518				
29% reduction for shell efficiency	8,178	9,789	3,997	3,997	
Improvement in heat pump COP	20%	7,831	3,197	3,197	
MWh/year, all homes		824	6,395	11,191	
% of power from gas in MD	50%				Assumes M
MT/MWh from gas	0.44				
CO2 emissions/year (MT))		182	1,409	2,466	
TP 2020 GHG emissions (MT)	130,000				
Increase in emissions due to these new buildings		0.1%	1.1%	1.9%	
<b>Transportation</b>					
MoCo transportation MT (2020)	3,073,311				
Number of households (7/1/22)	406,801				
Emissions/household (MT/hh)	7.55				
Avg vehicles/household MoCo	1.13				
Avg vehicles/household TP	0.90				
Ratio TP/MoCo	0.80				
Emissions/household TP	6.03				Seeking data on TP VMT
New units		105.27	2000	3500	
Emissions from new units		635	12,066	21,116	
Transportation savings relative to living elsewhere in MoCo due to lower vehicle ownership in TP		160	3,043	5,326	(compare t
Sum buildings + transportation		342	4,452	7,792	

Embodied emissions during construction: As a first cut, if more homes and apartments are not built in TP,

Tree cover: The current site has few trees and is well below the TP average. We would estimate that tree

Paved area: The current site has a lot of parking. We don't know whether apartments will require more o



33.8 minutes to get to work in Mo

, they are likely to be built elsewhere in the region, with roughly the same level of embodied carbon emissions. The report also notes that while the cover would increase with development but did not attempt to develop a specific quantified estimate.



Co

missions.



To: Montgomery County Planning Department

From: Steven Nadel, Takoma Park resident and energy analyst with more than 40 years of energy analysis experience

Subject: Approximate analysis of climate impacts of draft Takoma Park minor master plan amendment

Date: Sept. 17, 2023

I am aware that Montgomery County law requires a climate assessment as part of a master plan or ZTA decision by the County Council and that the official analysis will be done by the County Planning Department. To help inform this analysis, as well as consideration of this draft plan, I prepared the attached approximate analysis of GHG emissions. Please enter this memo and attachment into the official comments on the proposed amendment.

### Methodology

I created three scenarios: one for current zoning, one for the maximum number of new housing units theoretically possible over time under the draft minor master plan (3500 units) and one for an in-between number (2000 units). My analysis looks at unit annual energy use as well as transportation energy use. For unit energy use I used data for Maryland from the 2020 Residential Energy Consumption Survey published by the Energy Information Administration. I assumed energy-efficient all-electric construction in line with the Montgomery County building code. Energy efficiency savings come from the Maryland Building Decarbonization Study. Emissions from electricity generation assume half from renewable energy (in compliance with the Maryland Renewable Portfolio Standard for 2030) and half from gas-fired power plants. For transportation, I used data for the County, but modified to reflect vehicle ownership in Takoma Park versus the County as a whole from the American Community Survey. Specific data and sources are indicated in the attached spreadsheet. I also used WCOG's 2022 GHG emissions inventory for Takoma Park current energy use and emissions.

As Planning Department staff prepare the official analysis, it will be important to incorporate the latest data and information (e.g. the 2020 Residential Energy Consumption Survey, including information published earlier this year) as well as formally adopted policy such as recent changes to the Montgomery County Building code and the Maryland Renewable Portfolio Standard.

### Results

I find that the three development scenarios will increase emissions in Takoma Park *from the buildings sector* by an estimated 0.1% for current zoning, 1.1% for 2000 new units, and 1.9% for 3500 new units (about 182, 1409 and 2466 MT respectively). For transportation, I assume that these families will live somewhere in Montgomery County, but by living in Takoma Park, with good access to public transportation, they will use less transportation energy, saving about 160, 3043, and 5326 MT respectively. For the current zoning scenario, transportation emissions savings nearly offset building energy use emissions. For the two scenarios with extensive construction of multifamily housing, transportation emissions savings will more than offset building energy consumption emissions. The spreadsheet with my specific assumptions and calculations is attached.

I did not look at the embodied energy in building new units, and note that embodied carbon will be similar in Takoma Park to if these units were instead built elsewhere in the County. The current hospital



site does not have many trees, so likely tree cover will increase for any of the development scenarios under the draft plan. The current site has a lot of paved parking; I'm unclear if impervious parking area would be more or less for the development scenarios. I did not look at other aspects of carbon sequestration, adaptive capacity and community resilience.

#### Additional Steps to Reduce Emissions Further

If the County wanted to reduce emissions further, several additional steps could be employed. First, the County could encourage developers of the site to go beyond the Montgomery County Building Code, such as by meeting the Phius Standard (Passive House US),<sup>1</sup> a standard for very high levels of energy efficiency and low GHG emissions, essentially "net zero ready," meaning that with the addition of solar systems, buildings can be "net zero energy and carbon." Phius is becoming increasingly common for multifamily buildings in particular.<sup>2</sup> Second, developers could be encouraged to employ both solar panels and green roofs, as these two systems can work together to maximize environmental benefits.<sup>3</sup> Third, improving public transit at the site would also reduce emissions. RideOn service through the site should be continued and could be increased in frequency and/or better linked to the Takoma Park redline station and the new purple line.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.phius.org/standards>

<sup>2</sup> <https://multifamily.phius.org/service-group/multifamily-passive-building-projects>

<sup>3</sup> <https://theconversation.com/a-green-roof-or-rooftop-solar-you-can-combine-them-in-a-biosolar-roof-boosting-both-biodiversity-and-power-output-211347> . Also: <https://www.theecoexperts.co.uk/solar-panels/green-roofs> and <https://livingroofs.org/green-roofs-solar-power/> .



Dear Mr. Chair,

I am writing to provide the attached memo and analysis on the greenhouse gas impacts impacts of the proposed plan amendment that had a hearing date on September 14, 2023. I recognize that the official analysis will be done by Planning Department staff, but perhaps my analysis will provide some information that will help this official analysis. I will be happy to answer any questions staff have about my analysis or about assumptions to be used for the staff analysis.

Sincerely,

Steven Nadel  
Takoma Park resident and energy analyst

515 Elm Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
202-489-6967



Greetings,

I strongly oppose the current iteration of the Minor Master plan. It rezones far too many areas with no logic or reason. Instead it should only allow the rezoning of the land currently occupied by the Washington Adventist Hospital—and that area should be rezoned for low density development.

Please reconsider the TP MMPA in your Sept 14 hearing.

Thank you,

Dave Conner

122 Ritchie Ave

Silver Spring, MD 20910



Greetings,

I strongly oppose the current iteration of the Minor Master plan. It rezones far too many areas with no logic or reason. Instead it should only allow the rezoning of the land currently occupied by the Washington Adventist Hospital—and that area should be rezoned for low density development.

Please reconsider the TP MMPA in your Sept 14 hearing.

Thank you,

Dave Conner

122 Ritchie Ave

Silver Spring, MD 20910



Good day.

I would like to register comments on one specific parcel in the Maple District.

Map number 19: This parcel is currently occupied by three story garden apartments. The proposed recommended zoning is CRT-2.5 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-150.

This parcel is adjacent to Sligo Creek park (parcel map number 21), one of our most important assets in the area for the well being of Takoma Park's citizens. In addition, this parcel is adjacent to single family homes outside of the planning area.

The recommended zoning for this parcel should instead be similar to that proposed for the parcels at map numbers 10 and 12, CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R1.5 H-65 at the most, or more appropriately like the parcels at map numbers 27, 29, and 32, which are also currently R-30 and proposed to be CRN-1.0 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-50.

Having a proposed maximum height of 150 feet for this parcel is directly opposed to the need to protect the Sligo Creek watershed and provides no transition to the adjacent single family homes.

Thank you,

Giuseppe Cimmino



Dear Chair,

My name is Lavanya Sithanandam and I am a pediatrician and medical director of Park Pediatrics. My office is located in the professional medical building on the former Washington Adventist medical campus. As Mr. Klein of Adventist Health Care mentioned in his live in-person testimony, this building is independently owned by a group of medical professionals and is not a part of the main hospital, which will be demolished. Many of the medical professionals in our building serve low income Medicaid/Medicare populations from Takoma Park and the surrounding areas.

My practice alone (with ten physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants) treats on average 60-70 children, mostly children of immigrants at our Takoma Park office alone, for high quality pediatric preventive outpatient and sick visit care.

It is very essential that any development on the site allow us to continue operations. We will need access to the main roads, and more importantly we will need parking spots. We stand to lose ALL of our parking once the hospital relinquishes its land. Currently we are leasing the parking lot in front of the building from the hospital, however Adventist Health Care has told us this arrangement may end and it is unclear when. If you see the image below, we have approximately 90 spots used by patients and staff in front of the building (blue circle), another 30 spots used by patients on the side of the building (yellow) and 30 more used by physicians in the lot between our building and the hospital (green). We stand to lose all of these parking spaces (red belongs to the university and patients are not permitted to park there, but sometimes do). We need between 150-200 spots for our building for patients and staff to park. Please note some patients are in wheelchairs and strollers and need parking that is close to the building. I appreciate your time reading through my comments.



Sincerely,

Lavanya Sithanandam M.D.  
Medical Director & Owner,  
Park Pediatrics & Park Travel Clinic  
[www.parkpediatricsmd.com](http://www.parkpediatricsmd.com)  
[www.parktravelclinic.com](http://www.parktravelclinic.com)

Mailing address:  
7610 Carroll Avenue, Suite 400  
Takoma Park MD 20912



Dear Chair,

I am a Takoma Park resident who strongly *supports* the amendment, with the caveats and hopes expressed by the TkPk City Council.

I used to live on Maple Avenue. It is a vibrant part of the city. But while certain loud voices in our community claim to speak for those who live on Maple Avenue, what I know from my neighbors is that they, too, would prefer to live in something that is not, essentially, the "poor people of color zone" in our city. It is shameful that when the elementary and middle schools let out, White children walk home in entirely different directions to the children who are Black and Latino/a. The potential to mix the older non-profit run buildings with newer units that might attract wealthier demographics will add to the vibrance, diversity and safety of the Maple corridor.

I also know, from working with many of the Maple Ave residents, that they would love to move into somewhat nicer units--the so-called missing middle in Takoma Park--while staying in the neighborhood. This plan increases the possibilities for missing middle housing, and I am hugely hopeful for that.

Thank you for your work on this process.

Sincerely,  
Liz Keyes  
331 Lincoln Ave  
Takoma Park MD

--

Liz Keyes  
[elizabethkeyes@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethkeyes@gmail.com)



I am writing in MMPA that affects the Adventist Hospital grounds and Maple Avenue in Takoma Park. I support the plan, and in particular I support the greater density and additional housing it will bring to my city.

I do share some of my neighbors' concerns about the development. In particular, I worry about the impact of the additional families on our already crowded local schools, as well as the portion of housing stock that is set aside for low-income residents. I hope that some thought has been given to these and other issues that may come with an increasing population, but I am grateful that we have this opportunity to alleviate the shortage of housing that Montgomery County is suffering from.

Thank you.  
Jesse Koplowitz  
7432 Piney Branch Rd.,  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



4:44



Done

2019.08.13 large Aerial.pdf





Dear Chair,

My name is Achankunju Chacko. I am practicing primary care medicine in the professional building located adjacent to former Washington Adventist Hospital . When the Washington Adventist Hospital relocated from Takoma Park, Maryland,the popular concern in the community was the shifting availability of medical care to the local community. I am one of those who wrote to Montgomery County that our practice can provide for the gap, which will be created by relocation of the hospital. My practice involves Medicare and Medicaid patients of low income people who live in the community of Takoma Park. Now that Adventist Hospital closed the walking center attached to the old hospital, the need for a local medical facility is essential.

As Mr. Klein of Adventist Health Care mentioned in his live in-person testimony, this building is independently owned by a group of medical professionals and is not a part of the main hospital, which will be demolished. It is very essential that any development on the site allow us to continue operations. We will need access to the main roads, and more importantly we will need parking spots. We stand to lose ALL of our parking once the hospital relinquishes its land. Currently we are leasing the parking lot in front of the building from the hospital, however Adventist Health Care has told us this arrangement may end and it is unclear when. If you see the image below, we have approximately 90 spots used by patients and staff in front of the building (blue circle), another 30 spots used by patients on the side of the building (yellow)and 30 more used by physicians in the lot between our building and the hospital (green). We stand to lose all of these parking spaces (red belongs to the university and patients are not permitted to park there, but sometimes do). We need between 150-200 spots for our building for patients and staff to park. Please note some patients are in wheelchairs and strollers and need parking that is close to the building. I appreciate your time reading through my comments.

Sincerely,

Achankunju Chacko MD

My Mailing Address

Achankunju Chacko  
7610 Carroll Ave.Suite # 390  
Takoma Park MD 20912  
Tel: 301 270 5522



**SEPTEMBER 22, 2023**

**TESTIMONY ON DRAFT TAKOMA PARK MINOR MASTER PLAN**

**PETER KOVAR, 7112 HOLLY AVENUE, TAKOMA PARK, MD**

I appreciate having the opportunity to provide testimony on the draft Takoma Park Minor Master Plan. I served on the City Council for 7 years up until November of last year, and I offer the following thoughts based partly on the involvement I had with municipal issues and policies during my tenure on the Council and partly as a longtime resident of the City.

There are three key aspects of the Plan in terms of its potential impact on Takoma Park: the effects on affordable housing; the impacts of zoning changes; and the influence on the City's finances. I've summarized below my views in regard to those three elements, along with several others, all of which I urge the Planning Board to incorporate into the next draft of the Plan.

**Affordable Housing.** I'm pleased the recently adopted City Council resolution calls for work sessions on the housing components of the Plan, and I look forward to those discussions. But I think it's essential in any case for the Plan's language on affordable housing to be strengthened.

While the Plan may augment "missing middle" housing in the City, it's vital to ensure that existing affordable housing is preserved and that a substantial amount of new affordable units are created. So the language in the Plan on maximizing, and ensuring no net loss of, affordable housing should be stronger than "striving" where "feasible". It should "commit" to "achieving" those goals. Without strong language along those lines, I fear there will be a major negative impact in particular on renters of color in the City. This would be a tragic result on its own, and even more so, given the explicit call-out in the Plan on the history of segregation in our area.

In addition, protecting and ultimately extending existing rental subsidy contracts for buildings which currently receive government subsidies is crucial. The Plan should include more details on how that goal will be met, including financial incentives to help preserve affordable units which may be eligible for conversion to market rate rents. Furthermore, the Plan should be modified to specifically call for no displacement of existing tenants (with maintenance of affordable rents as well as equal space with similar rents for any residents who are temporarily displaced).

Indeed, given that Takoma Park has a higher percentage of affordable units compared to the County as a whole, the Plan should contemplate financial and other aid to the City in recognition of the reality that following adoption of the Plan, the City's role as a key provider of affordable housing in the County may expand. The Plan also calls for the City to consider using Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) without establishing a clear connection to their impact on the City's property taxes, budget, etc. It should be made clear in the Plan that any use of PILOTs would be undertaken only pursuant to a formal policy to be adopted by the City (as called for in Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan).

The above discussion only covers rental units. The Plan also aims at promoting development of missing middle home ownership opportunities (condos, starter homes and the like). That should



be explicitly incentivized within the Plan. This is an important piece of the City's Housing Strategic Plan, and the Minor Master Plan should more explicitly help further this goal.

**Zoning.** The Council resolution calls for work sessions on certain aspects of the Plan's proposed zoning changes. However, the structure of the proposed zoning changes needs some serious reconsideration, particularly in light of the affordability concerns outlined above.

Changing the zoning at the former hospital site makes sense, but I'm skeptical that the proposed changes for the Maple Avenue area will have a positive effect. First, this was not an issue that was raised in any major way by any of the participants in the public engagement process. In addition, given that only roughly half of the units on Maple as I understand it currently enjoy some type of government or non-profit subsidy, if the Plan incentivizes major rebuilding there, it's hard to see how there wouldn't in the end be a substantial loss of affordable units, especially with the City's rent stabilization law not applying for five years. Accordingly, I'd like to see the zoning on Maple Avenue remain essentially as it currently is, though if there's a way through zoning changes to stimulate some additional ground level commercial/retail development there without wholesale height increases or loss of units I would be open to that type of change.

More broadly, I believe analysis of the Plan's zoning proposals should be based on Takoma Park's population as compared with the entire County, and what a reasonable "share" of new units for the City would be. In other words, with the County's goal of creating 10,000 additional units beyond those currently in the development pipeline, the total potential number of new units in the City connected to the Master Plan should have some rough relationship to our population, as well as a recognition of what we're currently providing in terms of affordable rental units.

The City currently has less than 2% of the County's population. Now 2% of 10,000 is only 200, and it's my opinion that we should go much higher than that in terms of new units. And we could easily do that and more at the Adventist site alone. But before moving forward with a range of zoning proposals which all together would mean the potential of 3500 new units in the City, let's include as part of the Plan some analysis of where else in the County it might make sense to also locate new rental units. Of course even if all of the Plan's proposed zoning changes were to be approved, we'd be unlikely to ever see as many as 3500 new units. Nonetheless, a better proportional analysis might end up eliminating the need for major re-zoning on Maple Avenue, while still enabling the production of hundreds of new units in the City.

I know some commenters have argued that it's preferable to focus any density increases in areas of the County where there's already heavier density in the name of curtailing suburban or exurban sprawl. There's some validity to that notion, but it doesn't fully take into account some of the current thinking on sustainability which emphasizes having jobs and homes closer to each other so long commutes are less necessary, not to mention the post-COVID reality that substantially higher percentages of people will likely work remotely, at least some days each week. None of that argues for breaking ground on green fields, agricultural lands or wooded areas, but it does mean greater density can be distributed more widely, including in some areas with high average home assessments, relatively low property tax rates, and large gaps between assessed values and market values for homes. I don't have the sense that analyses along these



lines were a major part of the Plan, which is likely why it calls for what seems like a skewed approach to density. I urge the Board to include these considerations within the Plan to help ensure that Takoma Park can continue to do our part and more to provide housing units, but in a more balanced way in terms of what's happening elsewhere in the County.

I would note also that I disagree with the notion advanced by some that simply increasing supply will inevitably lead to more affordability. When it comes to truly affordable housing, that will generally only occur if there is government support (in the form of subsidies, tax credits, etc.). Yes, there is government support in the form of property tax revenue foregone due to rent control and/or providing the required percentage of affordable housing in new apartment buildings. But in an area like Takoma Park, that will tend to be counter-balanced because the rent stabilization requirements won't apply for five years and because the City is a desirable place to live with good local schools and amenities. There would be a much better chance of having increased supply lead to more affordability if the Plan didn't -- at the same time it contemplated creating a substantial amount of new housing units at the former hospital site -- also include zoning changes on Maple Avenue which if anything have the potential to lead to displacement and creation of new rental units with higher rents. So again, the key is to create new housing with generous provisions for affordability (primarily at and around the hospital site) without incentivizing the elimination of any existing units or the displacement of any existing tenants.

**City Finances.** While the Council resolution calls for the Board to consider the Plan's impact on City services and resources, I'd like to see more explicit analysis and guidance in the Plan on the potential impact on property taxes within the City and the City's long term fiscal health. It's not immediately apparent to what extent the new development contemplated in the Plan would lead to increased City property tax receipts, given that more population and more commercial activity may also translate into an increased need for services and staff. That's not a reason to oppose such development, but estimates of the range of potential impacts depending on the kinds of development should be provided before any final decisions are made about approval of the Plan.

Moreover, I think it would be helpful to frame any such analysis around the reality that -- should the Plan's impact on the City in terms of needed additional services be unsustainable -- the City may need additional financial assistance from the County. From that perspective, I would say that overall the Plan should incorporate more fully the notion that it's a partnership between the City and County. At various points within the draft there appears to be an assumption that Takoma Park is in a position to contribute financially to the Plan's components. That's unlikely to be the case unless there's a very substantial increase in property tax receipts connected to the Plan, which again in turn connects back to the points outlined above, including the uncertainties about the appropriate number of potential new housing units as a result of zoning changes.

**Impact on Schools.** Although schools are seen as largely falling outside the ambit of this Plan, they need to be more directly incorporated into it. Piney Branch Elementary School has already been identified as needing to be renovated or replaced. As I understand it, the former hospital site has been determined to be too small or otherwise inadequate for a new school. It's likely that the zoning changes in the final version of the Plan -- even if they are scaled back to some extent as suggested above -- will still create the potential for significant increases in the City's population.



With that in mind, school crowding in our area can't just be set aside for later discussion. Schools have to be part of the Plan, unless the zoning changes are radically cut back.

**Existing City Plans and Initiatives.** The Council resolution refers to several key City plans and initiatives, many of which relate to topics covered in the Plan. I urge the Board to include language in the Plan calling for it to be “consistent” with these plans. That should include the previously mentioned Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan; along with the Climate Change Framework; the Racial Equity Initiative; the urban forest policy and tree canopy goals resolution; the ARPA spending plan; the City's stormwater policies and plans; and the Public Space Management Plan (which is expected to receive final approval in the near future).

This isn't merely a technical point. When it comes to housing and racial equity, it's crucial that the impacts of the Plan in the Maple Avenue area and elsewhere are fully aligned with City policies. Elsewhere, with the Plan's call for tree canopy coverage well below the City's 60 percent goal, its tepid “support” for the City's nascent efforts to consider steps that may be taken to help address stormwater challenges on private property, and its disconnect on energy efficiency improvements in multi-family buildings already being sponsored by the City, the Plan is arguably misaligned with some key aspects of the City's current work. Clear language calling for the Plan to be consistent with these initiatives would help alleviate that problem.

**Traffic and Transit Impacts.** Typically traffic impacts are only studied for individual development projects, as opposed to a comprehensive analysis of aggregate traffic impacts of multiple projects. With the Plan's potential for a number of projects over a period of years, a more comprehensive traffic analysis should be undertaken. Also, in terms of transit impacts, the Plan should reflect the reality that the Takoma Metro Station development proposal (to be located in Washington, DC) calls for the elimination of all or most Metro parking at the station.

### **Other Elements.**

**Lighting.** The Plan should be amended to call for LED lights where appropriate. The City has installed LEDs for all streetlights (with the ability for residents to request shielding if the lights shine unduly into their homes, which should also be in the Plan).

**EV Chargers.** They're mentioned briefly in the Plan, but there should be an explicit call for a broad array of chargers in the commercial areas covered in the plan.

**Developmentally Disabled Residents.** An emphasis on the need for Housing for developmentally disabled residents (which is in the City's Housing Strategic Plan) should be included in the Plan.

**Indigenous Peoples.** The Plan should include more emphasis on the role and history of indigenous peoples from the area, and their future involvement.

**Small Business Incubator.** In the Plan's discussion of potential community amenities, a small business incubator should be included as one option for newly developed areas.

**Food Distribution Storage.** With many non-profit food distribution efforts active in our area, the Plan should include the idea of a modest sized storage area for use by multiple organizations.



Below, for the record, please find written copy of the testimony I gave on behalf of Community Vision for Takoma, at the September 14th Public Hearing on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Good evening. My name is Sue Miller (12 Montgomery Ave, Takoma Park MD 20912).

I am here tonight representing Community Vision for Takoma, a community group for almost a decade now, with over 1000 people on our list.

I moved to Takoma Park after living for years in West Africa, and then Brazil. Like many in our City, I chose Takoma Park because I wanted my children to continue to grow up surrounded by racial, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity. My children attended Piney Branch Elementary, the school in the Minor Master Plan area on Maple Avenue. At Piney Branch, they were part of a student body made up of equal proportions of white, Latino, multigenerational Black American students, and students from African immigrant families. As the Piney Branch PTA president, I got funding to enliven the front of the school facing Maple with the murals that are still there, with a photo highlighted in the plan draft. And we waged two successful City and County battles to save the unique public pool on Maple, behind the school. These days, I volunteer for a non-profit making grocery deliveries for seniors on Maple, in the building where my best friend lives.

For me, Maple Avenue is the heart of Takoma Park. It makes Takoma Park what it is.

Decades ago, our community created a network of public, non-profit, and private entities to produce what we believe is the densest corridor of affordable housing in the county, on Maple.

It has never been clear to us why Maple Avenue was appended onto this plan. The conditions and built landscape on Maple present entirely different issues than the abandoned hospital site. We hope we **will** see new housing on the hospital site. But the issue of aging buildings on Maple will not be solved by this Amendment except through teardowns that could lead to displacement, and gentrification. And only about half the buildings on Maple are protected by deed covenants. So it feels like a plan developed under a previous planning board is going forward despite widespread opposition from the communities most impacted.

Maple Avenue is a community, not an empty campus. They did not ask for upzoning, and in fact had no idea this was part of the plan, since outreach sessions emphasized other questions such as "What would you like to see on the hospital site?" or, "Why do you like your neighborhood?" We realize there is a commitment under Thrive to build more housing, but why should the Maple Avenue community absorb additional density when they already live in our densest neighborhood? Why would we try to shoehorn new 15-story buildings into an already dense neighborhood, **outside** any transit walkshed? And, how could it be equitable to fill in the only open spaces on Maple, spaces that bring light and sky and trees to people already living there, **in** high-rises?

Taking all this into consideration, CVT urges you to remove the Maple District and Municipal District from the Amendment. Short of that, we urge you to reduce the proposed upzoning on the streets surrounding the campus and down Maple and Lee, and instead match the current heights and density, in order to protect our rent-stabilized and garden apartments, and to protect current residents. Please reduce the commercial quotient, which risks displacing more housing with entirely commercial buildings. And on the hospital site, please confine high-rises to the center of the site, away from the creek and surrounding neighborhoods.

This Amendment could set in motion the undoing of all that makes these neighborhoods affordable. We urge you to look at this plan with the fresh eyes of a new Board. Surely you do not intend to trigger displacement, and rising rents. There is no reason to barrel forward with the totally inappropriate, broad-brush upzoning in this Amendment. And so we urge you to take all necessary time, and make all necessary changes.



Thank you for your service to our community.



Good evening. My name is Bob Dreher, and I live in Takoma Park.

As you will hear tonight, the proposed Master Plan amendment has raised deep concerns in our community. People are taken aback by the sheer size of the development that would be allowed under the proposed plan: 150 and 120 foot tall residential and commercial buildings throughout the inner core of our city, increasing our city's population by as much as 40%. People are apprehensive that the economic incentives provided by this massive up-zoning will lead to replacement of existing, highly affordable apartment buildings along Maple Avenue, displacing residents and destroying the most affordable and diverse neighborhood in Montgomery County. People are concerned about environmental impacts from all this construction, including stormwater, climate impacts and harm to our parklands along Sligo Creek, and worried about what this huge increase in our population will do to traffic, schools and other infrastructure.

What is striking to me is how little we actually know about the consequences of this plan. We do not have any environmental analysis, any analysis of stormwater impacts, any traffic studies, or any socio-economic analysis of the impacts of up-zoning on existing buildings and residents. And there's been no apparent consideration of alternative approaches to planning for this vital area of our city: zoning schemes with lower building heights and less density, or moving forward just with the Adventist Hospital site and deferring changes to Maple Avenue.

As someone who has spent much of his career working on planning for federal lands and resources, I find this astonishing, frankly. Federal



decision making for land development is governed by the National Environmental Policy Act, which requires thorough analysis and public disclosure of potential environmental impacts at the proposal stage, and consideration of alternative approaches that would cause less environmental damage. It requires transparency and public involvement throughout the planning process. Although the NEPA process doesn't eliminate disputes over proper management of federal lands, it ensures informed decision making and it can lead to development of alternative approaches that can win broad public support.

I urge the Planning Board to follow that approach here. I know that NEPA doesn't apply to you, but the basic point of looking before you leap makes obvious sense. You should direct your staff to study the potential environmental, climate, and socio-economic impacts of the proposed plan, and to compare those impacts to alternative approaches that establish lower building heights and less density, and that separate out Maple Avenue from the current plan. And you should disclose those studies and the alternative approaches to the public and take public comment before voting on a plan.

This will require effort and take some time, but it will provide the information that our community – and the Board – needs to understand the likely consequences of this major change in our city. We cannot afford to simply sign a blank check for developers here. And it may help bring people together around an approach that promotes new, affordable housing in our city without endangering the environment and the welfare of existing residents. Thank you.



**Takoma Park Minor Master Plan (TPMMA):  
Review & Comments for consideration by the City of Takoma Park Mayor and City Council,  
the Montgomery County Planning Staff and County Planning Board Commissioners**

Submitted by William P. Mallari, FAIA

Architect and Planner

8012 Maple Avenue

Takoma Park, MD 20912

[wmallari@umd.edu](mailto:wmallari@umd.edu) ; 301-789-4779 (m)

**Introduction:**

I am a native DC-PG-Montgomery County-Marylander, writing to you as a long-time City of Takoma Park (CTP) Ward 5 and adjacent neighborhood resident (1977-present). While I am aware and support aspects of fellow CTP resident input and petitions, I have no formal membership in any CPT homeowner's association, environmental, transportation, nor development advocacy group.

**My Takoma Park Background:**

I came to Takoma Park (CTP) the Summer of 1977 as a student in Architecture and Urban Studies at the University of Maryland, being employed as a draftsman, working under a renowned exhibit designer, Dave Ellis, whose offices were then on Carroll Avenue in "Downtown Takoma". I sought an affordable room to rent as there were a variety, availability, choices, and price-ranges of rooms in single-family houses, as well as in apartments in two and four-plex houses.

During this first year in CTP, my grandfather was undergoing treatment at the old Washington Adventist, then passed away in the Autumn of 1977 at the old Washington Adventist Sanatorium. This momentous experience initiated my investigation about the *Hospice Concept*- then emerging in this country, as a critique of heroic healthcare practice in acute care settings.

In subsequent years from 1979 – 1987, this led to and shaped my career path in healthcare facilities strategic and master planning, as I built my professional career. I married during this period, and as a mixed-race couple, we felt at home, remaining renters in this unique established community. In December 1986, we became CTP homeowners, at our current Maple Avenue address.

It is a blessing that over our decades, we raised a family that now includes two grown children, their spouses, and our two toddler grandchildren.

**My Professional Perspective:**

I appreciate, understand, and support as essential, multivalent stakeholder participation and citizen input into the processes of community-institutional-corporate visioning, strategic and physical planning/urban design for mixed-use development and public realm framework that CTP and Montgomery County Planning are undertaking on our behalf.

For 25 years (1997-2022), I was the Assistant Director of Facilities Planning and primary urban designer at the University of Maryland, College Park. I led a multi-disciplinary staff of professionals and graduate assistants, along with professional consultants to conduct 10-yr updates to the campus master plan (FMP) followed by 5-yr FMP updates of accomplishments; develop planning / design guidelines for the eight campus districts; conduct planning studies, with subsequent design review for over sixty capital building projects, including in-house design of campus landscape projects.

I also served as UMD's representative and liaison to surrounding neighborhoods, local municipalities (Member & Co-chair of the City of College Park Advisory Planning Commission); Prince Georges' County, State of Maryland and additional regional agencies related to environmental (Washington Metropolitan C.O.G. - Anacostia Watershed Restoration Committee); cultural landscape (as a co-founder of the UMD Campus Arboretum and Botanical Garden), heritage/historic preservation (P.G. County and Maryland



Historical Trust), planning for multi-modal transport (Campus Parking and Shuttle-UM, SHA-Route 1 Improvements, MTA-Purple Line); including planning responsibilities for public-private partnership development on campus and in the City of College Park.

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*We care deeply about this unique place.* I am glad new resident couples, and young families are coming into our neighborhoods. We are hopeful for newer immigrants and families that existing affordable housing can be maintained and expanded, improving their lives and opportunities; that collective community input helps you conclude planning and achieve desired project results achieving a legacy that helps maintain and extend the many positive attributes of our town for the common good.

**Thank You for reviewing my story and considering the following!**

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## **MY Comments Regarding the Draft TPMMA**

### **Introduction:**

#### **A once-in-a-generation opportunity:**

This TPMMA study area is the geographical, civic and ideological heart of the CTP – the common identity, that of a “liberal, socio-economically diverse community”, is also recognized for the history and legacy of the Seventh Day Adventist community and its built institutions of WAU+H anchoring the north end, with its most dense concentration of affordable housing in the “Middle” Maple Avenue District, including CTP Municipal Buildings anchoring the south at Philadelphia Avenue.

Natural Environmental and Cultural Landscape Systems are fundamental to place identity, community connectivity, recreation, and a focus of concerns and environmental activism for human, multi-specie habitats and ecological health. Located in the Eastern Piedmont Province – neighborhoods’ topography slope into the stream valleys of Sligo Creek, its confluence with Brasher’s Run and Long Branch Creek. Our city is a part of and impacts the larger Anacostia-Potomac River-Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Traffic capacity and design of Multi-modal Circulation and Transport Networks of the broader Washington, D.C.-Maryland Metropolitan region surrounding and through this CPT core impact and shape our city.

#### **A Holistic Integrated Master Plan should be inclusive, aspirational, practical, and understood:**

The Draft TPMMA is yet to be a complete, holistically integrated plan that the intergenerational, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse citizens of CTP expect and deserve - a plan that the County can continue to demonstrate in the County, another innovative extension of aspirational and practical policies, one fully addressing critical “green” and “gray” infrastructure plans for practical projects and appropriately nuanced mixed-use development, reflecting and continuing the city’s legacy values and unique pride of place.

**More refinement of the current Draft TPMMA should be undertaken prior to any final CTP endorsement and County Planning approval.**



## **The Draft TPMMA:**

- presents a limited “Mini” (yet) “Master” study area catalyzed by the departure of Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH, 14.5 acres) combined with the Washington Adventist University (WAU, 19.0 acres), totaling 33.5 acres, both legacy heritage and active religious higher educational institution shaping CTP since 1904, with selected adjacent private and business properties along Maple, Maplewood, Erie, Flower, and Greenwood Avenues. (Note: Rolling Terrace Pre-K Elementary School: 4.3 acres; Silver Spring International Middle School: 16.5 acres; Montgomery Blair High School: 42.0 acres; The Parks at Walter Reed, D.C.: 66.5 acres).

A mixed-use “Healthy-Community Campus” could evolve more fully to serve WAU’s financial health, spiritual, educational, and community service missions in partnership to also serve the greater intergenerational CPT community.

- references the 2000 CTP Master Plan, now 23 years old, primarily maintaining its relevance, aspirational intent and goals, updated by the TPMMA’s intended “mini” process and visioning sessions, primarily focused and addressing WAU+H leadership, CTP Mayor and Council (including professional staff) and initially focused on citizen stakeholders input within the delineated study area.
- includes some selected current on-going critical CTP projects and initiatives, such as: the Maple Avenue Connectivity Project – rebranded “The Green Promenade”; Preliminary redesign of the Maple Aven Bridge crossing Sligo Creek; CPT’s Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan, and CTP’s Open Space Management Plan, among others. In a holistic integrated Master Plan, containing both aspirational and practical objectives, more such projects should be identified and prioritized for future study and potential funding. All such improvement projects should be prioritized with identified in the final approved TPMMAP prior to implementation.
- proposes jarring development interfaces to adjacent neighboring properties: The TPMMA proposes the County’s “CR suite” Up-Zoning as the principal instrument for transformative change in the core of our city - rather mono-lithic and heavy-handed; and,
- is incomplete, lacking capacity impact analyses inherent in the proposed CR Suite of Zones that should be considered for critical environmental and natural systems, multi-modal circulation, vehicle and transit systems, and citizen understanding of these “formulaic rules” of land use mixes and development densities “allowed by right”.

Importantly, the up-zoning is not a “physical plan”, form-depicted holistically, nor pictorially in maximum allowable and nuanced scenarios showing scale, density and height relative to the surrounding topography and neighborhood contexts enabling understanding by CTP citizens.

While the above is essential, this also seems a fragmented approach to “Master Planning” generating the city ward-wide citizen interest, unrest(?) and debate.

## **Going Forward: Refining Plans for CTP:**

***The TPMMA, CTP’s central core of affordable housing and municipal facilities, is necessary and strategic but partial. The TPMMA should act as a catalyst for the needed update to the 2000 CTP Master Plan, now 23-years old, given the following:***

- Mixed-use and affordable housing goals identified Montgomery County’s Thrive 2050 (and generally called for in our region, re: the Washington Metropolitan Council of Government’s land use and proposed housing goals and initiatives), for a variety of affordable housing of various types and scales (such as allowable rental units/apartments in single-family homes; ADU’s; especially the



needed “missing middle” scale), maintaining, growing, and serving our valued city’s socio-economically diverse intergenerational population for existing and forthcoming generations.

- Refine components in each of the mixed-use suites of proposed CR Zones. They should be contextually nuanced among all TPMMA districts. In the Maple Avenue District, reduce the FAR percentages allowable, say up to FAR 1.0 for neighborhood commercial uses, with proportionally more housing above. Nuance building setbacks, bulk and height step-downs considering both topography and adjacent neighboring housing. In the Flower Avenue District, reconsider the “down-zone adjusting” or stepping down the FAR height allowed at WAU property along neighboring Maplewood Avenue and Greenwood Avenue.
- Capacity Evaluations and Integration of Multi-modal Transportation Systems (ADA-elder Pedestrian, Bicycle, Vehicle + Parking, Bus Transit Systems). Consider recent and on-going development in adjacent jurisdictions in Takoma DC, Silver Spring along with continued development given Purple Line completion with expected development around its stations and along its corridor.

#### **Wholistic Planning considering the Aspirational and Practical:**

Add or expand TPMMA Subsections to be more comprehensive in process and resulting plans and projects. Continue facilitating collaborations among WAU+H, CTP officials and staff, city residents – especially underrepresented individuals and groups.

Address sustainable-resilient urban environmental and mixed-used, multi-modal transport connectivity, including public access to improved spaces for social interaction, education, neighborhood services via a diversity and scales of housing types, landscape spaces, and facilities. Include planning subjects and related critical projects, including, but not limited to:

#### **Green Infrastructure - Environment and Landscape (Global to Local):**

How can any planning effort delay to consider Global Climate Change Imperatives, assessing and developing County plans for local action? The TPMMA needs to wholistically integrate County and CTP sustainability and resiliency plans given climate change. Consider testimony submitted to the City and Montgomery County Planning Board by *The Friends of Sligo Creek* (FOSC) and city resident environmental experts among the following Environmental Natural Systems & Habitat, City- wide Public Parks and Open Spaces, at the least:

- Sligo Creek Steam Valley and Brashear’s Run Corridor: the former, a natural, cultural and recreational landscape resource considering conservation, restoration, maintenance (water quality, plant & animal habitats storm water management, woodland & trees); the latter, piped underground and densely developed in need of restoration at its outfall and confluence with Sligo Creek.
- City- wide Public Parks and Open Spaces, including WAU+H wooded steep slope and grass-sloped field along Maple Ave & Maplewood, WAU Quad & Rec. fields: Acquire Washington Adventist University (WAU) edge property or develop a M.O. A. with WAU to preserve and maintain:
  - a) the sloped-grass field and wooded slopes, north of Sligo Creek Bridge, bounded by Maple Ave and Maplewood Ave. This is mostly an open landscaped area serving as a buffer between WAU+H and the residential neighborhood, also used by the community. This area has all-season flexibility for a wide variety of activities, unencumbered by facilities and equipment. Children sled, roll down and hill-charge; adults, children and pets freely run and play. This hill has even served for assembly of resident teens, as group photo back-drop for 1st proms and high-school graduations.



- b) the steep-slope woodland buffer along the eastern stretch of Sligo Creek. Both areas are essential eco-buffers to the stream and parkland: 2) Stream Maintenance: Remove downed trees and, branches and debris; sediment mounds to improve proper stream flow; 3) at Stream Buffers, provide Native Plant/Invasive Species Information and seasonally / annually (Earth Day/Week?) conduct Invasive Plant Removal (could be education and staff supervision for TKPK City, Mont. Co. & other volunteer groups); 4) Provide various species info and birdhouses along this and other stretches of Sligo Creek. (See Friends of Sligo Creek submittal).
- c) WAU Campus Quad and Heritage Trees: conservation for the university; negotiate for a more inclusive sharing of this cultural open space, open for public enjoyment and WAH-CTP community dedicated events.

## **Gray Infrastructure:**

### **Multi-modal Circulation and Transport:**

- Address our intergenerational (children to elders) population's needs regarding access, safety and accommodation, related signage, shelters, street furniture and amenities for all circulation and transit modes, promoting universal design for all public facilities.
- Capacity of Multi-Modal Systems: Consider the carrying capacity all modes given the CTP projected population increases determined by the maximum proposed up-zoning, especially regarding R.O.W., streets and required parking within the TPMMA study area, extending throughout Ward 5, Kilmarock neighborhood, to CTP boundaries.
- Multi-modal improvements to road infrastructure: Beyond the boilerplate "Complete Street Sections" shown, provide specific concepts for the proposed improvements along the so-called "Green Promenade", assuming this branding incorporates CTP's on-going process for the "Maple Avenue Connectivity Project" through to Maplewood and Flower Avenues.
- Properly plan, budget, re-design and re-develop the Maple Ave-Sligo Creek Bridge addressing safety & traffic flow. Enhancements should include two-way: vehicle carriage widths to better accommodate transit buses and emergency vehicles; have dedicated bike lanes, pedestrians (side-side walking, strollers, ADA). Will increased traffic (pedestrian/trail runners, bicycles, emergency, busses) volumes projected by development (projected Up-Zoning population growth) necessitate traffic control signals?

### **Utilities Infrastructure:**

- Assessment and planning for critical infrastructure in the TPMMA: What is the future underground of utilities poles and overhead lines- the opportunities and challenges, dependability, safety issues, damage & costs due to downed lines and power outages caused by increasingly intense storms?
- Explore the need for capacity upgrades to critical underground utilities per the projected population growth generated by the proposed max. rezoning. Private development in this three-district center of our city and utilities investment will be implemented piecemeal. Understand the threshold for infrastructure capacity improvements as growth happens and consider the required public - private-private investment.

### **Development of Buildings and Facilities:**

- **The WAU+H Site:**  
Collaboration among the County, CTP and WAU meeting collective missions and goals for future viable campus development providing common university-community use service facilities & amenities; i.e., student, faculty and senior housing, inter-generation educational, recreational, public health, arts & cultural, even expanded neighborhood-retail also serving the campus, among other uses & services, at least those that have been suggested by city and residents at the earlier planning input phases.



- **Maintain-Remodel-Additions and Adaptive Re-use in the TPMMA Districts & across CTP:**

What can we do to improve the intergenerational qualities of life for city residents in rental housing of various scales and types? What incentives are there for landlords to maintain and improve conditions, stabilize rents/modest rent increases for renovation, adaptive use, and new development? Are there opportunities and options for smaller scale density besides accessory apartments and ADUs in the R60 zone?

- **Zoning: Existing, Re-zoning (Up-zoning):**

Proposed mixed-use suite of Zones (as the main instrument to achieve multiple, complex, and long ranging objectives). These are alpha-numeric language “Codes”, the province of planners, developer know-how and lawyer specialty. How can general citizens absorb, understand as it? Basic use and height representing “desired” and “density” the handles by which opportunity or resistance forms the public discourse/battles on a project-by-project basis well after master plans are proposed and adopted.

The Zoning CR, CRT “suite” of codes is relatively new and given the new mixed use market development in various contexts in the county (Rockville, Wheaton and locally in Silver Spring) but also recent mixed-use development in bordering Takoma DC and nearby at the Walter Reed redevelopment (66.5 acres, displays the intent and opportunity to achieve many aspects of Montgomery County’s Vision 2050 Plan. However, it has raised calls for caution and/or alarm if misapplied in our town of Takoma Park.

- **Depicting the TPMMA / CTP Master Plan by representative illustrations will improve understanding and consensus among CTP citizens and representative officials:**

- Support and supplement County and CTP planning staff by developing a RFP to conduct next-step urban design charrettes (possibly by UMD MAPP+D and/or UMD Center for Smart Growth?) for depicting and communicating a final master plan/development guidelines (informing allowable and compatible density FAR) scenarios- “Zone-to-the-Plan” informing allowable and compatible density FAR.
- Utilize all the planning, urban design, and development tools available - 2D & 3D GIS, Revit, etc. to depict final plan results.

----- **END** -----

**THANK YOU!**

cc: Mayor Talisha Searcy [talishas@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:talishas@takomaparkmd.gov)  
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To: Montgomery County Planning Board  
From: Jan Rein, 418 Boyd Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Re: Comments on Minor Master Plan  
Date: 9\14\2023

Dear Chair and members of the Planning Board,

I recently moved permanently from Sacramento, California to Takoma Park. What attracted me to TP was the human scale of the buildings (no boxy high rises or big box cookie cutter stores) and the abundance of lush green space and clean air. We should not go down the slippery slope of even partially losing these rare and environmentally friendly features.

The so-called minor master plan is not a plan at all. It is a zoning change which is a blunt instrument for achieving the so-called plan's stated objectives. A true plan would start out by envisioning what the resulting changes should look like, their impact on existing residents and the quality of the environment. Planners should use a scalpel rather than blunt, hope for the best, post-approval zoning changes. Wise plans would anticipate unwanted consequences and tailor the plan to avoid them.

The unwanted consequences that most concern me are:

**1. ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION:** The proposed zoning allows developers to build 12-15 story high rises where neighborhoods and abundant open green-space now exist. To ensure structural stability, these high-rises will necessarily replace porous greenspace with large amounts of nonporous ground surfaces. Absent mandated underground parking, parking areas will replace even more greenspace with non porous materials. The result of this cumulative elimination of greenspace plus the attendant increase in vehicular traffic throughout the city will inevitably produce negative environmental impacts including increased air pollution and increased vulnerability to flooding on Takoma Park's now healthy environment. The proposal does not consider let alone address how these negative environmental consequences might be avoided.

**2. LOSS OF CONTROL OVER WHAT CAN BE BUILT:** The proposed zoning allows developers to build 12-15 floor high rises. Except for complying with city codes and setback requirements, builders can do anything they want. Based on what I've seen developers do in the 11 cities I've lived in, the results will not be pretty. Developers will build to maximize profits with little regard to aesthetics, resident well being or environmental concerns. Such buildings will be out of character with many of the neighborhoods in which they sit. Despite our climate emergency, there are no requirements for underground parking or solar or



light colored roofs. Giving developers free reign threatens to destroy the qualities that make Takoma Park a rare gem among American cities.

3. **FAILURE TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES:** Rather than rely on big box high rises, planners should consider the alternative of increasing housing by doing small scale infill throughout Takoma Park, using townhouses and garden apartments. Although this more modest approach may not yield as many new housing units as the minor master plan allows, it can add a lot and prevent the loss of existing affordable housing units (see 4 below). On balance the more modest approach is preferable because the city cannot absorb the potential 30% population increase 3,500 added units would likely produce. The so-called plan does not consider the capacity of schools, traffic, stormwater, greenspace or Sligo Creek to accommodate this growth or the negative impact this would have on the environment. A further benefit is that the small scale approach would preserve the rare qualities that make Takoma Park so unique.
  
4. **THE NEW ZONING WOULD LIKELY DISPLACE LOW INCOME RESIDENTS POTENTIALLY CREATING HOMELESSNESS:** The new CRT zoning would encourage replacement of town houses and garden apartments with high rises. It would also put economic pressure on owners of existing rent-stabilized housing to sell or convert their units to condos. The proposed zoning change would not protect renters from being priced out of their units because the new housing would be exempt from rent stabilization for a *minimum* of 5 years. There is nothing to stop new high rises from setting high rents at the outset. The plan does not increase (and may even decrease) the percentage of low income housing because it only requires that 12.5% of new housing units be affordable. The combined effect of these counter-productive incentives will put renters at risk of financial distress or homelessness. I've lived in many cities including New York, San Francisco and Sacramento, CA where the unhoused are forced by necessity to sleep in the streets or tent encampments or in neighborhood yards. I have not seen this phenomenon in Takoma Park. I have always treated the unhoused with respect, chatting with them and giving them money and food. But most of the unhoused would prefer to be permanently housed and they and the cities they live in would have a better quality of life if they were. To avoid creating a homeless problem, the plan should increase the required percentage of affordable housing from 12.5% to 50% and remove the 5 year exemption from stabilization for the 50% affordable housing units.

I wholeheartedly support smart development but cannot support the blunt, big box,



environmentally unfriendly, development the proposed minor master plan encourages. The incentives in the plan also encourage the kind of developers that seek profit over people, the environment and quality of life. I've seen what happens when developers of this ilk move into cities.

They use their money and influence to take over and badger city government into approving zoning and big projects that serve their private private, pecuniary interests, usually to the detriment of residents and the environment. I've seen this movie many times before and don't wish to see it replayed in the unique gem of a city that is Takoma Park.

I hope the planning board will completely rethink its minor master plan proposal. A good start would be to replace much of the CRT (allowing 15 stories) to CRN (neighborhood).

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Ellen Rein  
418 Boyd Avenue,  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear Planning Board Chair Harris,

As promised, below is a summary of research challenging the common belief that up-zoning increases housing units or increases affordability. I hope you and the other members of the Planning Board will give this information their most serious consideration before proceeding with the proposed Minor Master Plan in its current form.

Respectfully,

Jan Rein

418 Boyd Avenue

Takoma Park, MD 20912

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## Upzoning Does Not Mean Affordable Housing

[ACE](#) | Posted on January 23, 2023

### Current Research on

### Outcomes with Upzoning – “Yes in My Backyard” [YIMBY]

### Gleaned from a Google search done on the words: Outcomes from Upzoning

### Summaries of articles found:

Brookings Institute website

**How We Rise: The double-edged sword of Upzoning, Jenna Davis – Thursday, July 15, 2021** [The double-edged sword of Upzoning \(brookings.edu\)](#)

“However, upzonings have ignited the hot-button issue of gentrification. In several cities, upzoning policies have driven a wedge between those fighting for supply-side solutions and tenant advocates. Supply-side advocates, often those affiliated with the yes-in-my-backyard (YIMBY) movement, have argued that upzonings will improve housing affordability, pointing to recent studies (including one in [New York](#) and another in [11 cities](#)) that have found that new market-rate development does not trigger increases in surrounding housing costs. Tenant advocates have countered that upzonings will fuel real estate speculation and gentrification, as landlords of upzoned buildings will be incentivized to sell their properties at inflated prices reflecting their added development potential. In doing so, some advocates have pointed to studies (such as [this one](#) in Chicago) suggesting that upzonings are in fact associated with increases in property prices, at least in the short-term.”

...”minimal empirical work has examined the effects of upzonings on gentrification. Aiming to address this gap in the literature, I recently conducted a [study](#) examining how a series of upzonings implemented in New York City in the early 2000s interacted



with subsequent gentrification pressures (using growth in the non-Hispanic white population as a proxy for gentrification). I find that upzoning activity is positively and significantly associated with the odds of a census tract becoming whiter, suggesting that upzonings might accelerate, rather than temper, gentrification pressures in the short-term.”

From Urban Affairs Forum:

**Upzoning Chicago: Impacts of a Zoning Reform on Property Values and Housing Construction**, Yonah Freemark [MIT] March 29, 2019

[Upzoning Chicago: Impacts of a Zoning Reform on Property Values and Housing Construction – Urban Affairs Forum \(urbanaffairsreview.com\)](https://urbanaffairsreview.com/upzoning-chicago-impacts-of-a-zoning-reform-on-property-values-and-housing-construction/)

“In my new research, [recently published in Urban Affairs Review](#), I delve into this question of what happens in neighborhoods once they are upzoned through a case study of a series of upzonings in Chicago. Implemented in 2013 and 2015, these changes were undertaken broadly, without specific association with new developments or other changes. The upzonings were designed to increase density and reduce parking requirements around rail stations. By examining parcels that were upzoned and comparing them to equivalent, nearby parcels that weren’t, I set out to determine what, exactly, happens in the short term after an upzoning.

I identified two primary conclusions about the effects of the zoning changes. First of all, I found no perceptible uptick in new housing-unit permitting in the upzoned areas compared to the unaffected areas over five years. This might seem like a surprise in light of the [news stories regarding apartment projects going up](#) in areas around transit in Chicago in recent years. But my study shows that the zoning reform itself did not induce a specific increase in construction compared to other neighborhoods.

Second, I found an increase in property values in upzoned areas roughly equivalent to the increase in allowed density. This finding extended to existing residential units in some of the models I used, indicating that the cost of living in certain neighborhoods actually increased in the period I examined.

Together, these two findings paint an interesting picture: In the first few years following an upzoning, construction may not immediately increase but the cost of property will.

The two conclusions of this study reflect in part the fact that development is a lengthy process; it takes time to move from a policy like zoning to actually getting housing units in the ground. They also reflect the fact that property buyers *did* rather quickly take the zoning change into account—they were willing to pay more for buildings and land in the upzoned areas.”

New MIT study suggests the Yimby narrative on housing is wrong, Tim Redmond, 48hills, January 29, 2019

[New MIT study suggests the Yimby narrative on housing is wrong – 48 hills](#)

- “There’s no evidence in the study that allowing greater density in areas close to transit actually leads to more construction – certainly not to the construction of affordable units.

Affordability in the areas where the city allowed increased density declined, he reports.”

- “On the *specific parcels where upzoning occurs*, costs appear to go up for individual housing units.”
- Allowing increased density when area is already dense makes land more valuable and thus increases housing and rental prices not only in area upzoned but also surrounding areas
- “But he [Freeman] puts into perspective some of the calls from the local Yimbys, who have said that eliminating all single-family housing in the city and (as Sen. Scott Wiener says) “legalizing apartment buildings”) will lead to more affordable housing.

There is not data that I know of showing that to be true. And now there is some good data suggesting that it may be entirely false.”

- Link to Freeman article in Urban Affairs Review: [Upzoning Chicago: Impacts of a Zoning Reform on Property Values and Housing Construction – Yonah Freemark, 2020 \(sagepub.com\)](https://urbanaffairsreview.com/upzoning-chicago-impacts-of-a-zoning-reform-on-property-values-and-housing-construction/)

**What is upzoning and what does it mean for property managers?**, Laurie Mega, Buildium, July 19, 2019

[What is upzoning and what does it mean for property managers? – Buildium](#)

“However, different cities are handling upzoning in different ways. Some are simply relaxing current zoning laws, while others are rezoning with a specific goal in mind. Let’s take a look at a few case studies to see how cities are implementing upzoning and what effect it’s having.”



- NYC – in East Village – no requirement for affordable units, restrictions to preserve character – outcome – only ½ anticipated units built
- Seattle – created high-density pockets and requirements for affordable housing in each new development. No outcome measures yet
- DC – NoMa [North of Massachusetts Avenue – increase in property taxes and rents went up considerably
- CA upzoning plans – no data on outcomes yet

**What's Missing from the Upzoning Conversation?**, Andrew [no last name listed] Opportunity Labs, July 9, 2019 [What's Missing from the Upzoning Conversation? — Opportunity Labs](#)

Entire article is critical –

By Andrew

As has now been widely reported, on the last day of the season's legislative session, the Oregon State Senate passed [House Bill 2001](#), a first-in-the-nation statewide package of regulatory measures that effectively bans zoning of single family housing in cities of over 10,000 in favor of "[missing middle housing](#)"—that is, everything between single family and high-rise apartments.

Whether the bill will incentivize new affordable housing development, thus decreasing housing prices as more stock comes online—and simultaneously eliminating vestiges of racial and exclusionary economic segregation—remains to be seen.

Lots of folks cite [evidence](#) in support of that idea. Recently, however, two prominent economists [argued](#) that the notion that an insufficient supply of housing is a main cause of urban economic problems is based on a number of faulty premises. An [analysis](#) of zoning changes in Chicago came to similar conclusions about the effectiveness of increasing allowed densities as an affordability mechanism. It is worth noting that the latter has been [critiqued](#). At the least, these papers should give us pause.

Despite the ambiguity of outputs and outcomes resulting from upzoning, as the regulatory practice is commonly known, the practice is in vogue. Cities from Minneapolis to Seattle are experimenting with regulatory loosening (and associated tactics including developer incentives). Odd bedfellows have emerged. The NIMBYism v. YIMBism debate proceeds (and will only be made trickier by the Trump Administration's [entrance](#) into the conversation and the acceleration of the Democratic primary process).

Stroper, an economist at UCLA and one of the authors of the paper cited above, argues "housing is an area where the law of unintended consequences is most powerful."

Given the deep and obvious connections between housing and education we have been surprised to find no serious conversation about the second-order effects of upzoning on schooling.

For example, upzoning may lead directly to new public infrastructure needs, such as the need to provide new seats for new students. I have seen no public analysis or distillation of plans from Oregon or cities experimenting with upzoning to address the obvious and non-obvious impacts on education. Minneapolis' 2040 plan, which many have [lauded](#), makes no attempt to answer obvious questions:

- If upzoning increases neighborhood density, where is the funding coming from to support the associated new school seat needs?
- Is existing human capital infrastructure sufficient to handle new seat needs (do we have enough school leaders, teachers, and support staff)?
- What are the potential school funding impacts (e.g., flows of student-connected federal funding streams)?
- How might geographic shifts impact and intersect with local work on school integration?
- What happens to schools in neighborhoods that families are moving out of?

The three million plus Oregonians who will be impacted by 2001 should be clamoring for answers to these questions (and many more).

More affordable housing is noble and necessary. Zoning should certainly remain one of the tools that we utilize to increase affordability. Yet, it seems absurd to pull this lever without attempting to understand the trickle-down impacts on our most valuable resource and best hope for the future: our children.

**Use Upzoning Sparingly, New Report Suggests**, Cinnamon Janzer, Next City: Backyard – Next City on Housing Equity, August 31, 2021 [Use Upzoning Sparingly, New Report Suggests \(nextcity.org\)](#)

**Note: Backyard, a newsletter exploring scalable solutions to make housing fairer, more affordable and more environmentally sustainable.**

- rezonings have different effects in different communities.



- “Specifically, neighborhood upzonings in BIPOC, low-income communities are where these rezonings are really going to cause more harm than good,” [Chris] Walters [of the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development] says.
- “Targeted rezonings produced a higher ratio of affordable housing to market-rate housing”
- “While I totally agree that single family zoning is by its nature part of our country’s history of racial segregation and exclusionary housing policy, it’s more nuanced and just eliminating it does not, in fact, actually repair the harms of it,” Delaney says. “If you just undo that but leave everything else the same, the research is laying out what we know to be true—the same winners and losers in the current market will win and lose based on this.” From Will Delaney, associate director of Hope Community, Inc. in Minneapolis
- Also from Mr. Delaney – “For communities of color like the folks who live in Phillips,” he continues, “just eliminating single family zoning doesn’t make them any more able to benefit or build wealth through housing. If anything, it makes it easier for gentrification to happen, which is something we’ve been seeing at a large scale all over our neighborhood.”
- For Walters, the answer lies in treating rezoning and upzoning as what they are—one housing tool among many that should be used where appropriate

**Who Really Benefits from Upzoning in Sacramento? – Deregulatory Upzoning: “Cui Bono?”** – A repost from the Livable Portland Blog, East Sacramento Preservation, August 15, 2021

[Who Really Benefits from Upzoning in Sacramento? | East Sacramento Preservation \(eastsacpreservation.org\)](#)

This is more an opinion piece than a data piece, but the author does cite reference cities. The claims looked at include:

- Upzoning is an effective strategy in creating greater
  - Affordability
  - Equity
  - Sustainability
- Are there other explanations for aggressive promotion – essentially, are there financial benefits from the process?

Findings –

- Upzoning strategy for affordability is built on linear thinking. Vancouver, BC belies the linear nature. Its new building of denser, taller projects resulted in more units that are costlier and has pushed it to become the most expensive market in North America. The “attractive urban scene is also populated almost entirely by relatively wealthy urban elites not a diverse rand-and-file citizenry”
- Older, heritage structures get demolished and are replaced with new buildings that may not last.
- “It is naïve to assume that everyone will want to live in dense cores – and certainly a disturbing idea that we should force them.”
- Building in the sub-centers of major cities – like Edmonds to Seattle
  - Projects built that are more expensive than existing stock
  - Only rewards the developers
- “Older and historic homes are on average significantly more affordable than the structures that replace them”

Author argues for a poly-centric approach in urban areas to density. He encourages recognizing local citizens as allies in finding solutions

As to *cui bono*? He feels it is developers, architects and planners – not really the citizens

**Facts and Data Continue to Contradict Upzoning Argument**, Andrew Berman, Village Preservation, October 24, 2021

[Facts and Data Continue to Contradict Upzoning Argument – Village Preservation](#)

Property Shark survey findings

- City’s [NYC] most expensive neighborhood is the one with the most new housing construction
- Contextual upzoning – no correlation to higher prices than neighborhood’s without such changes
- ...“we have to recognize that opening the floodgates to vastly increased market rate housing development in our city may benefit developers and the very wealthy but will help few others. And this can be true even when there are affordable housing set-asides in these mammoth new developments...”
- ...“need to be guided by empirical data, and the facts. These show allowing large scale new market rate housing development doesn’t help the cause of affordability, and landmark and zoning restrictions that reinforce neighborhood character and keep new development in scale don’t hurt it. Instead, promoting policies [as I’ve previously suggested](#) which hold on to as much of our existing affordable housing as possible, connecting it to those who most need it, and creating new affordable housing without it being dependent upon vastly increased amounts of new market rate housing, are what’s needed to truly address our city’s housing affordability needs.”



## **Dubicki: When Upzoning Becomes a Fool's Errand, [Ray Dubicki](#), The Urbanist, December 9, 2020**

### **[Dubicki: When Upzoning Becomes a Fool's Errand | The Urbanist](#)**

**...“let’s step back from upzoning for a little bit. Zoning will never be able to create enough new housing because it was never designed to. We need a deep understanding of all the places polluted by zoning’s exclusionary, racist history and the courage to rip it out by the roots. Until we get that done, we must put the [polite spectacle](#) of zoning decisions on the side and use every other tool to zealously [ursue housing, housing, and more housing.”**

**The Penny Drops: Evidence for Upzoning Benefits is Full of Holes, Peter Dorfman, The Dissident Democrat, July 21, 2021.**

- The entire article is a worthy read because it details some of the process in Bloomington to move towards upzoning.**
- ‘That is, while YIMBY advocates push supply as a nostrum for housing affordability, opponents whom [Jenna] Davis identifies as “tenant advocates” argue that upzoning leads to *“real estate speculation and gentrification, as landlords of upzoned buildings will be***



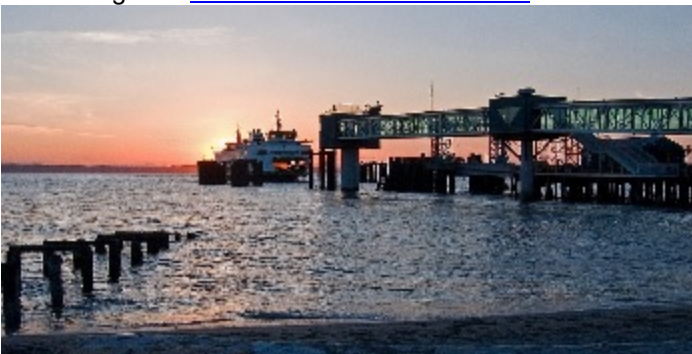
***incentivized to sell their properties at inflated prices reflecting their added development potential.”***

• ***From a paper published in the journal ScienceDirect in April 2021, Jenna Davis writes: “I find that upzoning activity is positively and significantly associated with the odds of a census tract becoming whiter, suggesting that upzonings might accelerate, rather than temper, gentrification pressures in the short-term.”*** [“How do upzonings impact neighborhood demographic change? Examining the link between land use policy and gentrification in New York City”](#) (April 2021).

• ***A paper from New York University’s Furman Center at the NYU School of Law – “Supply Skepticism: Housing Supply and Affordability” ends by admitting that adding supply will never be sufficient to drive affordability by itself, stipulating that “policymakers should be frank that adding supply is unlikely ever to meet the housing needs of the very lowest income households in our communities, and will have to be paired with subsidies or other incentives or inclusionary zoning requirements.”***

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**Waterfront | The Alliance of Citizens for Edmonds\***

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Dear Chairman Harris,

I wrote to you earlier to praise your conduct of the planning board September 14th hearing. Now I write to you about a problem.

I have been trying for 3 days to reach someone who can give me the email addresses of each member of your planning board. I first looked online. No luck there. I called the Planning Commission, Catherine Coello, your office staff, the planning board, my state representatives and other entities, each several times and no one answered. I left messages to call me back but that's an exercise in futility as no one called me back. Frankly, I believe this lack of transparency and responsiveness is a public disgrace which needs to be promptly corrected. Members of the public should not have such difficulty in reaching governmental entities that are supposed to serve the public.

All I want to do is to email additional comments re the proposed Minor Master Plan before the September 30 deadline. Please email me a list of the planning board members emails as soon as possible. And please do something about the inaccessibility problem described above.

Respectfully,  
Jan Rein  
418 Boyd Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
916-616-6983



My name is David Reed. I am an economist; I am president of the Long Branch-Sligo Community Association, and I am a member of the Community Equity Coalition for whom I am speaking tonight.

A fundamental controversy in the MMPA regards the urgently needed rehabilitation of high-rise buildings on Maple Avenue. The MMPA proposes using **up-zoning** as the sole instrument to incentivize that rehabilitation process. Unfortunately, privileged use of that instrument disregards two basic economic facts:

- One, up-zoning does not mobilize private sector investment **without** raising the cost of housing. Private investors need a robust, stable return on their investments. Rent increases are inevitable.
- Two, up-zoning does not promote renovation without major dislocation of tenants UNLESS accompanied by public financing. Absent such funding, displacement of many vulnerable families is inevitable.

How, then, can the MMPA claim that it “aspires to achieve no net loss of affordable housing” by using this blunt instrument and without public financing? Further, even a cursory reading of American urban change over the past half-century highlights how up-zoning has been a privileged tool in displacing hundreds of thousands of low income families, largely Brown and Black, from urban centers.

I propose two specific steps to address this important challenge:

- One, that the Maple Avenue District be severed from the MMPA so that construction of housing in the Flower Ave District can move forward expeditiously. In truth, we have not received a clear explanation of why this district was included in the Plan area in the first place;
- Two, that the Planning Board mandate a tailored urban design process on Maple Avenue that, among other actions:



- Explores expansion of public ownership opportunities, including with the Montgomery Housing Partnership, that encourages cooperative development, and that opens “missing middle” ownership options;
- Two, convenes a forum with private owners to explore obstacles, financing and timing regarding rehabilitation of their properties;
- Three, identifies sources of public financing that are needed to ensure temporary relocation of residents in buildings undergoing rehabilitation.

A dedicated planning process along Maple Ave will be required to meet the requisites of the *Equity in Master Planning Framework* by which you are guided, to wit, the department must “incorporate racial equity and social justice when preparing Master Plans.”

I close in thanking Mayor Searcy for her dedication and that of the City Council in trying to find inclusive answers to the challenges posed by the current MMPA. And I close expressing the ardent commitment of the hundreds of residents I **represent** to work with you in finding equitable and enduring solutions to our City’s needs.

Thank you

David W. Reed  
7309 Garland Ave  
Takoma Park, MD



Dear Montgomery County Planning Board members,  
Please see below for my comments on the draft minor master plan.

Overall, the plan has some good elements to increase housing and services, but some deep vulnerabilities that could decrease affordable housing and diversity in Takoma Park.

### **Summary of Recommendations:**

#### *Housing protections:*

- Narrowly tailor the zoning changes for Maple Ave tract to increase housing only in parking areas and limit commercial use.
- Enact strict protections for existing affordable units and tenants.
- Change all SFH zoning throughout the city to be multi-family (not just duplexes or ADUs)
- Require smaller footprints for new SFH homes

#### *Recreational opportunities*

- Add lights and artificial turf to Piney Branch Field for extended use of soccer and other facilities.
- Add recreational facilities to WAU site (driving to soccer, basketball and swimming in the West side of the County is the biggest source of our family's vehicle miles traveled (VMT) due to the huge recreational inequities between the East and West sides of Montgomery County)

The number one reason we live in Takoma Park is because of the diversity of the community and schools. Takoma Park is a special place because people across incomes, race, and nationality live and go to school together. Sadly, this is rare in the United States and even in the DMV, where schools are still highly segregated by race and/or income. This diversity is made possible largely due to the high number of multi-family units on Maple Ave and the city's rent control policies.

Fundamentally, redeveloping the Washington Adventist University and hospital site does not require major changes to Maple Avenue, and the rezoning for the Maple Ave section proposed risks gentrification and displacement. Adding housing by replacing parking lots is welcome (although Takoma Park has repeatedly failed to do so on the city lot at the Takoma Junction), and if there's a way to do that on Maple Ave that includes underground or stacked parking lots, then that would be a positive development. However, the rezoning proposed is too broad and could enable developers to raise existing affordable structures and add more expensive housing, retail or other mixed use. Raising the value of these properties to for-profit developers is not welcome. Stronger protections of existing tenants and below-market rate units are essential to preserving the limited affordability we have in the City.

In addition, Takoma Park has been delinquent in redeveloping a simple parking lot already (Takoma Junction), and the limited multi-family development that has happened has all centered on the DC side of the Takoma/Takoma Park border. Rather than an increase in multi-family or affordable housing, Takoma Park has seen a rash of increases of tear downs and enormous single family homes put up, which hurts affordability and increases the environmental harm on a per resident basis (permeable surface, energy use, etc.). Rather than focus on disrupting the best multi-family corridor in Takoma Park (Maple Ave), the county should focus on upzoning single family tracts throughout Takoma Park (and the county), discouraging supersized, luxury single family homes, and increasing the number of below-market rate units.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Shannon Baker-Branstetter  
318 Ethan Allen Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912



Chair

Montgomery County Planning Board

2425 Reedie Dr.

14<sup>th</sup> Floor

Wheaton, MD 20902

6 September 2023

Dear Sir:

I am writing to submit my questions and comments relating to the Major/Minor Plan suggested for Takoma Park, MD.

My family and I have lived for 23 years at 726 Maplewood Ave. Directly across the street from Washington Adventists University's (WAU) girl's dorm on the corner of Flower Ave and Maplewood Avenue. This is one of the streets included in development plans for the Major/Minor plan. All the streets surrounding the WAU and the Washington Adventis Hospital (WAH) campus are now slated for rezoning. My house would be rezoned from being residential and changed to Commercial Residential, as would all the streets directly adjacent to this large piece of property.

It is my impression that the Major/Minor plan initially dealt with plans for the stretch along Maple Ave. going from Philadelphia Ave to Maplewood Ave. Then the hospital campus and WAU land was added at a later date. I understand that the campus and the hospital are legally bound to one single plat of land and cannot be divided. NONE of our neighbors along Maplewood, or anywhere in Ward 5, were ever contacted by Adventist's so-called community engagement team. Nor were we.

Between 1999 and 2005 the Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park floated a plan to build a 10-story doctor's office building and adjacent above-ground, 9-story parking lot to accommodate the increased visitors. Our community banded together and asked that a traffic and an environmental impact study be done to assess the feasibility of the proposed project. The results indicated the site was untenable for that kind of growth and that the existing streets would in no way be able to handle the traffic.

This plan is much, much larger than the WA Hospital proposal was. I have the following questions and requests for the Board:

- 1) Can new traffic and environmental studies be done based on the proposed rezoning for the hospital to assess the impact on the surrounding neighborhood and Sligo Creek?
- 2) Why is the WAU campus, the university, included in the Major/Minor plan? It is not near Maple Ave. and I don't understand why this has been included. Why are all the surrounding streets around the university being rezoned? Why not concentrate on Maple Ave development as well as the hospital, which will feed into Maple Ave. and leave the areas around the WAU campus out of the rezoning? By that I mean, Maplewood Ave, Greenwood Ave, Carroll Ave.



It seems clear that the "commercial mixed-use rezoning for properties on and around Washington Adventist campus" includes the University. The Adventist community has been very quiet about when they plan on closing that institution. When are they closing it?

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Melinda S. Ulloa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Melinda" being more prominent than the last name "Ulloa".

Melinda Smith Ulloa  
726 Maplewood Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
301-785-1242



September 27, 2023

To the Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board:

We are submitting comments regarding the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment.

My wife and I are residents of the Sligo Park Hills neighborhood, which is adjacent to the city of Takoma Park. We live across Sligo Creek from the Adventist Hospital site.

I've been following the planning process for several years. A few things are becoming clear:

1. Washington Adventist University intends to maximize their income when repurposing the old Adventist Hospital site, and I expect the County will accede to their intentions.
2. The residents of the Maple Avenue apartments are a community at risk.

Here are our thoughts and recommendations:

- WAU's greatest income would accrue from putting luxury high-rise condominiums on the hospital site. We know that many affluent people want to move to close-in suburbs like Takoma Park. There is a strong market for this sort of thing.
- Luxury condominiums are attractive to the power-brokers who influence the planning process. Governments can increase their tax base. Developers can make big money. Candidates can receive seductive donations from developers. This is why I believe the Planning Board and the County Council will enable WAU to maximize construction of luxury housing on the hospital site.
- Our message is simple: **Don't sell out the neighborhood without extracting maximum concessions from WAU and their developers.**
  - Require that the Sligo Creek watershed will not only be protected from getting worse, but that improvements must be included along with the new construction: green space, native trees, ground cover, stormwater management, energy-efficient buildings, etc.
  - Require that the developers subsidize the cost of significant improvements to public transportation (as well as bicycle and pedestrian routes) from the Adventist site up Maple Avenue to the Takoma Park Metro. This is only way to mitigate the increased number of vehicles that will inevitably accompany the new buildings.
  - Require that public amenities be included in the plan: retail (such as a fresh food outlet), public spaces, and community services.
  - Do not let developers make promises for which they cannot be held accountable afterwards, with severe financial and civil penalties if they don't follow through.

The second part of our comments concerns Maple Avenue. Montgomery County, under the guise of enabling improvements to the affordable housing along Maple Avenue, is on the verge of creating conditions which will replace this affordable housing with luxury condos and apartments.



- The foolhardy plan to upzone the Maple Avenue corridor will result in the same process we've seen repeatedly in this area over the generations, in which predatory developers gain the trust of local governments, and use zoning changes to enable low-cost housing (which are the cheapest properties) to be replaced by high-cost housing.
- **Do not institute upzoning along Maple Avenue.** The residents of this area onto this deception.
- Our thoughts are simple: you must use this opportunity to improve the circumstances for those who live there now, not lay the groundwork for pushing them out. This is a unique area which deserves to be protected and enhanced, not supplanted by the gentrification process you will kick-start otherwise. This area needs more public spaces, public transportation, and retail. It does not need to be completely replaced by upzoned, expensive housing. Those affluent folks who want to move here, let them buy a new property on the Adventist site instead (see above).

Many area residents naively believe that this TP-MMPA process is about securing affordable housing and providing more middle-income housing. As we see it, the most likely outcome of the current plan is an expansion of high-end housing at the expense of all other options.

The residents of this larger community are paying attention, and we will not tolerate sloppy, short-sighted, or deceptive planning to turn Maple Avenue into downtown Bethesda.

In summary: The Planning Board (and the County Council) are the means by which our government represents my wife and I. We need you to serve as a check on the otherwise limitless scope, demands, and predation of property developers. In other words, you are our representatives in the negotiation for appropriate housing options in this neighborhood. We expect, and demand, that you will stand up for reasonable new construction where appropriate (the Adventist site) and that you stand against unreasonable new construction where inappropriate (Maple Avenue).

Sincerely,

David Heller and Barbara Drazin

14 Sunnyside Road, Silver Spring MD 20910. [dn.heller@verizon.net](mailto:dn.heller@verizon.net). [bar.drazin@verizon.net](mailto:bar.drazin@verizon.net)

Copies of this email will be sent to our Councilmember Kate Stewart, and to Council President Evan Glass



Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reedie Drive, 14th Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902  
[mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org)

Dear Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board,

As a family living adjacent to the Takoma Park Minor-Master Plan area, we are enthusiastic about the opportunity it presents to develop additional housing, retail, and services to meet the needs of the community. Before adopting the plan, however, we urge the county to take additional steps to ensure the resulting development preserves and enhances the defining qualities of our neighborhood, including its natural beauty, its socioeconomic diversity, and its unique character.

Specifically, we encourage the country to do the following:

- Adopt binding policies to prevent a net loss in affordable housing and the displacement of existing low-income residents. This will protect our community's unique diversity for future generations.
- Encourage the development of "missing middle" housing, possibly by requiring more than 12.5 percent of units in new residential buildings to be set aside as Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU).
- Encourage a mix of development, encompassing a variety of heights, densities, and possible uses to provide robust opportunities for business development and middle-income housing.
- Reduce the allowable building height on portions of the former Adventist University Hospital campus that adjoin residential streets lined with single-family homes. Mandate additional measures such as appropriate setbacks and step downs to ensure new developments are sensitive to the surrounding landscape and the character of the neighborhood.
- Preserve recreational greenspace, tree cover, and wildlife habitat within the Minor-Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) zone, in keeping with Takoma Park City Council's Climate Emergency Response Framework. Specifically, we urge the county to increase the amount of publicly accessible greenspace on the Adventist Hospital campus from the recommended half acre and to make its preservations mandatory. Steps should also be taken to preserve or restore the greenspace and wooded area adjoining the southwest edge of the Washington Adventist site along Sligo Creek, and along Maple Avenue between Sligo Creek Parkway and Maplewood Avenue (A.K.A. Hospital Hill).
- Incorporate more specific recommendations for the creation of new publicly accessible green space, greenways, and outdoor recreation areas within the MMPA zone to offset the increased density and help preserve the neighborhood's verdant character.

In addition to the measures outlined above, we urge the county to conduct additional research on how the increase in density the MMPA envisions could impact the environment, schools, and traffic in and around the MMPA zone. Obviously, the results should be shared with the City of Takoma Park *before* the plan is adopted, and the plan should be modified based on these findings to ensure any future development doesn't put undue strain on our infrastructure or damage our precious natural resources.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Mariah Blake



Maple Avenue  
Ward 5

Andreas Sengebusch  
Maple Avenue  
Ward 5

cc: Mayor Talisha Searcy [talishas@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:talishas@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 1 Shana Fulcher [shanaf@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:shanaf@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 2 Cindy Dyballa [cindy@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:cindy@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 3 Randy Gibson [randallg@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:randallg@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 4 Terry Seamens [terrys@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:terrys@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 5 Cara Honzak [carah@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:carah@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 6 Jason Small [jasons@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:jasons@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Clerk Jessie Carpenter [jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov)



Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reedie Drive, 14th Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902  
[mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org)

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Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Mariah Blake and Andreas Sengebusch



8022 Maple Ave  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

cc: Mayor Talisha Searcy [talishas@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:talishas@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 1 Shana Fulcher [shanaf@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:shanaf@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 2 Cindy Dyballa [cindy@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:cindy@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 3 Randy Gibson [randallg@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:randallg@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 4 Terry Seamens [terrys@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:terrys@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 5 Cara Honzak [carah@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:carah@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Ward 6 Jason Small [jasons@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:jasons@takomaparkmd.gov)  
Clerk Jessie Carpenter [jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:jessiec@takomaparkmd.gov)





September 29, 2023

Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reddie Drive  
Wheaton, MD 20902

**Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment - Hearing Date September 14, 2023**

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board,

The Montgomery County Food Council (Food Council) would like to express our appreciation for the opportunity to provide comments on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment (the Plan). We **support the food system recommendations outlined** in the Plan and commend the Planning Department for incorporating these crucial issues into the Plan.

The Food Council is dedicated to promoting a robust, equitable, and sustainable food system in Montgomery County, so we are thrilled to see that the Plan addresses food system-related issues and focuses on the need of the community to center equity in the decision making process.

The Food Council was excited to see the Plan's clear focus on Food Security laid out in section 3.3.1.5. We agree that the introduction of spaces for urban agriculture, on all scales, is vital to improve access to food for residents and that there are positive impacts for local businesses, development, and social benefits for citizens. We strongly applaud the plan's recommendation to "Make commercial food kitchens, food processing, and rooftop farms permitted uses in the Plan Area" as a way to increase equitable access to food and opportunities to grow food. This section also emphasizes the importance of supporting and expanding food distribution sites. With decreased federal funding available and elevated need for food across the County, we would instead recommend better coordination amongst providers and a focus placed on connecting residents to the benefits and assistance programs for which they qualify.

The Food Council applauds the inclusion of Environmental Equity (section 3.3.1.6) within the Plan and supports the inclusion of "community gardens, and local healthy food productions" as part of the ways to achieve equity. The intended use of all available US EPA and the President's Council on Environmental Quality data tools will ensure that the pursuit of environmental equity is data-driven and directed toward areas in need of change.

The community outreach and engagement laid out in section 3.4.2.4 speaks to the desire of residents to incorporate food system spaces into park space. The integration of food systems and park space are vital for creating healthy and whole communities. Community gardens and food forests not only provide food for those that are involved in the projects but help to deepen the connection between residents and their local park space, improve the biodiversity of our park system, and create inclusive spaces that encourage more





residents to be involved in their local park. As the Plan notes, the Plan Area “is well-served” by parks and trails; this provides an opportunity for targeted improvement of those park spaces to ensure that they are being crafted into inclusive spaces that benefit the whole community.

The planned feasibility study laid out in section 4.2.2.2 to determine the possibility for projects such as food forests, orchard projects, or community gardens demonstrates the positive connection between planning and the food system. This study will help to make intentional decisions about food system improvements to ensure that the community will benefit and we applaud this approach.

The Food Council looks forward to continuing to work together with Montgomery Planning, the Planning Board, the City of Takoma Park, and the County Council to support these important food systems goals. Please do not hesitate to contact us for more information at the email and phone number provided below.





Dear Montgomery County Planning Board,

We write as residents of Takoma Park to ask you to amend the TP MMPA to reduce the risk of displacement of residents from affordable housing, and to reduce the risk of environment, traffic, and infrastructure stress in our community going forward into a climate emergency.]

Please restrict the boundaries of the plan to the former hospital site, where redevelopment is necessary and new housing would be welcome. Please do not include already developed surrounding neighborhoods, or Maple Avenue, until we see the effects on our community of the increased density on the hospital site. Rezoning in stages will allow for careful monitoring of the effects of the hospital site development.

Whether or not you alter the boundaries as suggested, we urge you to reduce the density and heights across the MMPA for a more granular approach, rather than broad-brush upzoning inappropriate for this site. Maple Avenue, in particular, is an extremely valuable corridor of naturally-occurring affordable housing, located outside the transit walksheds. It defies the commitment of our City and County to equity to add the burden of new density in this already very dense area. Broad-brush upzoning risks the complex planning that went into this affordable housing corridor, and triggering displacement from what are now rent-stabilized buildings. Only about half of those buildings are protected by deed covenants.

Signers:

1. Sue Miller 12 Montgomery Ave.
2. Jacqueline Moore 7005 Aspen Ave
3. De Herman 8011 Maple Ave.
4. Paul Huebner 7405 Carroll Ave.
5. Tom Gagliardo 107 Hodges La.
6. Karen Elrich 8110 Roanoke Ave.
7. Philip Bogdonoff 39 Oswego Ave.
8. Bob Dreher 7122 Sycamore Ave.
9. Stephan Whitney 16 Crescent Pl.
10. Barbara Whitney 16 Crescent Pl.
11. Judy Rosenthal 505 Elm Ave.
12. Laura Gagliardo 107 Hodges La.
13. Jan Herman 8011 Maple Ave.
14. Rachel Hardwick 7400 Flower Ave.
15. Colleen Cordes 500 New York Ave.
16. Christine Cutillo 702 Erie Ave.
17. David Reed 7309 Garland Ave.
18. Michael Blau 7005 Aspen Ave.
19. Denise Jones 7777 Maple Ave.
20. Thomas Hall 7414 Birch Ave.
21. Esther Siegel 706 Erie Ave.
22. Michael Tabor 706 Erie Ave.
23. Eleanor Porter 8012 Maple Ave.



24. Maurizio Porcari 8009 Sligo Creek Pkwy.
25. Keith Berner 7902 Flower Ave.
26. Cheryl Morden 705 Erie Ave.
27. Neal Chalofsky 8108 Roanoke Ave.
28. Margie Chalofsky 8108 Roanoke Ave.
29. Peter Dowling 8005 Maple Ave.
30. Tom Huizenga 7313 Wildwood Ave.
31. Sandra D. Kerr Porcari 8009 Sligo Creek Pkwy.
32. Nami Mukasa 8010 Maple Ave.
33. Davida Wood 7925 Edinburgh La.
34. Brendan Rowan 8010 Maple Ave.
35. Marie Ritzo 7113 Central Ave.
36. Michael Padhorzer 7113 Central Ave.
37. Saul Schniderman 306 Lincoln Ave.
38. Jack Carson 700 Auburn Ave.
39. Naomi Edelson 716 Erie Ave.
40. Marsha LeBoeuf 646 Kennebec Ave.
41. Maureen Malloy 136 Fleetwood Ave. Silver Spring
42. Sarah O'Donnell 7002 Aspen Ave.
43. Lori Brenig 711 Erie Ave.
44. Barry Brenig 711 Erie Ave.
45. Lee Feldstein 7412 Hancock Ave.
46. Glenda Kapsalis 223 Grant Ave.
47. Rastislav Brezny 223 Grant Ave.
48. Bridget Brodie 234 Grant Ave.
49. Mei Kong 713 Auburn Ave.
50. Katie Babcock 123 Geneva Ave.
51. Emmy Shacter 710 Erie Ave.
52. Lynne Bradley 7305 Maple Ave.
53. Joan Samworth 7318 Flower Ave.
54. Dmitri Velikii 705 Auburn Ave.
55. Nina Velikaia 705 Auburn Ave.
56. Sharon Mandel 902 Elm Ave.
57. Richard C. Masterson 8319 Roanoke Ave.
58. Farnoosh Ahmadi 8101 Garland Ave.
59. Mark Brochman 8305 Roanoke Ave.
60. Christine Kenngott 7711 Garland Ave.
61. Rose Berman 652 Kennebec Ave.
62. Bryne Kelly 6517 Westmoreland Ave.
63. Alys Cohen 413 Boyd Ave.
64. Laura Delaney 8121 Davis Ave.
65. Marguerite Cyr 403 Boyd Ave.
66. Erin Markley 414 Boyd Ave.
67. Jan Rein 418 Boyd Ave.
68. Amaya Bassett 411 Boyd Ave.
69. Eva Cappelletti Chao 224 Grant Ave.



70. William Barnds 8001 Maple Ave.
71. Susan P. Schreiber 7323 Willow Ave.
72. Roger Schlegel 6512 Allegheny Ave.
73. Joseph Klockner 401 Circle Ave.
74. Rick Weiss 27 Pine Ave.
75. Lea Chartock 6414 Sligo Mill Rd.
76. Loraine Hutchins 17330 Quaker La. Sandy Spring (former Takoma Park resident)
77. Julie Boddy 7314 Baltimore Ave.
78. Robin Broad 214 Tulip Ave.
79. John Cavanagh 214 Tulip Ave.
80. Susan Strasser 7309 Willow Ave.
81. Nadine Bloch 405 Beech Ave.
82. Adam Frank 408 Boyd Ave.
83. Rebeca Rios 7211 16th Ave.
84. Ted Jacobson 509 Elm Ave.
85. Carol Mermey 7415 Holly Ave.
86. Robert Goo 508 Elm Ave.
87. Miriam Szapiro 118 Park Ave.
88. Gary Lear 7213 Garland Ave.
89. Steve Shapiro 7324 Willow Ave.
90. Enrica Detragiach 6909 Westmoreland Ave.
91. Fred Feinstein 7114 Sycamore Ave.
92. Thomas Alderson 7137 Maple Ave.
93. John Blount 6513 Allegheny Ave.
94. Amy Turim 7713 Takoma Ave.
95. Nancy Ricks 5 Lee Ave.
96. Sharon Levy 7431 Baltimore Ave.
97. Delores Simmons 6802 New Hampshire Ave.
98. Neil Cox 7907 Greenwood Ave.
99. Ines Hilde 7909 Greenwood Ave. ("Do not include Greenwood Ave. in MMPA")
100. Ellen Jennings 4 Parkside Rd.
101. Linda Nunes-Schrag 708 Erie Ave.
102. David Connor 122 Ritchie Ave.
103. Sharon Mandel 902 Elm Ave.
104. Elizabeth Strickler 25 Philadelphia Ave.
105. Linda Carlson 16 Valley View Ave.
106. Larry Himmelfarb 16 Valley View Ave.
107. Catherine Tunis 907 Larch Ave.
108. May Beth Hatem 704 Auburn Ave.
109. Elizabeth Perwin 48 Jefferson Ave.
110. Karen Lange 41 Philadelphia Ave.
111. Gina Gaspin 28 Columbia Ave.
112. Dara Orenstein 7502 Hancock Ave.
113. Katherine Katzin 7008 Aspen Ave.
114. Ron Resertarits 7502 Hancock Ave.
115. Judy Treible 112 Lee Ave.



116. Susan N. Holliday 7422 Buffalo Ave.
117. Marilyn R. Abbott 503 Philadelphia Ave.
118. Noa Baum 13 Devon Rd. Silver Spring
119. Karen Collins 7114 Sycamore Ave.
120. Barbara Gleason 8108 Park Crest Dr.
121. Steven Ney 7006 Woodland Ave.
122. Stephanie Ney 7006 Woodland Ave.
123. Martha Feldman 6901 Jackson Ave.
124. Gary Gleason 8108 Park Crest Dr.
125. Karen Burke 7711 Takoma Ave.
126. Terese Bouey 14 Philadelphia Ave.
127. Kathryn Phillips 7405 Carroll Ave.
128. Robert Engelman 500 New York Ave.
129. Edwin Stromberg 512 New York Ave.
130. Richard Weil 7617 Takoma Ave.
131. Robert Anderson 7120 Woodland Ave.
132. Iris Bennett 7413 Baltimore Ave.
133. Stephanie Fitzpatrick 202 Hodges La.
134. Dirk Fitzpatrick 202 Hodges La.
135. Paul Chrostowski 7708 Takoma Ave.
136. Lorraine Pearsall 7708 Takoma Ave.
137. Julia Jarvis 718 Gude Ave.
138. Kenneth Allen 808 Jackson Ave.
139. Deborah Stoll 808 Jackson Ave.
140. Ashley Flory 7116 Willow Ave.
141. Jill Gay 7218 Spruce Ave.
142. Megan Scribner 7321 Willow Ave.
143. Katherine Mack 7208 Maple Ave.
144. Allegra Cangelosi 7410 Cedar Ave.
145. Kirsten Stade 99 Ritchie Ave.
146. Marty Ittner 7902 Flower Ave.
147. Ferd Hoefner 22 Montgomery Ave.
148. Diane Curran 22 Montgomery Ave.
149. Joseph M. Jeral 1110 Jackson Ave.
150. Ellen Meizlish 7908 Greenwood Ave.
151. Matt Hardwick 7400 Flower Ave.
152. Kerry Daniel McDonald 7336 Carroll Ave.
153. Jay Danner-McDonnell 7336 Carroll Ave.
154. Deborah Luxenberg 7217 Central Ave.
155. Sharon Wolchik 7217 Holly Ave.
156. John Varnum 7217 Holly Ave.
157. Elizabeth Thornhill 7215 Holly Ave.
158. Sharon Broderick 7947 Eastern Ave.
159. Vincent Broderick 7947 Eastern Ave
160. Denise Simmonds 7201 Flower Ave.
161. Susan Rogers 416 Lincoln Ave.



162. Linda Pentz-Gunter 302 Grant Ave.
163. Barry Tolv 7110 Central Ave
164. Christine Fitzgerald 7110 Central Ave.
165. Carol Schatz 7310 New Hampshire Ave.
166. Kathleen Dorman 13 Cleveland Ave.
167. Nancy Cohen 7305 Baltimore Ave.
168. Frances E. Phipps 7210 Holly Ave.
169. Patrick Roberts 7300 Holly Ave.
170. Megan Roberts 7300 Holly Ave.
171. Mady Naden 7417 Piney Branch Rd.
172. Susan Drake Swift 6 Elwyn Ct., Silver Spring
173. Michael Rubin 7406 Flower Ave.
174. Mandilyn Beck 719 Erie Ave.
175. Lynne Bradley 7305 Maple Ave.
176. Susan Levi 7400 Glenside Dr.
177. Peter Carruthers 7400 Glenside Dr.
178. Elizabeth Strickler 25 Philadelphia Ave.
179. Margo Kabel 103 Tulip Ave.
180. Sabrina Eaton 7019 Eastern Ave.
181. Kathryn Desmond 238 Park Ave.
182. Dennis Desmond 238 Park Ave.
183. Patrick Jones 7714 Carroll Ave.
184. Christine Simpson 7300 Cedar Ave.
185. John Lorenz 7300 Cedar Ave.
186. Alison Baker 7209 Cedar Ave.
187. James Colwell 7209 Cedar Ave.
188. Renata Miskell 806 Jackson Ave.
189. John Rogers 7425 Baltimore Ave.
190. Karen Ackerman 240 Park Ave.
191. Thomas Kaufman 214 Manor Circle
192. Susan Comfort 7009 Aspen Ave.
193. Ambroise Agosse 1111 Kingwood Dr.
194. Gertrude Dangbedji 1111 Kingwood Dr.
195. Kerry Richter 17 Montgomery Ave.
196. Nadia Gabriel 715 Erie Ave.
197. Pamela Sparr 1308 Elson Pl.
198. Cynthia Mariel 24 Manor Circle
199. Mike Lastort 7514 Glenside Dr.
200. Jan Lastort 7514 Glenside Dr.
201. Jeffrey Kohn 7391 Buffalo Ave.
202. Susan Mathiessen 7391 Buffalo Ave.
203. Bob Muhlenkamp 240 Park Ave.
204. Jamie Iwugo 8110 Roanoke Ave.
205. David Zirin 207 Manor Ct.
206. Lisa Weber 7309 Holly Ave.
207. Bill LaFurgy 7309 Holly Ave.



208. Adam Polis 7003 Aspen Ave.
209. Emily Park 7003 Aspen Ave.
210. Sean Gallagher 405 Beech Ave.
211. Margot Bloch 405 Beech Ave.
212. Brittany Kayton 7004 Aspen Ave.
213. Mike Langen 7004 Aspen Ave.
214. Christine M. Kaess 7002 Woodland Ave.
215. Kathleen Quinn Hilton Ave.
216. Rebecca Prevots 7206 Trescott Ave.
217. Bruce Kozarsky 7321 Willow Ave.
218. James Francis Wolf 24 Darwin Ave.
219. Judybeth Greene 7416 Glenside Ave.
220. Marcie Stickle 510 Buffalo Ave.
221. George French 510 Albany Ave.
222. Arthur E. Gary 7404 Wildwood Dr.
223. David Navari 7116 Sycamore Ave.
224. Joan Duncan 25 Pine Ave.
225. Harold Phipps 7210 Holly Ave.
226. Karen Freeland 8308 Flower Ave.
227. Joann Malone 7007 Aspen Ave.
228. Patrick Smith 7007 Aspen Ave.
229. Bernita Leonard 208 Manor Ct.
230. Rick Leonard 208 Manor Ct.
231. Kathy Breckbill 7104 Woodland Ave.
232. Steve Breckbill 7104 Woodland Ave.
233. Stu Gagnon 41 Philadelphia Ave.

Submitted by David Reed, 7309 Garland Ave



Dear Planning Board members,

I write in support of the proposed development of the former Adventist Hospital site and Maple Avenue corridor. I have lived in Takoma since 1993, first on Piney Branch Road and currently at the intersection of Maple and Tulip. I've observed the development in Takoma DC and, while there is undeniably more traffic, particularly on Carroll and Eastern Avenues, I do not find the streets of old Takoma too adversely affected. In fact, it is now far safer to walk from the metro and the area is more vibrant with new restaurants that I greatly enjoy having within walking distance.

The Minor Master Plan seems to me an eminently sensible use of a significant area of prime urban land. Given the chronic housing shortage in Montgomery county it is, frankly, nuts not to develop this area. A mix of residential and retail space with an emphasis on walkable living close to public transport seems aligned with the values and spirit that drew me to live in Takoma in the first place.

My main concern is that affordable, low-income housing be fully retained on Maple Avenue, and that an important portion of new housing be accessible to middle-income and diverse families. I see Takoma becoming white and wealthier and more like Bethesda, and I do not believe that is the outcome most TP residents want for our community. I am confident that the board has

Sincerely,

Rachel Neild

7122 Maple Avenue

Takoma Park, MD



Dear Planning Board Members

William Hernandez was scheduled to speak on 9-14-23, but unfortunately was unable to. So here is my research and a report with the data found. Please feel free to ask questions if needed. All my data is available which can be referenced on my presentation poster board. The extra time was helpful to finish compiling my data and pictures.

Thank you for reviewing my findings  
I hope they are helpful  
Sincerely

William Hernandez



Dear Montgomery Planning Board and Planning Staff,

I am a thirty year resident of Takoma Park, living at 322 Boyd Avenue for all those years.

I am writing to express my overall support of equity solutions that create more "missing middle" and affordable housing solutions in Takoma Park and Montgomery County in general. I also strongly favor urban in-fill near transport hubs as an important part of the overall response we need to face the hazards of climate change. Therefore, I strongly support the overall direction of the proposed TPMMP.

I do, though, look forward to more work to clarify how the various traffic, stormwater and education issues the project raises will be handled as specific projects are proposed under the TPMMP.

In my reading, the proposed rezoning of the Maple Avenue corridor does not necessarily threaten the affordable housing that already exists there. Much of the affordable housing on that corridor is owned by the MHP, which to date has never sold any of its properties. It's not very likely that the MHP would fly against its publicly stated mission and sell the current buildings so they could build something more expensive. In addition, investment for high-rise commercial buildings is not likely to flood into Takoma Park in the near term. Thus, I hope that almost all of the very valuable low cost housing along Maple Avenue will remain in place. The County and the City of Takoma Park should make every effort to ensure that existing affordable housing remains in place.

I do agree with others who have submitted comments and testimony that the rezoning of the Maple Avenue corridor should be more nuanced to achieve a better overall outcome. Specifically, I would recommend that the blanket proposed zoning of CRT 2.5 be replaced with a zoning mosaic that allows only 2-3 buildings at 150', with the others under that. And, the CR zones should be strictly limited to commercial density of C-0.25, C-0.5, or at most C-1.0. to bring in more of the commercial amenities that its current residents themselves have said they would like, while avoiding the possibility of purely commercial buildings.

I am not opposed to tall buildings on the current WAH tract, but I do think that the County must oversee thorough and realistic traffic, stormwater and school studies when and if any particular building project is proposed for the tract. From what I've read so far, development of the tract that controls run-off better than is currently the case could in fact greatly benefit Sligo Creek. I am disappointed that, under current County guidelines, only 12.5% of the new units there would be affordable. I hope the County will consider at least a 15% affordable housing requirement. Overall, I urge the County to consider an all-electric, renewable energy-based, green and mixed income social housing project there, similar to the one being planned for Hillandale.

Our County urgently needs more affordable housing. And, the imperative to very quickly reverse behaviors and patterns that contribute to the climate crisis point to the need for in-fill projects that curb any more suburban sprawl. The TPMMP is a good planning proposal in this regard and -- with the caveats noted above -- I strongly support it.

Thank you for your kind consideration and ongoing hard work.

--

Christine Pendzich

322 Boyd Avenue

Takoma Park, MD. 20912

Mobile: +1-301-526-6217



Sept. 5, 2023

**Dear Mayor Searcy and Members of the Takoma Park City Council,**

We write to oppose, and ask you to oppose, the racially and economically inequitable goal for Tree Canopy Coverage that is proposed for the Plan Area in the Public Hearing Draft of the Minor Master Plan Amendment. ***It directly conflicts with citywide Tree Canopy Goals set by the City Council in 2020.***

See that on p. 54 of the [Public Hearing Draft](#), it recommends a **Tree Canopy goal for the whole Plan Area of just 45 percent**: "Achieve 45 percent tree canopy coverage for the overall Plan Area on both public and private property." But that would be just slightly above the current tree-canopy coverage over the whole Plan Area, which is 43 percent, according to the draft Plan itself. (That includes the forested portion of the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park that is in the Plan Area. "Developed properties" in the Plan Area, overall, currently have tree-canopy coverage of just 26 percent, according to the Draft, p. 53. But note that the draft Plan's vision is just reaching 45 percent for the entire Plan Area.)

**In fact, such a goal would fall far behind the citywide goal the Council has set, [which is 60 percent](#).** (See p. 4 of the link highlighted here.) Even the City's 60-percent goal represents a retreat from the highest ever tree canopy recorded in Takoma Park, which was back in 2009, when citywide it was 61.2 percent. (That was apparently the first time it was systematically estimated.) The most recent estimate for **tree canopy, citywide, from 2020 data, was 57.8 percent**.

Why is the goal for this whole Plan area -- which the Planning Staff's [Appendix B on Demographics](#) indicates is majority residents of color and majority residents with low and modest incomes -- so unambitious? What also makes this tepid goal especially disturbing is that the draft Plan also emphasizes that extreme heat is Montgomery County's "number one climate threat," that trees play an important role in cooling the land under and around them, thereby reducing the heat-island effect, and that the heat-island effect is an issue in the Plan Area.

We urge you to review the Heat Island map on p. 54 of the draft Plan, which demonstrates why the Plan area needs to be among the City's priorities for growing and saving more trees -- not exempted from Takoma Park's citywide goal. The Plan itself states: "Shaded surfaces can have a UTCI [Universal Thermal Climate Index] difference as much as 10–30°F cooler than the unshaded impervious surface areas."

That underlines why the draft Plan's recommended goal is unfair. It would continue the inequitable access to trees' many benefits -- including, in addition to their cooling effects, stormwater management, support for physical and mental health, beauty, etc. -- for residents of parts of Ward 4 and Ward 5.

***Note that any agreement to allow a goal as low as 45 percent for this large area of the City also would require achieving much higher than 60 percent in some other area or areas of the City to meet the citywide goal.*** The last Tree Canopy Assessment, which found that five of the City's six wards had lost tree canopy since the first assessment in 2009, indicates what an unlikely scenario that is.

**We urge the Council to articulate its opposition to allowing such an inequitable tree-canopy goal and Council support, instead, for a tree-canopy goal for the entire Plan Area -- as for the entire City -- of 60 percent.**



For your convenience, we share below relevant text from the City's [most recent Tree Canopy Assessment](#) and from the City Council's [Resolution 2020-15](#), "Overarching Goals and Principles for Tree Canopy and Urban Forest Policies," introduced by Councilmember Dyballa:

- The most recent Tree Canopy Assessment, produced under contract by the University of Vermont, recommended: **"Integrate the tree canopy change assessment data into planning decisions at all levels of government** from individual park improvements, to comprehensive planning and zoning initiatives, to citywide ordinances." [Emphasis added.]
- It also specifically noted the importance, for equity goals, of prioritizing areas of lower canopy for preserving and planting trees: "Planting new trees in areas that have high summer temperatures and low tree canopy will enhance ecosystem services **and improve equity.**" [Emphasis added.]
- The City Council, in Resolution 2020-15, recognized that: "trees and the urban forest provide many benefits to the community, including improving water quality, reducing stormwater runoff, lowering summer temperatures, reducing energy use in buildings, removing air pollution, absorbing emissions that contribute to climate change, enhancing property values, improving human health, providing wildlife habitat, and contributing to the beauty of our neighborhoods, with many of these benefits correlated with the size and structure of the tree canopy . . ."
- Resolution 2020-15 also noted that the most recent citywide assessment "revealed differences in tree canopy cover across neighborhoods and wards, with more cover in areas with a higher percentage of single-family homes **and less in areas with more multi-family buildings and commercial areas, and the Council seeks to identify and address racial inequities in the distribution of the tree canopy; . . .**" [Emphasis added.]
- The resolution states that "renters and property owners should all have access to the benefits of tree canopy; . . ."
- The Resolution notes that "the Council declared a climate change emergency March 13, 2019, with Resolution 2019-15 and adopted a climate emergency response framework on March 4, 2020, with Resolution 2020-6: 2020 which includes as a priority 'continuing the City's commitment to protection and healthy growth of the urban forest and tree canopy, for both climate mitigation and resilience'; . . ."
- The first goal listed in Resolution 2020-15 – a major document based on Council planning that included 10 work sessions – was: **"increase tree canopy coverage in neighborhoods with less coverage**, using a participatory process for planning to create an equitably distributed tree canopy over time, and collaborating with members of those neighborhoods in the planning of tree plantings and in efforts to support and maintain existing mature trees." [Emphasis added.]
- Resolution 2020-15 sets as one of the "overarching principles" for the City's urban-forest management policies to try to meet the City's goals: **"a focus on addressing inequities in distribution of trees and tree benefits citywide**, through identifying specific locations for focused planting and attention, working with a range of members of the community including property owners, renters, and businesses, and others." [Emphasis added.]

Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to your response.



Sincerely,\*\*

**Nadine Bloch**, Ward Three, Member, Takoma Park Grants Review Committee, and Founding Member, Takoma Park Mobilization, Inc.; Takoma Park Young Activist Club Parent facilitator; Winner of 2009 Tak-tivist Azalea Award

**Philip Bogdonoff**, Ward Four (Oswego Avenue), Member of: Takoma Park Mobilization's Environment Committee, TP Mobilization's Climate Action Coffee, and Climate Coalition Montgomery County; Board President, Biodiversity for a Livable Climate

**Nancy Cohen**, Ward One, Former Member, Takoma Park Tree Commission

**Colleen Cordes**, Ward One, Former Chair, Takoma Park Tree Commission; Former Member, City of Takoma Park Committee on the Environment

**Carol Hotton**, Ward Four, Former Chair, Takoma Park Tree Commission

**Karen Elrich**, Ward Five, Founding Member of the Board (Spokes Council) of Takoma Park Mobilization, Inc., and of its Climate Action Coffee; Founding Member, the Takoma Park Silver Spring (TPSS) Co-op

**Robert Goo**, Ward Two, Member, Friends of Native Trees in Takoma (FONTT), and Co-Author of FONTT's First Edition, *Takoma Park Native Tree Selection Guide*.

**Kopal Jha, PhD**, Ward Two, Former Member, City of Takoma Park Committee on the Environment; Organizer, The 1,000 Trees Project

**Denise Jones**, Ward Five, Former Board Member, Essex House Tenants Association; Former Member, City of Takoma Park Recreation Committee; Former NAACP Parents' Council Representative at Takoma Park Elementary and Piney Branch Elementary Schools; Winner, 2019 Mentor Azalea Award; Former Member, MCPS Deputy Superintendent's Minority Achievement Advisory Council; Takoma Park small-business owner; Community Engagement Director, Carpe Diem Arts, Inc.

**Pamela Sparr**, Ward Six, Chair, Hillwood Manor Community Garden Planning Team.

**Nicolien van Schouwen**, Ward One (Maple Avenue), Former Member, Takoma Park Tree Commission

**\*\* Organizations listed for identification purposes only.**



## **Draft TPMMPA Is Not Racially or Economically Equitable**

Public Comment Related to the Sept. 14, 2023 Hearing  
from Colleen Cordes, Takoma Park Resident, Former Chair of the City's Tree Commission

Please address the following five urgent issues in the Draft TPMMPA:

- First, like many others, I urge you to remove the Maple Avenue and Municipal Districts from the Plan Area.

No persuasive rationale has been offered for their inclusion. Yet it poses the threat of displacement for current Maple residents. ***This may be the most affordable neighborhood in the entire County.*** It's also that rare affordable neighborhood rich in public services and amenities – good schools, *three* parks, bus-line access, a public library (which will provide even more free events and offerings after its current renovation is complete), and a wide range of other City services – all within walking distance.

About 500 of the 1,000 rental units along Maple Avenue in particular are NOT in deed-restricted buildings, according to Ira Kowler, Acting Director of Housing and Economic Development for the City. Upzoning will increase property values, providing pressure to tear down existing extremely affordable housing and replace it with more expensive housing or commercial development, which would displace current residents. ***To gamble with this neighborhood's future through careless upzoning would reinforce systemic racism.***

- Second, please oppose the racially and economically inequitable goal for Tree Canopy Cover that is proposed for the Plan Area. ***The proposed goal of 45 percent directly conflicts with the citywide Tree Canopy Goal -- set by the City Council in 2020 -- of 60 percent.***

A 45-percent goal is unfair – especially given the severity of the heat-island effect in the Plan Area, documented in the draft Plan. It would continue the inequitable access to trees' many benefits for residents of the Plan Area. Benefits include, in addition to cooling effects, stormwater management, support for physical and mental health, beauty, and more. The tree canopy cover in the Plan Area is now estimated to be about 43 percent. That's well below the current City average of about 58 percent.



[Appendix B](#) shows the Plan Area is majority residents of color and majority residents with low and modest incomes. The City Council has set a clear policy of prioritizing planting and preserving trees in areas with lower canopy to "improve equity." This is one such area. So *expanding* tree canopy should be prioritized in the Plan. Instead, it undermines Takoma Park's citywide goal. **Again, please avoid perpetuating systemic racism. Raise this goal to 60 percent.**

(See also the attached letter related to this issue addressed to the Takoma Park Mayor and City Council from 10 other City residents with relevant experience and myself. **That letter too urged the rejection of the inequitable tree-canopy goal proposed in the draft Plan, and instead endorsed a tree-canopy goal for the Plan Area – as for the entire City – of 60 percent.**)

- Third, the draft states that the Plan could yield as many as 3,500 additional housing units. However, it does not calculate how many new units each of the three Districts would contribute, under the proposed upzoning. That is obviously missing information that is critical for planning purposes. ***Please ask the Planning staff to prioritize doing that calculation and sharing it with you, the Takoma Park City Council, City staff, and the general public ASAP.***
- Fourth, the proposed upzoning unwisely allows redevelopment of almost all sites in the Plan Area for 100-percent commercial uses. The reason given: "To increase flexibility for future development." But such extreme flexibility looks like a plan . . . not to make a plan. For example, ***the old hospital site offers the prime opportunity for more urgently needed housing affordable to residents with middle, moderate, and low incomes. But the Plan allows it to be developed – by right – with no residential units at all.*** That major housing opportunity could be lost to totally commercial uses – like a new hotel. Even worse could happen on Maple: Displacement of many residents and a permanent actual loss in housing to some commercial use – again, for example, a hotel. Please, correct this glaring flaw in the Plan as well.
- Fifth, please instruct Planning Department staff to provide more details about its Community Engagement process for the Maple Avenue District. Neither the Draft Plan nor Appendix A on Community Engagement and Outreach reveal what questions residents of Maple and Lee Avenues were asked by the "planning team's" consultant, Everyday Canvassing, whether the consultant produced a



report on the results of its interviews with Maple and Lee residents, or – if such a report was produced – exactly what the report said.

**FYI, I have twice emailed the Planning Department for this information.** Both times, I was told that no more information on the Community Engagement process for the Maple Avenue District could be provided before the public comment period is over. ***I was also advised that I needed to ask the Planning Board to ask the staff for the information, so I'm making that request to you here.***

(FYI, here's the reason given by Larissa Klevan, Master Plan Team Supervisor, DownCounty, for the Planning Department, in an email: The Public Hearing Draft and the Appendix (on Community Engagement), she stated, "constitute the basis for the Planning Board's Public Hearing scheduled for September 14, 2023. In the interest of public transparency, to ensure that everyone has access to the same information on which to provide comment during the Public Hearing process, and to make sure we have a comprehensive list, we wait to supplement or add information until after we receive everyone's comments from the hearing." She added that the Board "may request" that the information I'm asking for here be made available for your public work sessions.)

***However, it violates both the spirit and the purpose of Community Engagement processes for the County Planning Department to be so reticent about the Community Engagement process – and its results!***

It's important, for public trust as well as for fully informed public participation, for the Planning Staff to openly share more details about both that process and its results with all stakeholders – ***including, of course, the residents of the Maple Avenue District who were interviewed.*** Everyone needed a more detailed report on the questions Maple and Lee Avenue residents were asked, and on the results, as reported by the consultant, long before the current important period for public comment closes on Sept. 30.

Just a tallying up by Planning Staff of how many times a topic was "mentioned in the interviews," combined with a categorizing by Planning Staff of those topics is insufficient, in terms of sharing results. It's also not clear if the tallying of topics



mixes up some volunteered by interviewees with others that were brought up by interviewers.

It's possible that the consultant's process was a kind of qualitative research, not intended by the consultant to generate quantifiable results. If so, please ask the Planning Department to let the Board and all stakeholders know that, and to share with us whatever qualitative report of results the consultant produced.

**Thank you so much for this opportunity to comment.**

Sincerely,

Colleen Cordes  
500 New York Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear Chair,

I am Dr. Vijayalakshmi Subramanian, a Pediatrician and my medical practice is located in the Washington Adventist medical complex at 7610 Carroll Ave, Suite 240, Takoma Park, MD 20912. I have been in this location for about 20 years. My Pediatric practice as well as many other doctors in the building serve Medicaid/Medicare patients in Takoma Park and the surrounding areas.

Convenient Parking is very important to all our practices - without adequate parking it will be a major problem for us to have viable practices. My understanding is that we we will lose all of our parking once the hospital relinquishes its land. At present I believe we are leasing the parking spots (in the front of our building) from the hospital and at some point this arrangement may end. I also understand that we might lose the patient parking spots on the side and back of our building. Our parking requirements for our building for all of the patients and staff is estimated to be around 150 - 200 spots.

I hope you will be able to assist us in securing the necessary parking for the patients and staff in our building.

Thanks and best regards,

Sincerely,

**Vijayalakshmi Subramanian, MD**  
7610 Carroll Ave, Ste 240  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



Dear Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board:

As a resident of Takoma Park, I am writing with regards to the proposed amendment to the Minor Master Plan (MMPA) for our community.

While I am certainly in favor of the redevelopment of the property formerly occupied by the Washington Adventist Hospital, I strongly urge that the portion of the plan that includes Maple Avenue, from Sligo Creek Parkway to East West Highway/Philadelphia Ave (and including, I believe, parts of Lee Avenue) be removed from the plan at this time. This section of Maple Ave. has long functioned very successfully in providing homes for low and moderate income residents. A number of the buildings are owned and managed by nonprofit corporations, and Takoma Park's rent control policy, with its emphasis on providing affordability to a large number of City residents, has enabled thousands of families to bring up their children in our community, attending nearby public schools, and contributing to the racial and economic diversity of the schools as well as the larger community. Upzoning this important stretch of affordable housing will open the door to the construction of high-rise buildings with a 5-year period of rentals at market rate, transforming a safe and welcoming neighborhood for residents on the lower end of the income scale into something very different. And while promises have been made that with a significant percentage of current units protected by ownership by nonprofits, there will be no significant displacement of lower income residents, this is only speculation. Better for the County to work with the City of Takoma Park strengthen existing housing stock, by investing in improvements to aging buildings.

The essential element of the MMPA is the redevelopment of the property formerly occupied by the Washington Adventist Hospital, and this makes sense, as long as care is taken to take into careful consideration issues like the potential size and scale of new buildings and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, the impact of increased traffic on Flower Avenue and other narrow streets, stormwater and other environmental factors including the proximity of Sligo Creek. Traffic, stormwater, and environmental studies must be undertaken before any development gets the green light to move forward.

An anecdote: Several months ago, at an information session sponsored by our city government about the very large development proposed for the area surrounding the Takoma metro station (all on the DC side), I posed a question to the developer about his firm's willingness to work with the community on the final design (scale and mass of the development). I provided an example, from some years ago, in which the developer of the Takoma Central building on Carroll Street (which includes housing and retail such as Bus Boys and Poets) agreed to scale back the height of his building. The developer response to my question: "When I come up with the right design, I see no reason to compromise." Please take great care in setting out the parameters for future development for Takoma Park.

Sincerely,

Susan P. Schreiber  
7323 Willow Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912    susanschreiber100@gmail.com    202 413-4794



Chairman Harris and Members Pedoeem, Bartley, Hedrick and Linden

I am as concerned about the process as I am about the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment, which I urge you to reject as drafted. My reasons follow.

1. The Planning Board staff's claim that the Amendment followed community outreach omits the critical fact that outreach was conducted before the essential elements of the proposed Amendment, i.e., zoning categories, building heights and floor to area ratios were made known. Other than the September 14, 2023 public hearing, I am unaware of any other outreach by the County.
2. The county staff's omission is compounded by the City of Takoma Park's abject failure to publish the essential elements of the proposed Amendment in the City Newsletter, instead boasting that the proposed Amendment "should realize" . . . "new and improved uses for existing spaces and places, a resilient community prepared for and able to adapt to, mitigate for and thrive in the face of climate change, and "a reconnected community with improved, safe and inviting ways to get to parks, shopping and home and a stronger sense of the past"; See *Takoma Park News* August 2023, Vol. 62. No.8.
3. There is virtually unanimous support for rezoning the former site of the Washington Adventist Hospital to allow construction of multifamily rental units. In fact, I know of only one slight departure by someone who wondered whether condominiums and townhouses are needed more than rental units.
4. Except for general references to creating housing, including moderately priced dwelling units, and transit centered development, there has been no meaningful justification offered for CRT, town center, zoning -- think downtown Silver Spring -- on the Hospital site.
5. The same can be said for both proposed zoning that permits (a) development up to 2 million square feet, according to the Washington Business Journal, on the Hospital site; and (b) buildings up to 150 high on Maple Avenue between Sligo Creek and Philadelphia Avenue -- a height which in other areas is allowed only for those buildings immediately adjacent to a mass transit station. Brookville, where there will be a Purple Line station, is one example.
6. Likewise, what is the reason to rezone beyond the boundary of the Hospital site? I lived on Maplewood Avenue for a number of years and in 1988 fought to preserve nonconforming rental units that Montgomery County eventually eliminated on Maplewood and throughout Takoma Park. Maplewood Avenue on the north side is lined by single family homes and four or so unit apartment buildings. On the south side, except for a few WAU buildings near Flower Avenue, there are no structures. The proposed Amendment would permit mixed residential and commercial buildings up to, if memory serves, 50 feet.
7. Is the public required to disprove the unspoken assumptions behind the proposed Amendment or is it the Planning Board staff's obligation to the public to explain how it reached its conclusions and why community needs are best served by their proposal rather than any other option?
8. Finally, I totally agree with Robert Dreher, whose position with the federal government involves land use decisions; Carl Elefante, former president of the American Institute of Architects. I support the positions taken by Community Equity Coalition, Community Vision Takoma and others who have opposed adoption of the proposed Amendment as drafted.

Please add these comments to those I submitted on September 14th concerning tenant displacement of tenants living on Maple Avenue and which referred to current displacement in Bethesda where six buildings (477 units) are (or already have been) razed.

Thank you.

Thomas J. Gagliardo



107 Hodges Lane  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
301 213 3431



Dear [MCP chair](#):

**I am writing to express many concerns about** the Takoma Park [Minor Master Plan Amendment](#) .

I hope you recognize the threat of broad-brush upzoning to our rent-stabilized housing and the threat of displacement, as well as the potential effects on the environment, traffic, and schools from this ill conceived amendment. Significant changes are needed to make the Plan Amendment acceptable. Please reject proposal as it stands; or at a minimum, limit the zoning changes to the old Adventist Hospital site alone at this time.

Sincerely,

**Nadine Bloch**  
**405 Beech Ave**  
**Takoma Park MD 20912**

--

'be careful with each other so we can be dangerous together'

Nadine's contact #s:

(+1)202-412-7611 mobile

What'sApp/Signal/Telegram: +1-202-412-7611

[www.BeautifulTrouble.org](http://www.BeautifulTrouble.org)

>> And check out our (re)newed **website** [BeautifulTrouble.org](http://BeautifulTrouble.org)  
& the rad [BeautifulTrouble CARD DECK](#)!!





Dear Chair of the Montgomery County Planning Board,

I watched the Sept. 14, 2023 hearing on the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment virtually, and I know you have received many comments and much feedback from residents and experts on this draft plan. I am not an expert in city planning, smart growth, zoning or any of these issues but I know they are important to the livability of a city. I am writing to you as a homeowner and landlord in Takoma Park regarding the MMPA. I have an interest in making sure we have affordable housing for existing and new residents, while also making sure that landlords and developers receive adequate compensation for their investment and maintaining their properties. I don't think these two objectives should be incompatible.

My husband and I have lived in Takoma Park near the Washington Adventist Hospital site for 26 years.. When we first moved here, I was struck by the small-town nature of the city, and the odd, seemingly misplaced high-rises on Maple Avenue. As I read the draft amendment, I could visualize development on the abandoned hospital site, but I don't understand why an already developed area on Maple Avenue was included to be further developed.

I am concerned about the proposed density and everything that flows from that

These are some questions I would like addressed, with hearings on the following specific issues:

- Please provide traffic and environmental impact studies for the specific MMPA site, given the two-lane roads in Takoma Park, which are not comparable to larger traffic capacity in Silver Spring and Wheaton.
- Please show the impact on the City of Takoma Park of absorbing a one-third increase in its population, and the facilities and public services required, e.g. where will the new residents park their cars?
- Please explain the need for the proposed high-density zoning and the effect on existing homes adjacent to the areas proposed for development. Is the scale of the proposed zoning appropriate to the areas involved and will it result in the affordable housing and "missing middle" we want developed.

I have attended community meetings, listened to experts on many of these topics and I hope that the Planning Board has received valuable input as well from experts, and will hold subsequent hearings on these important issues. As an aside, one of the most surprising details I heard at the Sept. 14 hearing was that the communication about the MMPA was advertised in the Washington Times, and not the The Washington Post. Not only is the Post the major newspaper in the Washington, D.C. area (DC, Maryland, Virginia) with a larger print circulation, but it is one of the top five daily newspapers (by circulation) in the country. If you had hoped to reach most Takoma Park residents, this was a miscalculation.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Ellen H. Ensel  
8319 Roanoke Ave. , #3  
Takoma Park, MD 20912



I thank you

I wanted to add more pics to my report to help better explain what I am talking about. The old saying a picture is worth 1000 words is true.

These pic show a field of an example of Carbon Sequestration the cheapest and fastest way to remove carbon from the air.

The other three pics by the Anacostia River show how very aggressive non native plants are choking the life of the big oak trees along the river.

These pics show where most of the creeks have merged that make up about 95% of the Anacostia River. North Brentwood has 30" levy's the water rushes so fast it was common to flood before the levy's. I've heard stories of Bladensburg water park the River would flood as far down Bladensburg road all the way to Eastern Ave.

Thank you for your time, I hope you can decide to give nature a chance to come back, you may recall when everything was shut down with covid and how nature started to rebound in with animals coming back, in just a short period of time. We just have ot give it a chance. .

William (Bill) Hernandez



Dear Madame and Sirs.

I am concerned about the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) that is under consideration for Takoma Park and that was the subject of the planning board meeting on Sept 14, 2023.

For the past 25 years, I have lived at 710 Erie Ave, right next to the old Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) which is part of the area under consideration for re-zoning. I am against many aspects of the proposed plan, especially the density and building heights being proposed for both the old WAH grounds and along Maple Ave. Among other concerns that my neighbors and I share, I am concerned particularly about the impact on our neighborhoods that will be caused by over-development resulting in unsustainable increases in population, buildings, and traffic; loss of affordable housing; and damage to the Sligo Creek environment. The allowable scale of the potential buildings will have an unwanted and negative impact on the availability of affordable housing, which we cherish in Takoma Park. Under no circumstances should the height of any new buildings on the hospital grounds be allowed to exceed 5 stories. Our is a small and diverse city that includes people from all walks of life, and we want to keep it that way; not because we oppose change *a priori* but because we oppose change that is detrimental to our lives and our environment. The development being proposed fails to consider the negative impacts on our community, our environment, and our inclusive way of life. I urgently request that you take seriously the input that you receive from the people, like myself, who live here and significantly revise the limit plan to be one that preserves our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily Shacter, Ph.D.

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710 Erie Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912

240-353-3649

[emmyshacter@gmail.com](mailto:emmyshacter@gmail.com)

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Member, Dumbledore's Army against Racism & Tyranny



With concern to the rezoning outside of the City of Takoma Park boundaries, but by providing attention to the county land that exists in close proximity to Flower Avenue Park, a subdivision which was developed by the Seventh Day Adventist and in agreement with the county during the 1920's, this MMPA action jeopardizes the stable existing neighborhood by not excuting studies on infrastructure stress, environment, traffic volume, traffic flow nor necessary traffic controls by county planning department. This plan was completely drawn without survey or advised by the majority, if any, of property owners or residents in this said subdivision.

The impact to this subdivision, Flower Avenue Park, with the plan's significantly taller, multi-storied structures will greatly distract from the sereve location of the Cecil-Davis Family Cemetery located on adjacent block to the plan's rezoning on Greenwood Avenue and Maplewood Avenue as defined and recorded in county records.

Please take this information into account when deciding to go forward with said plan.

Curreen owners and caretakers  
of 7911 Cecil-Davis Family Cemetery

Thomas M. Welsh  
Charles W. Walton

Mailing Adress 901 Prospect Street  
Takoma Park, Md 20912

Mike Welsh  
mwkinkoranj@aol.com



Dear Chairman Harris and Board members,

We live on Erie Ave right next to the old WAH hospital which is part of the area considered for re-zoning. We are concerned about the minor master plan amendment for Takoma Park that was the subject of the planning board meeting on Sept 14, 2023.

We are *against* the density and height proposed for the old hospital area, as well as Maple Ave. We are deeply concerned about affordable housing, environmental impacts and the scale of the potential buildings and the unique character of our small and diverse city. Please reduce the height to no more than 5 stories on the hospital grounds.

sincerely,  
Michael Tabor  
Esther Siegel  
706 Erie Ave.



Members of the Planning Board:

Re: The **Plan's Public Hearing date of Sept. 14, 2023.**

From: **Kathy and Steve Breckbill**  
**7104 Woodland Ave.**  
**Takoma Park, Md 20912**

[breckbills@gmail.com](mailto:breckbills@gmail.com)

We have been residents of Takoma Park for over 40 years. We have seen many changes over those years. Many have been improvements, but not all. While we are not opposed to development, we are very concerned that the proposed Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment as written, will lead to changes in the City that have not been thoroughly vetted for beneficial results.

Below are some of our personal concerns.

This plan does not protect the very diverse residents on Maple Ave and the surrounding streets. **The proposed zoning increases property values and incentivizes higher rent development.** It is heartbreaking when our neighbors lose their homes! They may lose the rent control protection the City has been so good at maintaining. Language must be included to stop any action that would cause a resident to be moved from their home. This diverse population is something we are all proud of.

It also worries me that this plan does not consider the very fragile storm water situation and potential flood conditions that are already problems for Maple Ave and the Sligo Creek. The Creek is vulnerable. Steve has reported raw sewage on a number of occasions. You need only look at the increased costs of building the City Municipal Building and new Library on a flood plain to understand how important sufficient Environmental Review is. There must be Language to guarantee that any development meets the requirements of Appendix E: Policies and Regulation and of the 2019 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. Language must be included to require EPA Environmental Review.

The City is already burdened by the existing traffic overload on Maple Ave, Philadelphia Ave and all the other streets that connect to that area. The MMPA doesn't recognize the ongoing work of assessing traffic problems and looking for solutions on Maple Ave. Language must be included to require an extensive traffic study.

Our concerns are not even the tip of the iceberg. Paul Chrostowski, Carl Elefante, Bill Mallari, and Elaine Lamirande, President, Friends of Sligo Creek ([president@fosc.org](mailto:president@fosc.org)) and others, are residents with expertise and years of experience. They are far more knowledgeable than I and have provided you with information based on their actual experience and training. They have the additional qualification of living here and experiencing real time problems that have affected the area in question. Take advantage of their generosity and listen to them before you act.

Sincerely,  
Kathy and Steve Breckbill



September 27, 2023

To the Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board:

We are submitting comments regarding the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment.

My wife and I are residents of the Sligo Park Hills neighborhood, which is adjacent to the city of Takoma Park. We live across Sligo Creek from the Adventist Hospital site.

I've been following the planning process for several years. A few things are becoming clear:

1. Washington Adventist University intends to maximize their income when repurposing the old Adventist Hospital site, and I expect the County will accede to their intentions.
2. The residents of the Maple Avenue apartments are a community at risk.

Here are our thoughts and recommendations:

- WAU's greatest income would accrue from putting luxury high-rise condominiums on the hospital site. We know that many affluent people want to move to close-in suburbs like Takoma Park. There is a strong market for this sort of thing.
- Luxury condominiums are attractive to the power-brokers who influence the planning process. Governments can increase their tax base. Developers can make big money. Candidates can receive seductive donations from developers. This is why I believe the Planning Board and the County Council will enable WAU to maximize construction of luxury housing on the hospital site.
- Our message is simple: **Don't sell out the neighborhood without extracting maximum concessions from WAU and their developers.**
  - Require that the Sligo Creek watershed will not only be protected from getting worse, but that improvements must be included along with the new construction: green space, native trees, ground cover, stormwater management, energy-efficient buildings, etc.
  - Require that the developers subsidize the cost of significant improvements to public transportation (as well as bicycle and pedestrian routes) from the Adventist site up Maple Avenue to the Takoma Park Metro. This is only way to mitigate the increased number of vehicles that will inevitably accompany the new buildings.
  - Require that public amenities be included in the plan: retail (such as a fresh food outlet), public spaces, and community services.
  - Do not let developers make promises for which they cannot be held accountable afterwards, with severe financial and civil penalties if they don't follow through.

The second part of our comments concerns Maple Avenue. Montgomery County, under the guise of enabling improvements to the affordable housing along Maple Avenue, is on the verge of creating conditions which will replace this affordable housing with luxury condos and apartments.



- The foolhardy plan to upzone the Maple Avenue corridor will result in the same process we've seen repeatedly in this area over the generations, in which predatory developers gain the trust of local governments, and use zoning changes to enable low-cost housing (which are the cheapest properties) to be replaced by high-cost housing.
- **Do not institute upzoning along Maple Avenue.** The residents of this area onto this deception.
- Our thoughts are simple: you must use this opportunity to improve the circumstances for those who live there now, not lay the groundwork for pushing them out. This is a unique area which deserves to be protected and enhanced, not supplanted by the gentrification process you will kick-start otherwise. This area needs more public spaces, public transportation, and retail. It does not need to be completely replaced by upzoned, expensive housing. Those affluent folks who want to move here, let them buy a new property on the Adventist site instead (see above).

Many area residents naively believe that this TP-MMPA process is about securing affordable housing and providing more middle-income housing. As we see it, the most likely outcome of the current plan is an expansion of high-end housing at the expense of all other options.

The residents of this larger community are paying attention, and we will not tolerate sloppy, short-sighted, or deceptive planning to turn Maple Avenue into downtown Bethesda.

In summary: The Planning Board (and the County Council) are the means by which our government represents my wife and I. We need you to serve as a check on the otherwise limitless scope, demands, and predation of property developers. In other words, you are our representatives in the negotiation for appropriate housing options in this neighborhood. We expect, and demand, that you will stand up for reasonable new construction where appropriate (the Adventist site) and that you stand against unreasonable new construction where inappropriate (Maple Avenue).

Sincerely,

David Heller and Barbara Drazin

14 Sunnyside Road, Silver Spring MD 20910. [dn.heller@verizon.net](mailto:dn.heller@verizon.net). [bar.drazin@verizon.net](mailto:bar.drazin@verizon.net)

Copies of this email will be sent to our Councilmember Kate Stewart, and to Council President Evan Glass