

Strategies that offer the option to increase population density are favorable to social needs, infrastructure needs, and environmental preservation. Further building up residential areas can avoid converting additional natural areas and farmland that perform important environmental services, such as storm water runoff, tree canopy that reduces temperatures, etc. It is a more efficient use of space, increasing the tax base per square mile benefiting our public amenities and services which are facing ever increasing costs. Denser residential areas often are/become more walkable, which can facilitate more physical activity and opportunities for residents to connect with each other, both critical to our wellbeing.

Single family housing is enjoyable, but only to an increasingly small part of our community, and is not a sustainable housing model in a world with 8.2 billion people and a projected 9.6 billion by 2050. I would rather us delay achieving the housing development plans in the County's master plan and see us better use the space we are currently occupying.

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Brad Respondek - SILVER SPRING, 20906

As a resident of Montgomery County that travels throughout the county frequently, I would ask that the Council please take the time to examine the infrastructure of the county with actual boots on ground audits before moving forward with the AHSI. Traffic congestion throughout the county is a constant occurrence yet the roads are not being well maintained. Instead of proper repairs and/or replacements, the roads have received nothing more than a thin coat of asphalt that is already cracking and crumbling. This less than adequate treatment has only served to put more debris on the roads and most of the "repaired" sections are back to their cracked and hole-covered states. With regard to our public schools, there have been new schools constructed to meet the increased population needs, but the schools continue to be ranked quite low for the state as a whole. Investing in more teachers and staff, streamlining the bureaucracy within the MCPS central office to help parents and families navigate and utilize the various educational services available to their children, increasing teacher pay, and increasing the school bus fleet as well as the number of maintenance personnel for the fleet; these are all infrastructure investments that will significantly improve the lives of the citizens of Montgomery County. Rezoning the county, building a bunch of new homes/apartments without first physically assessing the existing infrastructure of the county to see if it can even support such changes, is a recipe for disaster. If the infrastructure is not built up in preparation for these proposed changes, then the county will forever be playing catch-up, which will be far more expensive for years to come. However, if the Council paused their AHSI and used this time to assess, plan, and execute any needed infrastructure changes to support AHSI in the future, it would cost the county considerably less than the current plan to charge forward without first assessing the County's current status.

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Joanna Pratt - Rockville, 20852

Our family has lived in the single family home neighborhoods of Old Farm and Luxmanor (20852) continuously since the 1960s. Our family business has employed dozens of Montgomery County residents for decades in well-paid jobs. Our neighborhood has already become overcrowded with so many lots being subdivided. If multi-unit housing is allowed, it will become too crowded and we will likely relocate outside the county to a new single family neighborhood in Northern Virginia. We will take our business with us and the many well-paid jobs it creates. Many of our neighbors are also business owners who will do the same thing. They are already discussing it. There are plenty of places, like the old White Flint Mall site and many undeveloped rural areas, that would benefit from having new homes. There is no need to destroy hundred year old neighborhood communities and reduce the county's tax revenues.

Susan Kahn - Chevy Chase, 20815

As a resident of the Village of Martin's Additions in Chevy Chase, MD, I have a question for the Montgomery County Council: why don't you work with residents across the county to create a plan for Affordable Housing? The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative is deceptive as it is cloaked in the guise of helping to alleviate the affordable housing crisis while in practice creating a giveaway for for-profit developers with no requirements for affordable housing.

I oppose this Initiative which does a bait and switch by saying we have an affordable housing crisis but coming up with an Attainable Housing plan that lacks studies of local impacts. They'll profit on building high income housing on prime real estate while residents bear the infrastructure costs and environmental impact. The costs for better water and sewer lines, schools, roads and drainage from more run-off will be borne by residents whose taxes will skyrocket and by municipalities that may go bankrupt in the process.

This plan breaks the bonds of neighbor to neighbor by reducing our input about what happens in our areas. Why not work with county residents to create a genuine plan for affordable housing?

Most importantly, it is unclear that the Council and Planning Commission have taken account of the actual need for effective oversight and supervision that would ensure plans by developers are followed through on, to abide by the Planning Commission's 'pattern book' of options the developers should match in their building designs. If the experience of county residents regarding cell antenna placement in residential areas is any guide, it is clear that the Planning Commission and Council are in over their head. They have been incapable for 13 years and counting of removing a cell antenna that was installed without a permit on Brickyard Rd. in Potomac, MD, which neighbor Vicky Huo has testified about countless times before the Council. Her testimony about her experience and numerous other examples of the County's broken process for review and oversight of cell towers in residential areas may be viewed: <https://techwisemocomd.org/mocos-broken-process-for-review-and-oversight-of-cell-towers/>

It is clear that the goal of affordable housing is not only admirable but essential. Let's go about developing a plan for affordable housing that's informed by actual studies of local impact and that allows neighbors and municipalities a seat at the table instead of cutting them out of the process.

The Planning Commission and the Council have a track record of inadequate oversight and supervision of zoning and building issues and should not allow developers to steer 'by right' what happens in our residential areas. Ongoing input and supervision from the taxpaying residents of our county and the municipalities within our county are essential. Residents are here to provide input and to help develop an effective Affordable Housing Plan with you.

Peter Kahn - Chevy Chase, 20815

To the County Council:

I believe this proposal for "attainable" housing in established neighborhoods is at this stage inadequately developed. Until it is radically improved, I must strongly oppose the proposal.

This proposal has nothing whatever to do with "affordable" housing, and it's emphasis on "attainable" housing has every appearance of being a sham. There is no requirement in the proposed legislation for maximum resident income, or for maximum pricing or rentals, nor does it contain any other provision that would work to guarantee that the housing in question would be provided to persons currently unable to afford housing in the County.

Since there is no such protection, we have to ask what kind of housing would result from this measure. In my neighborhood, we have seen older historic homes torn down to make way for tightly packed townhomes that fill every inch of the available land and that each sell for vastly higher prices than the original house that was torn down. I am certainly suspicious that this is exactly what would result in Bethesda, Chevy Chase, and other areas in the close-in County. After all, if multiple units can be built where a single home stands now, there is clearly a profit to be made by buying that land and building those units -- especially when they do not need to be "affordable" units.

So who benefits? This measure appears likely to result in high-income, high-priced units being built on this land. Every house that comes on the market will, in all likelihood, be bought by developers eager to make a quick buck, and turned into multiple units selling at the highest prices the market can bear -- prices that will certainly not be "attainable" by the "missing Middle."

In doing so, they will devastate this community and others across the County. Communities that have lasted for generations, neighborhoods that support warm, inclusive, stable communities will be gone, to be replaced by a lot of fancy housing units, for a purpose that no one has been able to explain.

After all, who among us would choose to stay? Since there is no obligation for the developers to bear the costs of the sewer, water, and street improvements that would be needed, or to provide the additional school and transit capacity, much of those costs would fall on the local towns and their taxpayers. I anticipate large increases in our property taxes, to subsidize the developers and their "attainable" units. The town I live in would be bankrupted by those new expenses, and current residents will rebel at the necessary increases in taxes. Many will choose to leave. This is a formula for destroying well-established, well-functioning communities.

So until the County Council and its Planning Department can figure out ways to ensure "attainable" housing is not just a massive gift to the developer community; and until they have carefully crafted and carefully considered plans for the necessary improvements in infrastructure, parking, schools, transit, and demonstrated a willingness to pay the very substantial costs those improvements would imply, I cannot possibly see how this proposal makes sense.

I urge the County Council to send this proposal back to the drawing board for much more careful development, to ensure that the many towns and neighborhoods in the priority areas will not be devastated by an inadequately considered zoning change. Until those modifications are fully developed, considered, and demonstrated to achieve better housing for "the missing Middle" without destroying existing neighborhoods, I will oppose this measure.

Thank you.

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Tim Vogel - Bethesda, 20817

ONLY DEVELOPERS AND BUILDERS WOULD THRIVE UNDER THE ATTAINABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES PLAN

An Arbitrary and Capricious Misuse of Government Power in an Undemocratic Way

As a member of the Kenwood Park Community Association (KPCA), I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies plan being considered in connection with Thrive Montgomery 2050. KPCA supports pragmatic and rational efforts to expand access to attainable housing. However, the plan being considered does nothing of the sort. Instead, as discussed below, the plan reflects a process that disregards relevant facts and shockingly ignores the needs of our children for adequate schooling and for safety crossing overcrowded streets.

Luxury multi-family units, which are effectively encouraged by the plan, obviously do not expand access to attainable housing. The plan would permit duplexes, triplexes, and quadraplexes to be built throughout broad swaths of the County. Despite this being permitted in the name of attainable housing, the plan does not contain anything to ensure attainability. Inevitably, if a builder has a choice between building a luxury quadraplex or low-cost housing, the choice is obvious. The purchase price for the builder is the same either way, so why wouldn't the builder want to make more money rather than less?

No study of how to make housing attainable. This is a glaring defect in the process. None of the hundreds of pages of documents associated with the plan address how to make the multiplexes attainable. The Planning Board does not address this issue in any way.

No transparency regarding the role of builders in creating this plan. We are not against builders being paid for their work. But we would appreciate transparency. What role did builders and developers have in the preparation of this plan? The residents of Montgomery County have a right to know.

No interest in the democratic process. Why isn't this radical plan being put to a vote of the residents of Montgomery County? The idea of fundamentally changing an entire County without any indication of public support is strikingly undemocratic.

There is a lack of reliable data on new housing starts in Montgomery County. The County has used inaccurate data as the basis for recommending new housing that is needed. In fact, the County has been ridiculed publicly for its inaccurate records on this issue. See <https://montgomeryperspective.com/2024/08/07/will-we-ever-know-whether-we-are-building-enough-housing/> The question of how much additional housing is needed must be clarified before legislating how much additional housing is necessary for the County.

An Arlington County, VA circuit judge recently struck down a county policy that eliminated single family-only zoning in that county due to inadequate study of potential impacts of allowing town homes and small condo buildings in areas not initially planned for them. No study has been done on the effect of the housing plan on school capacity. Our children could be jammed into classes that are perhaps twice as large, and there is no plan to address that.

The Planning Board devoted one vague sentence to this issue in its 2024 report: "The Planning Board also believes that impacts of schools for the house-scaled products will be de minimis." That is the entire discussion of this issue, which is shockingly negligent, with no study cited for this unfounded belief.

No study has been done on the effect of doubling or quadrupling the population of neighborhoods with narrow roads and on-street parking. With this massive increase in traffic, will our children be safe crossing streets? Will we need to widen streets? If so, who pays for that? Will we need public parking areas to be built? Who would pay for that?

The Planning Board openly ignores the parking issue. The Planning Board states: "Creating housing with reduced parking in these areas will attract households with less of a reliance on personal automobiles." This is nonsensical since many neighborhoods, like Kenwood Park, effectively need cars. Any cursory study of the area would reveal that.

The Planning Board openly ignores the roads issue. The Planning Board simply states: "The Planning Board believes the demands on infrastructure can be addressed through existing policies." In other words, the Planning Board could not be bothered to study the issue. No study was made of ways to convert empty office space into attainable housing. We have underused commercial real estate, and we have a housing shortage. Why isn't the first step in this process to explore conversions of commercial real estate to housing? If office space is being converted, the parking and traffic issues will have already been addressed, unlike the current plan, which massively increases the traffic and parking needs of countless neighborhoods.

The Planning Board never even mentions this issue. This is an issue being discussed widely across the country, and it is not even mentioned in the Planning Board's report.

No study has been done to determine which neighborhoods have the best access to the most effective public transportation. Many individuals seeking housing need effective access to public transportation and to nearby commercial establishments, where they can work and shop. The plan ignores these points by including virtually all neighborhoods, including many without easy access to the Metro or commercial establishments, like Kenwood Park.

The utilities for Kenwood Park (water, gas, electric) are designed for the current density. Currently, WSSC is laying new water pipes to meet the needs of the neighborhood, and these will not be adequate if the density is doubled.

No study has been done of the environmental effects of the plan. As County Executive Marc Elrich has said: the plan "does not address the environmental consequences of increased land coverage from the larger building footprints of higher density development, resulting in increased imperviousness, stormwater runoff, and loss of tree cover."

The Planning Board does not even address this issue.

In summary, the proposed plan will create a building boom of luxury multi-family units in single family zoned neighborhoods that will not create attainable housing. The building boom will result in over-crowded schools, unsafe streets for pedestrians due to a dramatic increase in on-street parking, increased traffic on area roads and degradation of the environment. The proposed plan benefits developers and is detrimental to current tax-paying residents of single-family zoned neighborhoods.

645	<p>F Bayan - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>This initiative is simply unacceptable to homeowners in Kenwood Park. Adding the option to build units is simply a giveaway to developers with no plan behind it in terms of infrastructure be it parking, school, traffic congestion, noise, home value, utilities, etc. We purchased homes in this neighborhood because of its nature as single family housing and all the attributes of such a neighborhood. Rezoning is effectively a breach of contract on the part of the council. I am strongly opposed to this initiative and will make sure I organize against it in terms of voting against council members that support it.</p>
646	<p>F Bayan - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>This initiative is simply unacceptable to homeowners in Kenwood Park. Adding the option to build units is simply a giveaway to developers with no plan behind it in terms of infrastructure be it parking, school, traffic congestion, noise, home value, utilities, etc. We purchased homes in this neighborhood because of its nature as single family housing and all the attributes of such a neighborhood. Rezoning is effectively a breach of contract on the part of the council. I am strongly opposed to this initiative and will make sure I organize against it in terms of voting against council members that support it.</p>
647	<p>Alisa Diouf - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>Please do NOT allow this initiative to go through. It will NOT make housing more affordable as intended. It will just crowd the area to the sole benefit of builders. It's a terrible idea and as a Kenwood Park homeowner, I reject this proposal.</p>
648	<p>Alex Weintraub - Rockville, 20850</p> <p>As a long-time resident of the County, I share the concerns voiced by Mark Elrich on the October 4th Message from the County Executive.</p> <p>Many of the roads currently in place in residential areas, zoned R-60 and even R-90 do not provide adequate parking, as is. A duplex or a triplex needs to assume that each partition would have a minimum of 2 cars, given a household is made up of at least 2 full-time working individuals.</p>

Flooding and nuisance runoff is already at an all-time high and climate change has cemented that it will only get worse. An allowance to build out more of a given property and increase the ratio of impervious to pervious ground will exacerbate this and lead to an increase in civil disputes and likewise may make properties by sensitive floodplains cost-prohibitively unlivable.

The idea that the price of these homes will be left to the free market is set up for failure to provide housing the communities which need it most. There are already plenty of 500K+ single family lots, town homes, and apartments available on the market. There are practically none below 300k, however. It is nearly impossible for example to find an affordable place to live in the County as a single individual, even with a respectable income.

This initiative has the structure of a beautiful facade - brightly painted but with no substance. Please wait until the appropriate studies have been accomplished and only move forward if those studies show a net positive for the working class, not for the pocket lining of developers.

649 **Misty Belles - Chevy Chase, 0815**

I am strong opposed to rezoning from single-family homes to multifamily. This proposal has not be carefully vetted and researched, and there appears to be no regard for how it impacts neighborhoods, traffic (which is already dangerous in this neighborhood and has yet to be corrected despite repeated pleas to the county since 2015) or schools. This is not about affordable or even attainable housing; it's simply a scheme by developers to make more money. We've seen this at Chevy Chase Lake, where the Purple Line was shoved down residents' throats for the sake of development, attainable housing and to reduce traffic, none of which has been realized. Instead, it is a bloated, delayed eyesore that no one actually voted for. Rezoning to add multifamily units in single home spaces will do exactly the same: line developers' pockets, while disregarding the needs of taxpayers currently residing in the area.

650 **Jonathan Ryder - TAKOMA PARK, 20912**

To the Members of the Montgomery County Council,

Please introduce the Attainable Housing Strategies legislation now! The outcomes of this initiative would help ease the current housing crisis facing the county. It may not be perfect, but no legislation will be. Get this initiative on the books!

651 **Paniporn Phiansunthon - Silver Spring, 20901**

Looking at the "Undersized lot study: A 5,000 sf lot in R-60 Zone", I don't see where residents would park their cars. A typical single-family home has 1-4 cars, and none of the Duplex, Triplex, Quadplex proposed layouts appear to take parking space into account.

As it is, residents in single-family homes in some neighborhoods are already parking half of their car on to the sidewalk just to make enough room for cars to pass on the street. This becomes an even bigger issue where school traffic is already so tight; some parents picking up their children think nothing of parking in front of a fire hydrant, blocking residents' driveways, and even parking in someone's driveway.

Most of us who finally bought a single-family home, were able to do so from living in passable-quality apartments. If you deplete the amount of single-family homes available for those who dream of living in one and actually owning the property it is on, please do not call what you are proposing "attainable" housing while continually raising property taxes on those who worked hard to achieve their dream home.

652

Beth Elzer - Silver Spring, 20902

To the Members of the Montgomery County Council:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies (AHS) initiative, which proposes rezoning 82% of the County's single-family detached homes to allow higher-density housing.

Having lived in cities where similar rezonings have occurred, I've seen how they can negatively impact neighborhoods that were never designed for multifamily dwellings. Such changes often lead to overcrowded streets, parking issues, and declining property maintenance, which ultimately reduce the quality of life in these areas.

Increasing zoning density in single-family neighborhoods fundamentally alters their character. Homes and communities designed for single-family living become congested and less appealing. Property upkeep frequently declines, particularly when investors and absentee landlords prioritize profit over maintenance. Carving up single-family homes into multifamily units is often poorly designed and executed due to wanting to get the most profit from the conversion, resulting in overpriced, undesirable living spaces that further detract from the area's charm and appeal.

As more multifamily housing is introduced, the value of surrounding homes typically drops. Increased density attracts speculators and absentee owners who neglect maintenance or tear down homes for denser housing types. This creates an atmosphere where rental prices rise and property values fall, making neighborhoods less desirable for homeowners and renters alike.

Higher density reduces neighborhood stability, community, and personal interaction. Additionally, streets and parking arrangements designed for single-family homes will become significantly congested by the addition of more cars. Homeowners may be forced to add concrete parking spaces/pads, thereby reducing green space and damaging the aesthetics of the neighborhood. Narrow driveways and limited parking will lead to more cars clogging already congested streets.

Older neighborhoods were not built to handle the strain of additional families, leading to potential problems with outdated drainage and infrastructure. In addition, this proposal will likely result in a significant increase in the number of residents within existing school zones, placing additional strain on an already overburdened school system.

The AHS initiative, as currently presented, will harm the character, infrastructure, and property values of Montgomery County's neighborhoods. I urge the Council to firmly reject this proposal and explore alternative strategies that support growth while preserving the quality of life for current residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Beth Elzer

Martyn Green - Silver Spring, 20902

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I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies (AHS) initiative, which seeks to rezone 82% of the County's single-family homes for higher-density housing.

Having witnessed similar rezonings in other cities, I've seen how such changes can fundamentally disrupt communities that were never intended for multifamily development. These shifts often result in overcrowded streets, parking shortages, and neglected properties—leading to a decline in quality of life for residents.

Rezoning single-family neighborhoods to allow for higher density fundamentally alters the character of these areas. What were once quiet, well-maintained neighborhoods become congested, with properties that are poorly maintained or redeveloped for profit, leaving behind unattractive, overpriced housing. Property values in surrounding areas tend to drop, as more rental units create instability and attract absentee landlords.

The increased density also leads to less community engagement, as fewer long-term residents remain in the area. Additionally, streets and infrastructure designed for single-family homes cannot easily support the additional burden of increased cars and residents. Homeowners may be forced to add parking pads, reducing green space and damaging the neighborhood's aesthetic.

Lastly, adding more families to existing school zones will place even greater strain on an already stressed education system, potentially leading to overcrowded classrooms and fewer resources for students.

In conclusion, I believe the AHS initiative, as currently proposed, will harm the character, livability, and property values of our communities. I urge you to reject this plan and consider alternatives that promote smart, sustainable growth without undermining the quality of life in Montgomery County.

Thank you for your attention.

Martyn Green

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William Bolgiano - Silver Spring, 20910

I fully support the attainable housing strategies. However, in my mind this is only a tiny fraction of what needs to be done. My family grew up here but I am the only one of my siblings that can afford to live comfortably in MoCo. If MoCo can't go back to being a place normal people can afford to live on teacher or federal government salaries, it will become truly unrecognizable.

655

Joan Johnson - Silver Spring, 20901

Please ensure that any newly zoned duplexes and multiplexes are created in a way that ensures affordable housing for Montgomery County residents. In particular, ensuring that the problems Senator Jeff Merkley tries to address with the End Hedge Fund Control of American Homes Act are addressed.

I would suggest making property taxes for any newly zoned duplex (or multiplex) triple the going rate UNLESS the owner has a homestead exemption on the property. An exemption might be made for Montgomery county residents who rent a small number of these (say less than 4) or rent them at affordable rates. The extra tax money should go pay for more affordable housing in the area and serve as a deterrent to private equity ownership and long-term control.

Home ownership is a key to financial security, yet this county lacks starter homes. While building new million-dollar units helps overall, it fails to address the true problem.

Housing should be affordable for those who live here, and if done right, this could help immensely. If implemented incorrectly, it may turn us even more into a place where only the wealthy can own.

656

Alicia Fishbein - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Council Members,

As a Montgomery County resident and home owner, I write to urge you to VOTE NO on the "Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board Recommendations."

After carefully reading the Planning Board's recommendations and attending a listening session, I believe it is outrageous that a proposal of such sweeping scale and with such scanty research and analysis behind it is being considered outside of the Master Plan or other democratic decision making process. I have lost trust and faith in the Council, its members, and president Friedson due to their introduction of these recommendations to Montgomery County residents in this manner.

I find it disingenuous that the proposal has disguised itself as an affordable housing initiative, while at the same time noting that the so-called "attainable" housing it wishes to create is fully market driven. There is no evidence that this approach will result in anything other than profits for developers and further stress on the already maxed out infrastructure in our neighborhoods. Adoption of the recommendations would be disastrous in terms of quality of life (parking, traffic, pedestrian safety, overcrowded schools, sewage, water control, etc) in the Chevy Chase "major growth corridor" where my family makes our home.

Furthermore, to apply a blanket policy across the diverse communities that comprise Montgomery County is crude and irresponsible. Here in the Chevy Chase Village historic district, where for decades residents have carefully stewarded the preservation of the neighborhood's historic and architectural significance, the proposal would destroy not only the fabric of the neighborhood but also a vital part of Montgomery County's history. The AHS recommendations directly conflict with the County's Historic Preservation Commission and Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code. At a minimum, there should be no rezoning in historic districts.

Councilmembers, I urge you to repair the trust you have broken and truly listen to the voices of your constituents. VOTE NO on the AHSI recommendations.

Sincerely,

Alicia Volk Fishbein
Professor of Art History, University of Maryland
[REDACTED] Chevy Chase, MD

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Jane Lyons-Raeder - Silver Spring, 20910

I strongly support the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative and urge the County Council to introduce a zoning text amendment (or amendments) as soon as possible.

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Robert Gallagher - Kensington, 20895

As a resident of the Parkwood community I wanted to inform the County Council about the amount of traffic that we see on a daily basis especially now that Beach Drive is closed on Fridays and weekends. The traffic is not only constant throughout the course of any given day but also consistently in excess of the posted speed limit (25 mph). Some of the worst speed offenders are the public school bus drivers. Also, many of the existing dwellings do not have off street parking. So we have multiple cars parked on the street sides with high speed busses and cars trying to navigate. With the addition of multi dwelling units it would only make the traffic, and parking, situations worse. The current plan does not address these issues and has many other flaws as pointed out by our County Executive in a recent blog posting.

659

Jo Ann Cruz - Chevy Chase, 20815-5340

The County has not yet responded to the need for affordable housing by providing more ancillary studio apartments. When this proposal was before the County Council those against it argued that it would create parking problems. Is this why the proposal failed? How much more would duplexes and quadplexes cause parking problems. We currently do not have sufficient street and driveway parking in our single-family neighborhoods.

Finally, if there is already planned additional housing coming on line, why rezone everything, especially in neighborhoods where the new apartments will not be affordable, such as in Potomac. Is the County Council going to put in real rent controls? Lower property taxes? Force developers to build inexpensive housing?

	<p>This is a problem that goes way back. I urged Ike Leggett to deal with it years ago, and all that I saw was developers paying a fee in lieu for not setting aside affordable housing in their various housing projects.</p>
660	<p>Andres Engel - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>I am against the initiative as there are no good answers on how the council plans to tackle additional parking needs (aside from already crowded street parking), load on utilities to serve the additional population density, higher number of kids in schools, and truly affordable housing created vs. very expensive duplex and triplex selling at high \$ per sq. ft. I would rather the council focuses on converting already existing infrastructure such as under utilized commercial buildings into residential, affordable housing options.</p>
661	<p>Sally Robinson - Rockville, 20850</p> <p>I oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. It is unwise to override the county's Master Plans without due process and diligence, without analyzing the social, environmental and infrastructure impacts that these changes will certainly bring about.</p>
662	<p>Barbara Lyman-Varangis - Bethesda, 20814</p> <p>As a homeowner in Bethesda I am extremely concerned about changes in residential zoning that have not been adequately studied for environmental and infrastructure impacts. In the past 30 years I have watched the town I live in grow dramatically. Much of the change has improved the livability of Bethesda. New buildings are more visually appealing, there seems to be more thoughtful use of pedestrian a green/park spaces and safe bike lanes. Unfortunately, there seems to have been little to no consideration for the increased traffic congestion. It generally takes 20 minutes to drive the one mile from the Metro station to our home on a weekday evening. The traffic patterns that worked years ago now create awkward and dangerous traffic backups. I am also concerned about recent reports that our outstanding public schools are struggling to maintain their top performance rankings.</p> <p>I would expect any changes in zoning would be targeting growth that maintains the quality of life while targeting additional housing that is affordable across a broad economic spectrum. We don't need rezoning that simply offers lucrative investment opportunities for developers of high end properties.</p> <p>Finally, the impact on the environment and infrastructure should be directly linked to the developers who are reaping the financial rewards. If the development is sought to provide affordable housing, there should be a plan in place for the county to assist in covering the cost of the negative externalities prior to permitting any construction.</p>
663	<p>Robert Hunter - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Hello, I oppose eliminating single-family zoning. I will vote against any political leaders who approve this plan, I will donate to their opponents, and I will actively support campaigns against them. I will encourage my family, neighbors, and network to actively oppose this plan, and any elected officials who support it.</p>

664	<p>Dorothy Phaire - Silver Spring, 20905</p> <p>TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:</p> <p>I have read the information and responses to residents' concerns. I believe Montgomery County Executive, Marc Elrich has it right. I am not in favor of these new development plans, and I believe it will negatively impact current zoning in Montgomery County.</p>
665	<p>Caroline Hickey - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Most of MoCo is waking up now to the number of residents (82% of homeowners) who will be affected by this, and the complete lack of data it is based on.</p> <p>If you want to regain any sort of trust from your constituents, send this plan back to the drawing board, DO THE RESEARCH, and ask the planning board to come up with something that genuinely creates affordable housing. Not just more market-pricing housing.</p>
666	<p>Rachel DeLong - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>As a resident of Montgomery County (Chevy Chase, Section 5), I strongly oppose the AHS initiative. While I am a supporter of increasing affordable housing in MoCo, it is absurd to me the lack of evidence on which AHS was based, and its failure to address the issues of housing affordability and potential impacts on infrastructure. As such, the current initiative seems to pass on many of the costs that would accompany the zoning changes to existing residents, thereby making the existing housing even more unaffordable.</p> <p>Currently, we're dealing with the effects of already over-taxed infrastructure in our neighborhood: Our home regularly floods due to the lack of sufficient rainwater drainage, there is a lack of street parking, increased traffic on our narrow streets has jeopardized the safety of our children and vehicles parked on the street, public schools are overcrowded and under-resourced, and high traffic has increased our commute to our children's preschool in Cleveland Park to 40+ minutes. It is clear that the current initiative has not considered the impacts of increased density and land coverage on the neighborhoods already over-taxed infrastructure.</p> <p>For the reasons stated above, I strongly oppose the current initiative, and urge the Planning Board to collect the data and information necessary to propose a better plan.</p>
667	<p>Susan Hayduk - GAITHERSBURG, 20878</p> <p>This proposal is absolutely the WORST IDEA brought forward by any Montgomery County Council in the past, and I have lived in this County since the 60's!!!! If you continue to want to be like California, by defunding police, letting illegal immigrants released, become a sanctuary County, and demand we only buy electric cars, then MOVE TO CALIFORNIA AND GOOD RIDDANCE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!</p>
668	<p>Eloisa Marques - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I agree with County Executive Marc Elrich that the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative should be put on hold for the time being. It is not</p>

a well thought initiative, it does not provide affordable housing, which is absolutely necessary, and will have impacts on transportation, parking and infrastructure that were not considered in the plan.

669 **Kathleen Egan - Gaithersburg, 20877**

If it doesn't include any Affordability measures, it's written to satisfy the needs of builders.

Left to their own devices they will build what gets them the most profit - and why wouldn't they? That's the role of the council, to protect the overall, balanced interests of the residents of the county.

I'm sure the builders will trot out that increased supply *might* moderate prices, but that would rely on the county being a closed system. Since it is not, the same as always is more likely: expensive makes everything around it more expensive, just by a slim margin less.

We can't afford to put anything in place that doesn't address the 'missing middle'.

670 **Maureen Holohan - Chevy Chase, 20815**

I attended the 9/25/2024 listening session on the Attainable Housing Strategies (AHS) initiative, hosted by Council Chair Friedson at BCC High School, and I very strongly object to the AHS proposal.

I was shocked at the lack of data about the effects of a policy that would broadly and irrevocably rezone up to 82% of the County's single-family detached homes. Don't we evaluate risk/benefit for policy changes, especially ones this extreme? Where is the study and data on potential impacts to infrastructure—schools, traffic, emergency services, environment, flooding, and others? I agree that affordable housing is needed, both for home buying and renting. However, the AHS as planned will provide little to no affordable housing, as the Council and Planning Board admitted at the session. So the benefit is not affordable housing. As to the risks: A Planning Board document handed out at the meeting stated, "While impacts on infrastructure (schools, transportation, water and sewer) are likely to be minimal [emphasis added], these can be addressed through existing policies including those contained in the Growth and Infrastructure Policy." There is no factual basis for the statement that negative effects are "likely to be minimal."

When every single lot in affected R-60 neighborhoods is zoned to be redeveloped into a duplex or a triplex, with additional density allowed near the transit corridors, "impacts...are likely to be minimal" is a ridiculous statement to make. I live off a main road that is considered a growth corridor. That means "medium scale" development would be allowed. From the main road to 500 feet in, every home could be demolished and turned into a small apartment building, by right with no notice and no appeal. Doing the math—a neighborhood of 460 homes, of which 105 could become 19-unit apartment buildings, and the other 355 turned into triplexes, means 3,060 units. The new construction would certainly be built to the maximum setbacks and heights (which the planning board is also proposing to alter)—leveling trees, killing habitat, and stressing the 100-year-old physical infrastructure beyond its limits. The demands on schools, traffic, parking, sewers and emergency services would cause havoc.

The rezoning is not essential to addressing the County's housing needs, because the County has not been built out—Montgomery County's master plans have enough zoned capacity to house more people than are projected to come here through 2050. There is simply no call for 82% rezoning "by right"—meaning every parcel can be developed to its maximum density no matter what the harm may be.

Four points:

1. This plan does not address housing affordability. New construction will be priced at whatever the market will bear. In close-in neighborhoods it is likely the new construction duplexes and triplexes will be more costly than the homes they replace.
2. Montgomery County residents deserve clear notice of AHS, with a postal mailing to the homes that will be affected, a systematic collection of unbiased data, and better explanations than the Planning Board and the Council have provided. Of note: the interactive map of affected neighborhoods in the final report is a dead link.
3. The AHS Planning proposal is premature. It is a developers' wish list rather than a plan that serves the populace. AHS undoes master plans without assessment and the entire process lacks a commitment to fair, open participation by residents of the county.
4. The Planning Board and Council have no data to back up statements such as "Impact to infrastructure is likely to be minimal." In fact, there has been no systematic review of the impacts to the infrastructure (schools, traffic, emergency services, sewer, etc.) and the environment. My neighborhood already has overflowing storm drains and problems with runoff, and we work hard to keep tree canopy to improve air quality and mitigate rising temperatures from climate change.

We need adequate infrastructure to accompany development. Overcrowded schools, traffic, perpetually closed sidewalks due to construction, and lack of open green space are serious problems in the Bethesda area that any planning board and country council should be concerned about. As an alternative, a master plan process is more inclusive and considers the impacts in a deliberative manner. The AHS initiative includes no evaluation of what we need and what it will cost. AHS needs to be paused as it is a flawed process in which the Planning Board and Council avoided direct notification of affected residents. That needs to be rectified as a first step, by providing notification to residents by mail in multiple languages, and then being transparent and unbiased in evaluation of benefits and risks.

Sincerely,

Maureen Holohan

████████████████████ Chevy Chase MD 20815

Catherine Arold - Rockville, 20853

671

I have never agreed with Mr. Elrich before but I agree with him in opposing the fraudulently named Attainable Housing initiative. I can't believe that affordable housing cannot be accommodated through the numerous development projects already underway or through repurposing the many empty office buildings throughout the County. This is just a way to disrupt neighborhoods and will make living in the County even less attractive than it is now with rising crime, declining schools, and higher costs of living. I have lived here all of my life and I

	<p>refuse to believe this is the best for this community. It makes me question the motives of the Planning Commission members. Perhaps they have some financial interest in this rezoning initiative.</p> <p>Please be more creative in your thinking and revamp tax incentives for new construction to repurposing empty buildings. Do not turn traditional neighborhoods into urban centers.</p>
672	<p>Louis Koutras - Rockville, 20853</p> <p>I am 100% against the attainable housing strategy, and would like us to focus on affordable housing.</p>
673	<p>Linda Manning - Bethesda, 20816</p> <p>The current Attainable Housing Strategy does not address the issue of affordable housing, has not studied the ancillary infrastructure and environmental impact, and is a gift to developers.</p> <p>The current county master plan is adequate to support the goal of more affordable housing.</p> <p>The ruse that there is no legislation currently before the council is disingenuous.</p> <p>Do not approve this plan!</p>
674	<p>Nerissa Hamilton-Vom Baur - Silver Spring, 20910</p> <p>I strongly oppose this Initiative. It does not reflect any consideration of infrastructure needs and does not provide affordable housing, as plainly stated. This is a give-away to developers and will place burdens on infrastructure and communities, at their expense. I attended a listening session and it was apparent that concerns about infrastructure - school capacity, parking, emergency services were of little concern to the proponents. To those of us who have invested in our communities, it is really disconcerting how little outreach/notice the Council has provided about this plan, which if passed, cannot be reversed and will forever alter our communities.</p>
675	<p>Sharon Newman - Silver spring, 20901</p> <p>It is ridiculous to think that someone who moves into the university and colesville road area will give up their car and solely use public transit. People will need cars to shop, work, and socialize. Their friends will visit by car. The idea of not providing parking at new construction is poor judgment. Our streets are currently filled with parked cars. There is no restriction on owning a car.</p>
676	<p>Taylor Adams - Silver Spring, 20901</p> <p>We moved to South Four Corners 5 years ago as first time homebuyers. We have loved the community and hope to stay for decades to come. However, this new rezoning effort will push us out due to the very predictable consequences of upzoning. Developers will start to outbid first time homebuyers like ourselves and tear down houses and rebuild as many units as they can squeeze onto lots. As it is, many streets are becoming undriveable or unofficial 1-ways due to the volume of cars parked on them. This is due to 1 or 2 houses on the block</p>

that have 5+ cars. If upzoning is allowed all lots could have 5+ cars which will make streets undriveable. As many streets do not have sidewalks, it will also make the neighborhood unwalkable for residents. The Four Corners area also already has very high traffic problems due to the density of people driving through to reach 495. It is completely disingenuous to think that people have enough public transport options in this area to forgo owning a car. Finally, MCPS just voted on increasing class sizes. MCPS is not equipped to handle an influx of students from increased density created by upzoning. We are two public service employees who will make plans to move out of Silver Spring if these changes are passed. The irony is, we have the most to gain by leaving due to developers increasing our property value. The housing that will be rebuilt on our property will be luxury townhomes that price out the very people this plan argues it is trying to help. This is a real shame for our community.

677

David Massey - Chevy Chase, 20815

The attainable housing strategy initiative will not provide affordable housing in most areas and should not go forward. The cheapest housing in the area will be demolished and more expensive housing will replace it. There is already enough housing stock built and approved to meet county goals. This plan is clearly a move to satisfy developers and will not help achieve the goals. Those voting for it are working for developers and not the good of the county or its residents.

678

Karen Hammons - Chevy Chase, 20815

I do not support the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI).

I am now a resident of Chevy Chase West by way of Old Town Alexandria, VA (condominium owner), Lexington, KY (rented apartment and condominium), northeastern KY (rentals & owner of single family houses), northern KY (trailer rental, apartment rental, owner of single family houses), and Brooklyn, NY (rental).

I now live with my daughter and son-in-law with 3 grandchildren in a single family home.

We bought our CCW single family house together, otherwise it would have been neither AFFORDABLE nor ATTAINABLE for either of us. (We are glad we had the option to buy a single family together house instead of a condominium to avoid condo density, "surprise" costs and add-on costs for building-wide services and maintenance and update/replacement costs as buildings age.)

Why is MOCO seriously considering approval of a housing plan that destroys single family neighborhoods to create high density housing likely to be just as expensive or more expensive than already-developed single family homes? \$\$\$\$\$\$

MOCO should develop and approve a plan/policies to encourage development and building of AFFORDABLE housing, throughout MOCO, including in Potomac.

If a wide selection of housing offered at more AFFORDABLE prices, housing then is likely more ATTAINABLE.

ATTAINABLE housing is not necessarily more AFFORDABLE. One can attain a house only if they have enough money to do so.

MOCO should NOT support the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI), because it appears to be a plan that merely increases density by permitting more units to be built that are not necessarily AFFORDABLE on property that is presently single-family housing.

AVAILABILITY does not mean AFFORDABLE!

AVAILABILITY, first and foremost, means that more people are living in higher-density spaces.

AVAILABILITY does not mean solving the AFFORDABILITY issue which is an important issue to solve.

Create policies to encourage AFFORDABLE housing.

Let's solve the AFFORDABLE housing issue!

VOTE NO on AHSI !

Respectfully,

Karen Hammons

[REDACTED]
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
[REDACTED]

679

Jorge Garcia - Olney, 20832

I stand with the vast majority of Montgomery County residents when I say that the aforementioned Attainable Housing plan is an ill-conceived and harmful plan to densify areas of the county that don't need to be densified. None of the requisite studies on school overcrowding, environmental impact, parking availability, etc. have been conducted by the Planning Board. This plan does nothing to address the fundamental housing problem in the County, which is lack of affordable housing. The plan is a boon for developers, but a nightmare for County homeowners. Thankfully, our County Executive, Marc Elrich has come out forcefully in opposition to this misguided plan. I wholeheartedly support his recent statement on the Attainable Housing Initiative. Unfortunately, Mr. Freidson seems to be hell-bent on going down this path. I am urging all of my fellow neighbors to join me in opposing this destructive and misguided policy proposal.

680

Tanya Tan - Silver Spring, 20901

I am against this initiative for the following reasons:

- increased cars without increased parking spots. Our neighborhood streets are already inundated by cars.
- outbidding by big companies which will make it even harder for single families to purchase homes. This initiative will just increase prices.
- lack of infrastructure to accommodate increase in population. No metro access, bus routes etc
- schools are already overpopulated. Without increase in schools, this proposal will just overwhelm the school system and decrease education quality and access

681	<p>Tim Proctor - Silver Spring, 20901</p> <p>Attainable housing does not start at \$750,000. I wish the county council would stop trying to take advantage of our area of the county. Everyone knows that there are have and have Nots in this county which is absolutely unacceptable. Why don't you start with improving our schools so that young families aren't moving out to find better school systems in the county ?</p> <p>I am extremely against this ridiculous idea that never takes into account community and neighborhoods. The county is 30 years behind in planning and has fallen even more each year with these ridiculous plants.</p>
682	<p>Erica Brown - Chevy Chase, 20815-5424</p> <p>The AHS will result in the gentrification of middle-income neighborhoods. Developers will be free to tear down \$500-600,000 homes and replace them with 2-3 townhouses that fetch several times that amount on the market.</p> <p>The AHS was created with no cost-benefit analysis and does not account at all for the impact on infrastructure, including water and power lines, fire/rescue, parking, and schools. The ones who will be stuck with the bill? Current homeowners, through increases in property taxes.</p> <p>Most importantly, the AHS will do nothing to ease the problem of affordable housing. Indeed, this is a huge giveaway to developers, who are not required to provide any affordable housing in buildings under 20 units.</p> <p>It is the height of irresponsibility to turn over planning and development for a county as big and diverse in terms of land use to private developers, and permanently cut out the voice of regular homeowners. But that's exactly what the AHS does. Please do not vote for this extreme, under-researched, and rushed plan.</p>
683	<p>Tim Proctor - Silver Spring, 20901</p> <p>The fantasy of Bus travel and bicycles in the county is a pipe dream!</p> <p>Why don't you start by getting rid of 20 percent of our county's population?</p> <p>Since no one in the past or present ever cared to keep up with our growth!</p> <p>Why should established neighborhoods Have to take the brunt of this poor planning?</p>
684	<p>Carol Glass - Bethesda, 20816</p> <p>I agree with County Executive Elrich that rezoning such a large amount of the country is a bad idea.</p>
685	<p>Edna Miller - Montgomery Village, 20886</p> <p>The AHS may be a start, but it is not the finish. There is little evidence in the AHS Initiative proposed housing development that actually explains: what are the impact and adequacy on schools, on transportation, on the environment and on housing affordability per</p>

development. The missing middle income housing crisis in Montgomery County is not clearly addressed in Attainable Housing development when attached units can be offered "FOR Sale" at market rates. There is little evidence in AHS that offers guidance for developers to build common ownership communities - either a townhome community or condominium community, as a preference for missing middle affordable housing market place. The AHS is currently too ambitious around building attached housing topographies countywide now. What goal is missing? Create AHS draft ZTA with the goal of building attached housing units "For Sale" for the benefit of middle income buyers, with attached housing units in a common ownership community near transit now.

686

Nidhi Khattri - Bethesda, 20816

There has been inadequate consultation and consideration of impact on existing communities, including environmental impact, requirements for infrastructure - roads, drainage, schools, parking, noise, open space - in this plan. It does not provide adequate information on why this rezoning is needed. I do not support it.

687

G Mitchell - Silver Spring, 20901

Dear MCC - I have read the AHSI with some concern. First, I don't believe the AHSI adequately addresses the unresolved issues in Zone-60 related to traffic, parking, mass transit and safe biking/walking paths. As a resident of over 10 years of Zone-60 in Montgomery County, I have seen the area grow more dense without commensurate actions to deal with the increased levels of traffic. As it currently stands, crossing or driving through even non-main roads such as Franklin and Flower Avenues can be difficult depending on the time of day. All county residents also understand the challenges of driving/or taking a bus down Colesville and East West Highway under current rush-hour conditions. The Purple Line and Flash Bus routes may, in time, alleviate some of the present traffic patterns, but it also likely additional residents will continue to use their cars enmasse as they historically have. Secondly, I am curious to know why most of the envisioned growth in the areas up for potential rezoning are already some of the most densely populated parts of the county. I find it odd that the southern portion of Montgomery County in those areas roughly bordering the District are slated for some of the heaviest rezoning while areas like Garrett Park, Potomac and Rockville appear to be relatively undisturbed by the AHSI. I appreciate your consideration of the above concerns.

688

Daniel Frissell - Silver Spring, 20901

I have lived in Montgomery county my whole life and have seen the area change for the worse and taxes go up and up. My friends and relatives have moved out of the area because of it and I too am considering the same. The most recent rezoning proposal of single family communities is another example of the county overstepping their reach on property owners. My neighbors and I are in the so called buffer zone which in this proposal would allow quadplexes. The character of my neighborhood and street will be erased if this is adopted and I urge the council to stop this.

689

Dana Larsen - North Bethesda, 20852

I am writing in support of the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. I attended the listening session in Bethesda on 9/25/24. I thought the presentation was excellent—well thought-out and explained, with plenty of data to back up the recommendation. I support everything that was presented. I was extremely disappointed, however, in the tone of the audience and the (frankly nonsensical) arguments of those not in favor of the plan. While I went in with an open mind, I didn't hear a single argument against the initiative that was not already addressed by the plan recommendation or was rooted in the reality of the present housing situation in the county. Concerns about traffic, school crowding, and infrastructure impacts are legitimate (if not greatly overblown given the scale and gradual nature of this plan), but these are all solvable problems—especially when you consider the increased property tax revenue that could be brought in with more housing units. I am a relatively recent transplant to Montgomery County—I moved into an apartment first for work in 2021, then was able to purchase an older townhome in North Bethesda in 2022—and as you are well aware, housing in MoCo is expensive, even for those of us in dual-income households with jobs that pay well. While a single-family detached home does have its perks, I personally find living in a townhome to be a better fit for me—I can be closer to the Metro and shops, I don't have to worry about a yard, and of course, the price per square foot was much more reasonable than a comparably sized single family home would be in my neighborhood. I am strongly in support of allowing more multi-family homes in the county, for young(er) people like me who are looking to set down roots and start a family, but aren't looking for a 6,000 sq ft mansion or a 1,000 sq ft 1950s-era house that needs \$100k in updates and repairs, which seem to be the only options in my area (and only one of those options I would even be able to afford). At the risk of sounding ageist, I noticed that the vast majority of the people who spoke in opposition to the plan at the Bethesda listening session were 65 and older, and had lived in the county for decades. While their input is valuable, I frankly don't think they understand the housing difficulties that the younger generations are facing in the county, since they bought at a time when you could purchase a single-family home here on a middle-class salary. And while they seemed to be the majority at the Bethesda listening session, I hope the County Council remembers that this vocal minority is not representative of the county as a whole. The listening session was notably lacking in younger people, people of color, people with jobs and familial obligations that would prevent them from attending an in-person meeting in the middle of the week. These are the people who represent the future of the county, and I urge you to consider the needs of this population if and when this initiative is put forward to a vote. While it is acknowledged that this plan doesn't address low-income/affordable housing, please don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good—support the middle class of Montgomery County, and support the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative!

690

Dolores Falck - Brookeville, MD, 20833

No need to rezone 82% of single family detached homes. Use unoccupied commercial buildings and vacant land near Metro stations. The purpose of a Master Plan is to allow residents input to proposals not abolish it! Master plan allows resident to weigh in on any proposal. What impact to the Environment - trees, paved surfaces, potential flooding, room for parked cars at the proposed residences. What impact regarding schools. Slow down, rethink your proposal and conduct studies regarding the impact of the community.

691

Erin Whaley - Rockville, 20853

I fully support Re zoning to expand affordable housing in our county. I have lived in a single family home and now rent a 2-bedroom condo and it was very difficult to find something affordable for me and my son. More dense housing will also reduce environmental impact, especially near public transportation.

692

Grace Weisser - Chevy Chase, 20815

I'm opposed.

Lack of Infrastructure Studies: Why were no comprehensive infrastructure studies conducted? The current county stormwater system is already inadequate. Implementing this plan without a stormwater management strategy and upgrading the existing system is counterintuitive.

Insufficient Data: The data provided by the county is insufficient to justify such a large-scale transformation. There hasn't been enough analysis of the long-term impacts, including economic, environmental, and infrastructure consequences. The minimal data provided does not justify such a significant disruption to single-family neighborhoods.

Favoring Developers: This initiative seems to benefit developers more than the community. What is the true definition of "attainable housing"? "Attainable housing" as defined by the initiative does not truly meet the needs middle-income families. Instead, it as a way for developers to market slightly cheaper homes or duplexes that still remain out of reach for many local residents. Who

693

Kevin Weisser - Kensington, 20895

Opposed

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Favoring Developers: This initiative seems to benefit developers more than the community. What is the true definition of "attainable housing"? "Attainable housing" as defined by the initiative does not truly meet the needs middle-income families. Instead, it as a way for

developers to market slightly cheaper homes or duplexes that still remain out of reach for many local residents. Who is really driving this initiative?

Lack of Public Input: Why is this not being put to a ballot? How can 11 elected officials decide on the largest neighborhood transformation the County has ever seen? Are our representatives truly listening to their constituents? 6 Listening Sessions in a month's time is not enough to gather all input.

Master Plan Oversight: Why isn't this proposal being thoroughly studied and evaluated under the County's Master Plan?

Environmental Concerns: This plan could severely impact the tree canopies. Why would the County risk losing such a vital natural resource? Why would the County want us to lose more green space?

Traffic and Parking Issues: Major concerns like traffic and parking are being glossed over.

Preserving Neighborhood Integrity: People buy in single-family neighborhoods for the community it offers. This plan threatens to pull the rug out from under them, undermining their biggest investment.

Increased Density Challenges: These older neighborhoods simply cannot support a higher density of housing.

694

Navjyot Chahal - Potomac, 20854

Greetings:

I am an immigrant from India, who lived in PG county apartments for few years, afterward, bought a townhouse in Gaithersburg, where I lived for 17 years (where I did witness the onslaught of rise in density) and finally could afford a townhouse in more affluent more importantly quieter (because of low density) neighbourhood.

Someone who comes from a nation of 1.4 billion people, I am very well acquainted with degradation of one's quality of living because of high density environment. My honest- earnest question is - Is there an upper limit on the number of people that Montgomery county or Maryland state will try to absorb, hence obligated to provide housing? What if all of my fellow Indians are able to migrate to Montgomery, will all of us be forced to live in 10' - 5' area because not to accommodate will be against our goal of equity? Yes I did swing it to the " extreme " because what planning board's suggestion of rezoning is doing is, death of a neighbourhood by thousand cuts and my hypothetical is just proving the unattainability of noble goal without forcing neighborhoods to completely change over a span of few years. I will never own or will own a single family home but I do not resent the people who do or will, maybe because I do want my child to aspire to achieve which I could not and by taking out AP courses from schools for equity(California did and Montgomery considered it) and in this case destroying quality of neighborhoods with high density is sure way to not further the society in a meaningful, authentic way. If county really want to facilitate more homeownership, why not remove property taxes, at least for few years to beta test?

695

John Loveland - Kensington, 20895

As a long-time Montgomery county resident, I am appalled by the recently submitted Attainable Housing Strategies initiative and the Growth and Infrastructure Policy. Not only does the report fail to connect how its recommendations will achieve the objectives set forth in the executive summary, it is also so poorly researched, particularly with respect to the implications of its recommendations on the environment, infrastructure, and city services, that it is almost laughable. It's clear that the planning board is cutting and pasting language from other city attainable housing and applying it without consideration to the particular needs of our community. If adopted, the plan would not create more "attainable housing" it would just create more density - and more profits for developers. I urge you to reconsider this ill-conceived plan.

696

Andrew Bossi - Washington, 20003

Just listened to the full Youtube of the Council listening session & wanted to add one comment for consideration which I didn't hear explicitly come up from anyone:

How will the initiative's proposals affect property taxes? I'd presume that they will, on average, go upward due to the additional flexibility & growth potential that owners will now have with their properties. Is there a risk of additional taxes burdening existing property owners &/or their tenants? Are there proposals to mitigate any such impacts on those who may be unable to afford any such increases?

(and in case whomever is reading this recognises my name: I'm very much writing as an individual and not a representative of my employer)

Thanks!!

697

JESSE FRIEDLANDER - CABIN JOHN, 20818

I am against the rapid population increase of our county, which is placing a strain on resources, infrastructure and our quality of life. It is making people feel uncomfortable and resentful.

It is simply unAmerican to force people in traditional, single family home neighborhoods to have to live with multi-story, high density housing.

Please put the policy focus on maintaining our quality of life, environmental beauty and cleanliness and infrastructure.

698

Mary Ellen OBrien - Bethesda, 20817

The Park and Planning and Council have a very poor history in managing such complex policies. Obviously you still have not learned thru your mistakes with neighborhoods such as Wheaton and downtown Silver Spring where you have brought such negative consequences onto the built environment due to the inefficient and ineffective management of unintended consequences and poor insights into the complexity of your decisions. We have put up with enough with the chaos you have made

It is not democratic to have the citizens endure the bad decisions you make that should require a vote. For example, I am still not over how Montgomery County became a Sanctuary County. What is the origin of the Idea that appointed and/or elected local government attorney's general have the power or authority to unilaterally refuse to prosecute laws duly enacted by local legislatures? It is simply unjustifiable and anti-democratic as is taking away residential zoning.

699

Ankit Aggarwal - Bethesda, 20817

My name is Ankit Aggarwal (37) and my wife, Soorya Aggarwal (34), as voters, strongly oppose the attainable housing plan by the County Planning Board providing for a unilateral zoning change of single-family homes along "transit corridors" to allow replacing them with multifamily housing. This change would be disastrous for older neighborhoods like ours, Kenwood Park, near the intersection of River Road and Goldsboro Road. We request that you vote against this proposal and oppose it fully.

We oppose this because the current infrastructure in these neighborhoods is designed and maintained with single family homes in mind. The infrastructure, including schools, electricity, natural gas, water and wastewater infrastructure were never envisioned to be replaced by multiple unit housing. For example, WSSC is conducting a multimillion-dollar pipe replacement, currently, whereby, WSSC is replacing water mains throughout Kenwood Park and the surrounding neighborhood. This is a replacement of many miles of water mains – none of these are specified to support multiple unit dwellings. That is because the county's water regulator, WSSC, is replacing infrastructure to match current code and zoning. This area is not zoned for multifamily housing. As such, this infrastructure, which after replacement will not be updated for nearly 30-40 years will be immediately incorrect and easily overwhelmed by a population increase that the infrastructure was never envisioned to support.

Further, and more importantly, the roadways in and around these neighborhoods were never built to support that many vehicles and increased usage which would come from real estate developers buying homes and replacing them with multiunit housing. Kenwood Park has already had a child fatality due to a vehicle incident with a County school bus because of unsafe roadways, imagine the impact of adding hundreds of new students, children, and pedestrians to the same area.

Our Kenwood Park neighborhood has many “tear down” homes already. These are where a builder buys a property, usually off-market, and then tears down the house and replaces it with a multimillion-dollar home triple the size of the existing home. The County Planning Board has not issued any data supporting these new tear downs not becoming even more multiple multi-million-dollar new units – again, not attainable for most families – just more expensive unattainable housing. The notion that developers would be allowed to replace these single-family homes with multiunit dwellings only advantages the builders, developers, and financiers, not the actual housing supply nor the communities. This is a scheme concocted by the finance industry and builders to build more multimillion-dollar units down-county, not truly develop more attainable housing. Attainable housing is not multimillion-dollar units, it is housing priced in a different category with an increased supply. The simple reality any homebuyer knows is that unless you have nearly \$2 million dollars to buy a home “down county” your best “bargain” is to buy an older home that has had modest renovations, like Kenwood Park. This is the attainable housing supply in this part of Montgomery County. Simply put, a bad idea of unilateral zoning change cannot instantly increase attainable housing supply.

If the County wants a real attainable housing solution, then it is an easy four-part plan. First, allow for newly developed communities to be zoned this way, such as in Shady Grove, Clarksburg, or Seneca where newly fashioned neighborhoods are being built and laid out to accommodate multifamily housing like townhomes and condominiums. These areas have extra wide streets, green spaces, parking, and infrastructure designed to support large populations. Second, incentivize “down-county development” by allowing specialized tax treatment for currently zoned “mix-use” or “commercial properties” that are sold and converted within a short time frame (i.e., months) into additional mixed-used multiunit residential housing and mixed-residential-commercial properties, like those along Rockville Pike near Pike and Rose. These smaller commercial properties have limited uses, but they have all the infrastructure they need to support multiple units, especially the older construction. Specifically, they have parking and roadways for multiple vehicles to pass or access, the electricity, natural gas, and water and wastewater infrastructure is built to commercial grade and can easily support multiple units.

Third, for incentives not requiring State action, revise the County building code to only allow similar sized structures to be built on lots where an existing structure is removed. That is, replace a 2,500 square foot home with another new 2,500 square foot home, not a new 8,000 square foot home. Fourth, the County can expedite County inspections and permitting for these conversion properties, and allow developers who put these units into service before the State’s and County’s fiscal year each July to have expedited inspections and specialized tax treatment from the County.

Finally, if this proposal is so important, the County Council, County Executive, and Planning Board should jointly put this measure before the State’s General Assembly to make this a Statewide initiative not just a County initiative. Overall, this current proposed “solution” to uniformly change the zoning for the entire County is done in near secrecy and in a way to eliminate our deter voter participation and consent.

Lastly, if the County Council approves this plan, my household will not support nor vote for any of the Councilmembers who vote to support this plan. The County Executive clearly opposes this plan and would veto it if allowed, that means the power to veto this is the Council's and Council's alone. If the Council wants our votes, stop this absurdity and oppose this change and proposal.

We support meaningful and thoughtful housing planning, which this is not. This proposal is simply is just a down-county money grab by builders and financiers. Please oppose and vote against the zoning change. We will be watching your votes.

700 **jon davis - Silver spring, 20901**
Attainable housing, as the council has defined it, is NOT affordable housing. Vote against the attainable housing strategies initiative.

701 **Mary Ellen Davis - Silver Spring, 20901**
I am 100% against the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative, and want the Council to drop it altogether and work closely with the County Executive and the existing plans for affordable housing in Montgomery County.
Thank you.
Mary Ellen Davis

702 **Lawrence Kennedy - Poolesville, 20837**
I once again want to record my opposition to the proposal from the planning board to implement the A.H.S.

703 **Bill Montrose - Bethesda, 20816**
This is a terrible idea that will not provide affordable housing or the missing middle. It will allow two or more multi-million dollar homes to be crammed on 1 lot with parking and school consequences.

704 **Bill Conover - Bethesda, 20816**
As our elected officials - I wonder how this plan fits into supporting your constituents. You want to increase density - in our neighborhoods. On the roads. In our already severely overcrowded schools.

Please explain to me how this supports a positive step for our county? This is only going to get tied up in the courts and if Virginia is any indication you will lose. If there are districts that would like to try this plan, fine. Put it to a vote. Let the people decide.

Stop this insanity now.

705	<p>Jordy Diaz - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I am sick and tired of boards taking into consideration the profits of developers as if they held the same amount of weight as families needing a place to live.</p> <p>Even though the county council passed the rent stabilization bill those of us who have lived, grown up, and plan to have families are still struggling with the perpetual increase in rent of around 100\$ a year or 5%. Single parent families like the one I grew up in have been struggling with food cost increases and now this increase in rent each year. Something must be done before we face mass homelessness and the forced relocation of Montgomery county residents due to this increase in costs. It is your duty to do something about it while actually considering the needs of the citizens in good faith and not for profit. It is time to actually serve the people of Montgomery county and provide attainable housing measures that will lead to that.</p>
706	<p>John Smith - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>I paid top dollar and pay high property taxes to live in my single family neighborhood. I want it to stay a single family neighborhood. I will vote accordingly!!!!</p>
707	<p>Andrea Alderdice - Silver Spring, 20910</p> <p>Please don't drop multi-family buildings in the middle of our quiet, tree canopied neighborhood. An example of this "zoning" is quite evident in Arlington, where it is a mess. It will greatly affect all of our property values. Please incentivize owners of commercial buildings in downtown Silver Spring to develop all of those unused buildings into living - including 3 bedroom units for larger residents. Check out 1320 Fenwick Lane in Silver Spring where we did that in 2016. The building is thriving and brought in all kinds of buyers, many without cars and using public transportation, ie less congestion.</p>
708	<p>Mariam Lamech - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>My family and I moved to Kenwood park in 2013. Prior to that we had lived in an apartment building in Montgomery County (in an area zoned for apartments) and then a town house community in Cabin John, MD. When we decided we wanted to move to a single family home, we chose a community which was zoned for single-family homes. We had to extend ourselves to purchase our home, but we wanted to take this big decision. We live very close to Whitman and there is quite a bit of traffic during morning and afternoons but we have got used to it. Our big concern is parking, we will have cars parked all over and making driving difficult.</p> <p>We did not make this decision lightly and are against the initiative. If we want to make housing options available there are options already . New development in our neighborhood are \$3-\$4 million, townhouses, duplex, etc. at market rates will continue to be beyond the reach of many in the community.</p>

Albert Costilo - North Bethesda, 20852

I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with the proposed housing and infrastructure plan.

The core issue is Montgomery County's ongoing failure to attract and grow large employers, resulting in an unsustainable reliance on residential income/property taxes from higher-income residents and developer money.

This reliance creates opportunities for conflicts of interest and is not a sustainable way to fund the county. The plan's attempt to compensate for revenue shortfalls in this way is problematic for several reasons:

- 1) **Affordability:** The issue is misleading, as townhouses and duplexes in high-income areas remain unaffordable.
- 2) **School Overcrowding:** Large multifamily buildings and residential developments are planned without coordination with MCPS, leading to overcrowded and strained schools. This is the most serious.
- 3) **Traffic and Safety:** Increased traffic, congestion, and decreased road safety in an already oversaturated region. Highway widening is an excuse to get residents from moving to Northern Virginia where all the higher paying jobs are.
- 4) **Environmental Impact:** Loss of green spaces along the Red Line in North Bethesda, Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Gaithersburg has resulted in environmental degradation, high population density, and loss of tree canopy and nature.
- 5) **Public to Private School Shift:** The ongoing flight of upper-middle and high-income residents to private schools has the potential to mirror the situation in Washington DC, where only 30-40% of upper middle- and high-income families have children in public high- schools, opting instead for private or charter schools.
- 5) **Economic Sustainability:** If upper-middle and high-income residents begin to flee and are replaced with resource-intensive lower-income populations, the question arises: who will pay for the county's needs?
- 4) **Building Safety:** Current high-rise multifamily residential buildings lack adequate fire escape/evacuation solutions for disabled individuals, and older high-rise apartment buildings were built without County oversight on sprinkler systems. Now, the county is asking residents to pay for these upgrades. This demonstrates a continued focus on well-intentioned ideology over proper engineering, urban planning, and fiduciary oversight.

Montgomery County's approach, including holding forums and conducting studies only to proceed with predetermined plans, has eroded trust among the upper-middle and high-income population who fund these initiatives through tax contributions

710	<p>jen sjaw - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>i find it outrageous that you think you can change out single family homes into duplexes or bigger. we like our neighborhood the way it is - we chose not to live in the city ! don't change our neighborhoods - not to. mention parking problems and infrastructure issues ! find land and build what you want - don't ruin our neighborhoods .</p>
711	<p>William Zwack - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>The Parkwood Residents Association was just briefed by the County on the proposed Montgomery County Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. I understand the County needs more attainable housing, but ruining the nature of single-family communities such as Parkwood (within 1-2 miles from the Grosvenor Metro) is just not the right way to go about it. People such as myself bought here because of the neighborhood's current characteristics. I think accessory dwellings are the way to get at least affordable places to rent in our neighborhood. The roads, parking, schools, stormwater, city water, sewers, etc. are not equipped for up to quadplexes. If you must do it, limit it to duplexes at most on properties like ours that are only 6,000-10,000 sf. Thanks.</p>
712	<p>Philly Senot - SILVER SPRING, 20910</p> <p>County Executive Marc Elrich explained everything very well in his message from October 4, 2024. The AHS rezoning proposal is a serious mistake that could harm our cherished Maryland. It's unnecessary, as the master plan already accommodates housing needs through 2050. This proposal ignores crucial infrastructure requirements, parking, schools, and the negative environmental impact, essentially serving as a significant benefit to developers.</p>
713	<p>Linda Golden - Rockville, 20852</p> <p>Vote against Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. It would be harmful to the County and it would not make housing more affordable. Increase the incentives and reduce the regulatory burdens to encourage developers to build more housing.</p>
714	<p>Christine Burgess - Silver Spring, 20910</p> <p>Hello,</p> <p>I have concerns about the "attainable housing initiative" as currently designed. It is important to me that we create a housing strategy that is affordable, maintains/builds our diversity, and is sustainable. I do not believe that the current strategy is well thought out and has the checks necessary to prevent developers moving quickly without considering long term impacts. I agree with many of the concerns raised by Marc Elrich. My concerns include:</p> <p>1) This "attainable housing initiative" is something altogether different than making housing affordable for moderate income folks. Attainable Housing has a specific definition in the Planning world— housing affordable to those with incomes between 80-120% of households. This strategy uses a different definition: "Attainable" is any home at any price point for which there is a buyer. There is no</p>

regulatory structure or market tool to promote actual affordability of these units. Planning routinely shows photos of townhouses in DC that sell for well over a million dollars. This does not address affordable housing.

2) 95% of the multifamily housing units built in Bethesda and Silver Spring since 2017 have been rentals and not ownership opportunities. This effort does not include tools or policies in place to promote these units being built as ownership opportunities. A big factor in home prices is low inventory. Converting single family homes to rental apartments makes that problem worse.

3) The pattern book is not available so there is no public input on this critical component.

4) There are significant environmental issues to address in building these larger corridor structures including tree canopy and storm water runoff. This is absolutely critical for long term sustainability of our infrastructure.

5) The proposal departs from current practice and allows these larger corridor structures to be approved internally by staff without a public hearing before the Planning Board. Public input is critical for well designed infrastructure.

715

Peggy lucero - bethesda MD, 20814

I am 100% adamantly against the AHSI. It is wrong in multiple ways. The Infrastructure is NOT IN PLACE OR ADEQUATE FOR DUPLEXES AND APT LIKE BLDGS TO BE BUILT IN PARKWOOD/BETHESDA COMMUNITY. THIS WILL DELIVER MANY BAD OUTCOMES: SEWAGE, WATER, GAS, ELECTRICITY, PARKING, SANITATION Problems will be an everyday occurrence. RIGHT NOW WSSC IS DOING WATER MAIN LINE REPLACEMENTS AND NEIGHBORS ARE HAVING BROWN WATER IN THEIR HOMES DAILY. DO NO MORE THIS INITIATIVE FORWARD IN ANY WAY. ALL NEIGHBORS HERE ARE OPPOSED TO THE AHSI

716

Christina Zickert - Silver Spring, 20910

I oppose the Attainable housing plan. My single family home neighborhood (Linden) does not have the infrastructure to support quadplexes. We already have a great deal of traffic on roads with no sidewalks and it is a safety issue. Parking would also be a major problem if the number of residents increased. Multiunit buildings should be built along the main roads such as Georgia, Brookville, and Seminary, but not on side streets that can't handle the traffic.

717

Patrick Pexton - Chevy Chase, 20815

October 10, 2024

To the Montgomery County Council, regarding the Attainable Housing Initiative:

My wife and I, at [REDACTED], are opposed, vehemently, to the county's "attainable housing initiative.

We viewed all of the videos available – the planning staff’s presentation to the Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers, the county executive’s video, the listening videos of sessions around the county, and Patrick attended the listening session at BCC High School. We are fully informed.

Most of us in the village, many liberals and Democrats, understand and know the legacy of racism, segregation, and red-lining that we all live with in this region and in Montgomery County and the Village of Chevy Chase specifically. And we know of the need for more housing.

But this broad-brush rezoning plan by the county is not the solution for a whole host of reasons, because of poor process, lack of data to see if it will have the intended outcome, the sweeping nature of it applied to a broad swatch of the county, and the benefit it is likely to bring to developers, not neighborhoods. To wit:

1) This is not careful “planning” or “zoning” meant to regulate and guide growth – it is a Soviet-style, undemocratic, across-the-board regulation drawn up by an unelected board affecting hundreds of thousands of people in the lower county without a vote.

It is – pick your metaphor – like a nuclear bomb dropped on a border skirmish, or a sledgehammer swung down on an antique goblet. It is broad-brush, arbitrary and will set up a free-for-all for developers without regard to the particular needs of individual neighborhoods. This rezoning will not just affect or inconvenience the village, it will, over time, destroy it. Maybe that is the county’s goal?

2) It is a HUGE change in zoning and the way it is being done, through a fast-track zoning text amendment, would give all property owners a “by right” ability to sell their homes for duplex, triplex, quadplex, and even multi-story buildings (including spitting distance from our home, along [REDACTED]) with nary a review by planning board permittees except through a cursory bow to a loosely defined “pattern book” for appearance. This bypasses any normal democratic norms for how you plan a community.

3) It won’t result in lower priced housing in this village for sure. For example, the top contributor to County Councilman Andrew Friedson’s recent campaigns is the owner of ERB properties – a developer of luxury infill homes and low-rise condominiums. Do you think they’re going to build \$200,000 condos? Nope, they’ll build condos that sell for \$500,000 and above – that’s not going to help the “missing middle” very much.

4) [REDACTED], as one of the narrowest streets in the village, already has limited parking and it’s tough to get in and out of our driveways with cars parked on our street. And we already see Westbound cut-through traffic exiting to Wisconsin on Grafton and Oliver even though it is forbidden. The new zoning would allow more density and come with fewer requirements for developers to make off-street parking. The planning board seems to think no one in these new quadplex’s will own cars. That’s just incorrect, and naive.

5) Furthermore, [REDACTED], because of our global-warming-induced, greater annual rainfall, is a river during rainstorms. I could float a kayak down it, there is so much water coming down Hesketh during and after a storm. The county is going to increase density, and subtract trees and open ground for more buildings? Oh yeah, that will help absorb the excess water into the soil. Really?

Now to our own circumstances at [REDACTED]. Prior to living here, Marcia and I lived in the South Four Corners area of Silver Spring, near Blair high school. It was a wonderful neighborhood of small, older, single-family homes. People of all ethnicities and immigrants from many countries lived there – immigrants from El Salvador, Mexico, Ethiopia, India plus white people, black people and all kinds of mixes. We loved that neighborhood, it was tight knit and all those people worked really really hard to afford those homes, just as we did. We didn’t have big

six-figure salaries then, me as a journalist and Marcia as a pianist. But it was their American dream and ours too, and they and we were thrilled to live there. Marcia and I both had spent our young years in D.C., in Adams Morgan and Woodley Park before moving to Silver Spring. And before that I lived in Bowie and New Carrollton because it was affordable.

We only left Silver Spring because we wanted to be closer to Metro, needed a big living room for Marcia's grand piano and wanted to be able to walk to groceries, a bank and a post office. We were looking mainly in DC in Woodley Park and Cleveland Park, but in 2006 there were 10 bids for every house and they all climbed above our price range. Then we found an estate selling a house in the village for its deceased owner, and frankly, it was in terrible shape on the surface but was structurally solid. We didn't know anything about Chevy Chase Village; we just knew we could afford the house, barely, and over time could fix it up. The house showed terribly but we managed to buy it and we spent 15 years fixing it up. It's the only Normandy style cottage in the village with steep, shingled roof, and stucco surface and eyebrow bay windows. It isn't in the historic district but it is special, to us. It isn't huge, but we have made it comfortable and it has lovely outdoor space.

Indeed, it is a significant part of our retirement nest-egg. We know we will have to sell it at some point to realize the profits to downsize into a comfortable place but I fear the value will decline if we have a triplex or quadplex next door and a multi-story condo or apartment down at the end of Hesketh. It feels like a "taking" to me – that the county has come along and by fiat taken away what we have spent a lot of time and money building up.

This "attainable housing initiative" is arbitrary and a one-size-fits all blanket solution invented by planners who never leave their desks to talk to people who live in these neighborhoods. Our friends in the South Four Corners area of Silver Spring don't like this scheme either. Put to a vote of the neighborhoods affected, it would never pass – just watch the BCC "listening" session if you don't believe me.

I exercise at the county's Wisconsin Place Recreation Center gym that overlooks the huge Geico parking lot over in Friendship Heights. The parking lot is empty every day – why? —because the Geico workers are all working from home. Put high density housing there, or look at the Saks building and rezone that. We know there are high rises in our neighborhood – Somerset House and all of Friendship Heights, but do we want that at the bottom of Hesketh? Do you want this lower part of Wisconsin to look just like downtown Bethesda, a concrete jungle of towers and congestion, no trees or relief for the eyes? I don't think so.

Montgomery County is a great place to live because of schools, the quality of life and generally good governance over the decades, but also because of its attractive neighborhoods with a wide variety of housing styles that are walkable, pretty and small-scale. That will no longer be the case under this drastic and unworkable proposal.

Just on Hesketh street alone reside people of diverse backgrounds and professions -- lawyers, writers, architects, doctors, journalists, artists, executives – we are creative, we are resourceful, we know how to organize – we will do our level best, legally and peaceably, to fight this proposal at every stage. Prepare for a fight. And if you're not with us, we'll defeat you at the next election.

Respectfully and sincerely yours,

Patrick Pexton and Marcia Daft
[REDACTED]

718

Nitin Patelo - Olney, 20832

Unfortunately, the zoning regulations are so complicated in MC, that you would have to be a lawyer, to understand anything. I don't know understand why, in 2010, federal government issued a Memorandum on Plain Language in Government Writing and yet MC guideline and zoning requirements are so complicated till this day! So, I cannot intelligently make a comment on housing strategies.

719

Michael Larkin - Silver Spring, 20910

Attainable housing is an opportunity to choose housing abundance over contrived scarcity. We have high-quality schools, parks, libraries, public transit, and job opportunities. However, equitable access to these opportunities is limited because of zoning that gives preference to prohibitively expensive detached single-family homes. Housing is comparatively more affordable when the cost of land is divided between multiple households by building more duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and apartment buildings. There are already examples of diverse housing types in our county. East Silver Spring is one example and our county is better off for it.

This County Council should be ambitious. Approve a plan that encourages the building of as many units of housing as possible and reduces parking minimums as much as possible. Parking construction adds significant costs to housing and reduces the space available for housing, especially near major corridors with existing and planned transit. Housing near transit is more environmentally sustainable than building more housing that defaults to car dependence leading to more carbon emissions.

During the virtual listening session, Habitat for Humanity offered a constructive suggestion regarding incentives for deeper levels of affordability. I hope this suggestion is followed up on because attracting people across a broad range of incomes could grow our tax base.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

720

Molly Uxa - Silver Spring, 20901

Hi there,

I'd like to voice strong support for the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative - while this zoning change would not be about income-restricted affordable housing, I do believe that it would, over time, reduce home prices. Increases opportunities to build low and medium

density housing would also enable more private investment / development, including potentially by affordable housing developers themselves. HOWEVER, I do have a few specific points of feedback:

1. How was the 1 mile buffer from red line / purple line and 500 ft buffer to growth corridors decided for the priority housing districts? I'd like to suggest that AHOM and quadplexes are allowed directly on a growth corridor and within 1/2 mile of red and purple lines, or a natural boundary (i.e. creek, river, natural area, etc.), which is much more realistic for someone to walk to the station, which I assume is the implication there.
2. I'd like to see affordability components / requirements added to the AHOM units - either by lowering the MPDU to extend to these buildings or creating a new requirement.
3. The owner-occupied supports will be critical. I'd like to see a commitment and budget to these support systems enacted at the same time as the zoning changes. In addition, there need to be safeguards in place to disincentivize speculative buying and redevelopment and greater support and incentives to first-time home buyers.
4. I'd like to see one of the other parking methodologies be explored: particularly tying off street parking requirements to size of lot frontage.

In addition, this upzoning will risk causing displacement, particularly by landlords who want to redevelop their lots, thereby displacing renters. Likely landlords would then re-rent the new units at much higher rents, out of reach of previous tenants. The Council needs to address this issue. If a non-owner occupied property (i.e. a landlord) wants to redevelop, they should be required to provide/source temporary housing for their existing tenants and then give them first opportunity to sign a new lease. The county should create a fund to support landlords to do this and to support tenants to make up the difference in rent.

Thanks,
Molly Uxa

John Kyle - Bethesda, 20817

721

This plan fails to account for accommodating the increased vehicular traffic that increased density will cause, particularly along Whittier Boulevard, the primary traffic artery to enter and exit Kenwood Park and connect with two Maryland State Highways, River Road (MD 190) and Wilson Lane (MD 188). Walt Whitman High School reposes on Whittier Boulevard roughly midway between River Road and Wilson Lane, and school traffic there at the beginning and end of daily classes creates congestion when I personally can have difficulty just getting out of my own driveway at the corner of Whittier Boulevard and Clearwood Road. Adding density would increase students and increase

traffic beyond a tolerable level. Walt Whitman remains an excellent and popular school and has attracted many families to Kenwood Park specifically for that reason. These families have students now driving that has increased the population of cars, a trend that has required more on-street parking than the older houses there can accommodate on-site. Newer houses have provided more on-site parking, but these additional cars further exasperate the traffic problem that the plan seems to ignore completely.

722

Alex Campbell - Bethesda, 20817

My name is Alex Campbell, and I am a sophomore at UMD majoring in civil engineering. I grew up in Bethesda, but the current rate of housing price increase will price me out of the community I grew up in. The council has an opportunity to address the supply side shortages that are creating the housing affordability crisis, and I urge you to pass this game changing legislation.

723

Karen Lange - Takoma Park, 20912

I was unable to attend any of the hearing on the Attainable Housing Plan, but I would like to express my opposition to it. I agree with County Executive Marc Elrich's critique. The plan as is will not provide truly affordable housing. It will not provide the infrastructure needed for denser development or answer questions about how to fund that infrastructure. It will allow developers to tear down modest, less expensive housing and replace it with larger, more expensive housing, without regard to whether low or middle income people can afford the housing or how the neighborhood quality of life might be impacted.

Please do a little more research and come up with a better plan.

Thank you for listening.

724

Robert Bennett - North Potomac, 20878

I have watched the the three videos and read the AHS report presented to the Planning Board. I have also read the objections from Marc Elrich which seem sound and reasonable to me.

The planning staff mention several times that many of the objections raised to the AHS plan are concerns about infrastructure such as traffic & roads. The response I have seen is that the staff does not see this as an issue, or at least not one that causes them to change or modify any recommendation. They devote one sentence to this issue " the Planning Board does not see the recommendations in AHS having a unique impact on public facilities that would require mitigation outside of our normal processes" I have not seen any actual study of the increase in traffic for the zones in question and so they don't really know the impact. I get the impression that more information about this topic would not support their recommendation so it has been ignored.

We have a very crowded county already and goal here seems to be not more affordable housing for a better mix, but more residents in the same space because the demand is there. If the zones being considered become over crowded, and over busy, then not only will the demand disappear but the values of the homes of the owners who wanted a single family neighborhood will decrease. I understand that

this change would not restrict how a current owner might sell or use their property, but it seems it would be unfair to the other neighborhood owners if the property type was changed, even if the building was similar to others.

First, I urge an infrastructure study be done before approving this plan. If the decision is made to proceed, I suggest it only apply to ones R40 and R60 and we preserve Single family homes in R90 and R200.

T. Davis - North Bethesda, 20852

725

While I understand the need for more attainable housing for residents in the County, I do not believe areas zoned for single-family houses should be approved for anything more than duplexes or the addition of one ADU. Adding too many residences in these spaces could lead to problems with the infrastructure and quality of life of residents. How will this impact the sewer, electrical grids, school population, residential parking, etc.? Also, how will adding multi-family housing in single-family neighborhoods impact the property values of the current owners?

Nonetheless, there are alternative ways to tackle the attainable housing and crisis we face. First, one reason for the demand in single-family houses is the lack of viable rental options. People do not want to live in apartments in the County because the standards of them have significantly declined and not enough is done to regulate how they are built, how they are kept and how they are priced. A vast majority of the complaints raised by renters are about the apartments being in poor conditions due to poor management, the noise levels being unbearable, the prices being out of reach, or a combination of those three. Nothing is being done to resolve these problems and the County needs to do more to regulate rental housing. The conditions of apartment buildings and complexes need to be inspected annually to ensure they are up to code and stay up to code. Building codes need to be updated to require all apartment buildings to be built using concrete, thick sheet rock and double pane windows to make real strides to reduce noise pollution for renters. Currently, only apartment buildings taller than 4 floors are required to have concrete between the floors and apartments are being built primarily of wood. This leads to conditions where residents are suffering from constant noise pollution, hearing everything from their neighbors using the bathroom to neighbors walking to the traffic outside. There is no quality of life with apartment living because there is nothing done to insulate and soundproof units and the root is in how the developers are allowed to build. And the pricing of rentals in the County has become so outrageous that they exceed what is considered reasonable prices in accordance to HUD's standards. We have large apartment buildings and complexes that are not fully rented because the rent prices exceed 30% and a lot of times even 50% of the income of potential renters. And residents with Housing Choice Vouchers do not even have options because in almost every zip code, there are few or no apartments that fall within the payment standards - it is the new form of rental discrimination. The County needs to institute rent caps and require a higher percentage of MPDUs per building to bring prices to reasonable levels. The need is greater now for affordability in the County and our laws and regulations need to catch up. If apartments are made to be more viable homes, the demand for single-family homes would decline.

Second, there are land owners that have unused and undeveloped land. Another approach to resolve this crisis is to incentive land owners to sell portions or all their land so it can be used to develop more homes. I'm not sure if something such as reduced taxes or a temporary tax credit can be offered to owners as incentives.

Third, has the County considered developing tiny home communities? By having tiny home developments, the infrastructure can be set up to accommodate the number of houses and there can be more single-family homes on smaller lots of land.

726 John Orlando - Bethesda, 20816

Tell them hardworking residents should not be forced to bear the burden of developers' failure to build approved development plans. Our community will be adversely affected by AHSI.
AHSI is more interested in social engineering than providing affordable housing.
AHSI will make whole areas unlivable and that it will lead to displacement of current residents.
AHSI IS NOT RIGHT FOR MOCO, when they have 35,240 unbuilt housing units and zoned capacity for nearly 30,000 more.

727 Mary Catherine Ruocco - Bethesda, 20816

From 30 year MoCo Residents in 20816:

MoCo residents should NOT be forced to bear the burden of developers' failure to build approved development plans.

It is clear that AHSI is more interested in social engineering than providing affordable housing.

AHSI will make entire areas of our county unlivable; it will lead to displacement of current residents.

Bottom line: AHSI IS NOT RIGHT FOR MOCO, when we currently have 35,240 unbuilt housing units and zoned capacity for nearly 30,000 more.

Drop this ridiculous plan. Now.

728 William Poling - Silver Spring, 20910

The indiscriminate rezoning of properties now zoned for single family homes makes a mockery of the "planning" process. I agree with the Executive that the Planning Board's proposals should not be adopted in their current form.

729 Annette Levey - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. AHSI attempts to reverse long-standing zoning rules without adequate investigation or analysis on the impact on the environment, schools, transportation, parking, water and more. Moreover, the proposal would rezone 82 percent of the County's single-family detached homes without a vote by residents or their

elected representatives. The proposal sidesteps (and undoes) the Master Planning process where citizens have the opportunity to weigh in. A more well-researched, judicious, and democratic approach is warranted.

More specifically:

--The County Executive has stated that Montgomery County master plans have enough zoned capacity to house more people than are projected to come here through 2050 with far more modest and less disruptive zoning changes.

--Changing the zoning for such large swaths of the county "as of right" gives developers immense influence whereas individual community members affected by the development are disenfranchised.

--AHSI may not "eliminate parking," but it also fails to address the parking crisis that it will create. By reducing parking minimums in order to fit more units on each lot, AHSI ignores the reality that more and more people will be fighting for spaces on the streets. Stating that "parking will be driven by market demand" is meaningless in portions of Montgomery County where there are no commercial lots. Further, it is pure fantasy to assume that the community will rely exclusively on public transportation. While public transportation and commuting should be encouraged, it is rare (and frankly, not really feasible) to live in this area without a car.

--The AHSI simply recommends updating the code to require control of water runoff from new building sites, but does not explain how it will be managed and controlled. Environmental impact studies are necessary before blindly proceeding with AHSI.

--AHSI also punts the issue of street trees and tree canopy stating "efforts should be undertaken to explore ways" to address the issue. Proceeding with the AHSI without understanding the impact of the development and without solutions to foreseeable problems is irresponsible.

--No impact studies were conducted on the effect of AHSI on Montgomery County schools, which are already overcrowded; on the roads and county infrastructure; and on the transportation impact.

--There are apparently 30,000+ housing units in the County's development pipeline that have been approved but not yet built. Where is the analysis that these units are not adequate to meet demand?

In sum, the foundational work to support the AHSI has not been done, and the support of the community has not been obtained. I urge you not to pursue the AHSI in its current form.

730

Anne Barter - Bethesda, 20816

We are extremely concerned about the Council's proposal!! The evidence is that we will have enough housing in the future without it!!! Why take a wrecking ball to existing neighborhoods??!!

731

Brigitta Mullica - Rockville, 20851

Hardworking residents should not be forced to bear the burden of developers' failure to build approved development plans. Our community will be adversely affected by AHSI.

AHSI is more interested in social engineering than providing affordable housing.
AHSI will make whole areas unlivable and lead to the displacement of current residents.
AHSI IS NOT RIGHT FOR MOCO when they have 35,240 unbuilt housing units and zoned capacity for nearly 30,000 more.

732 Susan Hostetler - Bethesda, 20816

AHSI IS NOT RIGHT FOR MOCO, and absolutely not appropriate for the neighborhoods targeted for this development. Build those affordable buildings you have already zoned for - 35,240 unbuilt housing units and zoned capacity for nearly 30,000.

This plan of Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative is an attempt at a quick fix and cover for developers' failure to build approved development plans.

Our communities will be adversely affected by dramatically increasing cars in the neighborhood with no where to park. Our streets, many with no sidewalks, are already lined with cars. The local schools will become overcrowded and overwhelmed.

Making those targeted for AHSI neighborhoods unlivable for many who already live there and UNAFFORDABLE for those you are intending to service.

Please abandon this plan and build those affordable buildings already permitted and planned.

733 dwight King-Leatham - Chevy Chase, 20815

I fully support your efforts to expand our housing stock and improve access to what is now single family housing. We need to be proactive to face a variety of issues: insufficient housing stock, insufficient affordable housing, curbing emissions, curtailing reliance on gas powered vehicles, wealth disparities, etc.

734 Todd Cooke - Silver Spring, 20910

Subject: Vote against the Attainable Housing Plan

Dear County Councilmembers:

I can't urge you strongly enough to vote against the Attainable Housing Plan. Judging from the listening sessions and numerous conversations with my neighbors, this plan will profoundly disrupt well-established existing communities, impose prohibitive costs needed to retrofit and/or replace existing infrastructure of those communities, eliminate the accountability constraints imposed by existing zoning regulations, circumvents the master planning process, and does not address the profound impacts that the implementation of this plan would have on the environment of the affected communities.

	<p>Despite all these negative impacts and prohibitive costs, even the Planning Board has acknowledged that the Attainable Housing Plan will not affect housing affordability. I support increased affordable housing, but it seems reasonable to me that the Planning Board should devise a more targeted and cost-effective plan to address housing affordability.</p> <p>Sincerely, Todd Cooke Silver Spring 20910</p>
735	<p>Leslie Kefauver - Bethesda, 20816</p> <p>This legislation is NOT in the best interests of my neighborhood. It does NOT provide low cost housing for anyone. We have ENOUGH land allocated for more affordable housing. This proposal will ONLY enrich greedy developers!! Vote NO!!!!</p>
736	<p>James Maggio - Damascus, 20872</p> <p>Attainable Housing Strategies (AHS) would be destructive to hundreds of Montgomery County single-family detached home neighborhoods and tens of thousands of homeowners like myself, a Montgomery County resident in Damascus for almost forty years. No sweeping re-zoning proposal such as AHS should be approved or legislated by the Montgomery County Council, regardless of Planning Board intentions, to do such damage to property owners and property values. Proposals of such magnitude require nothing less than a County-wide ballot referendum, to seek majority taxpayer approval, at the sponsorship of the County Executive and County Council. And the County Executive and all County Council members should go on public record as their support or non-support of AHS and any similar sweeping Montgomery County re-zoning proposals. Thank you.</p>
737	<p>Roger Cochetti - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Like most other voters in Montgomery County, I believe that the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative is misguided. While the problem is real, it is vastly exaggerated and its causes are only based in modest part on the alleged need for new construction. It's causes are mainly macroeconomic and sociological, which have very little to do with short term construction in MoCo.</p>
738	<p>Gary Wilkinson - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>I will keep this very short and to the point. I am strongly against the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative.</p>
739	<p>Sacha de Lange - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I am against the planning department's attainable housing strategies initiative - it would effectively eliminate single family housing in Montgomery County, while simultaneously failing to provide for any new "affordable" housing. The goal of "attainable" housing seems at odds with what is actually outlined, and I feel that the valid concerns of people who actually live in Montgomery County and own homes have not been taken into consideration.</p>

740	<p>Karen Howland - Silver Spring, 20910</p> <p>I strongly oppose the AHS initiative. It does not address the core problem that working residents face, which is safe affordable housing. How does letting a developer tear down a SFH and replace it with town homes address affordability? It doesn't. It just allows that developer to make a huge profit. Create a plan that incentivizes developers to build and manage affordable price points. I'm sure there are programs that do but I am unaware of them. Focus on that. Perhaps loosen the restrictions on private homeowners creating rental apartments in their homes. Do not pass this ill conceived rezoning.</p>
741	<p>Laura Minassian-Kiefel - Silver Spring, 20910</p> <p>I do not agree with the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) since it does not make housing more affordable for Montgomery County residents, is not needed, will put a burden on the existing local residents and will enrich private construction and other companies at the expense of taxpayers. From what I understand, the houses and condos will sell for at least \$750K and the rents will not be affordable to less privileged families. Therefore, the whole idea that houses, condos and apartments will be more attainable by others who actually need them is invalid. AHSI is not needed because Montgomery County still has room to build additional houses. The county's master plans have enough zoned capacity to house more people than are projected to come here through 2050. With AHSI, there are no accompanying funds for adequate public infrastructure. Because of this, taxpayers will be forced to pay more to ensure that our neighborhoods function as they should. The only benefit that I see of AHSI is for the private construction, rental agencies and other related companies because they will profit with the zoning changes from single family homes to larger apartment buildings, condos, and the like and leave the taxpayers to pick up the tab. AHSI is not needed, will only benefit private companies and should not be passed.</p>
742	<p>Dan R - Rockville, 20853</p> <p>We need to offer more possibilities for housing in MC. Single family housing simply isn't cutting it for us or for the planet. People need to find housing and it is better for community and family health if we open up to higher density living.</p>
743	<p>Samiksha Nair - Bethesda, 20816</p> <p>I strongly oppose this initiative. According to the Web site, the Attainable Housing Strategy is put forth as a benefit for property owners: "It allows property owners the flexibility to build different types of housing if they choose to." Which owners? The likely path forward to implement the strategy is that a single-family owner will list their home for sale, it will be purchased by a developer, and the developer will construct multifamily housing. The neighbors on either side of the home will have no recourse. Perhaps the Web site, in speaking of "property owners," means "developers." It cannot mean owner-occupants, who will derive no benefit from the implementation of this strategy. By contrast, the proposal has a clear benefit for developers.</p> <p>Neighborhood character is not defined. Increased density, however, which, if this strategy is implemented will be a direct and intentional outcome, undermines neighborhood character and capacity for current residents. Increased density has implications for schools, parking, and government services. Many of the streets in this area are already at capacity. How do you intend to address the effects on schools, access to parking, traffic congestion, and the added burden on government services (i.e., utilities, transit)?</p>

Increased supply can affect affordability. I suggest that with land being so scarce in Montgomery County, and with the area as a whole being a hub for public- and private-sector jobs, it would be impossible to build enough housing via the Attainable Housing Strategy is to affect home prices and rents to any measurable extent. Instead, the strategy is merely likely to impair the values of single-family homes in the affected neighborhoods. These homes are occupied by your current constituents – people to whom you are responsible at the moment. How do you intend to compensate them for this loss of value? Are you rather more focused on advancing the interests of developers and potential future constituents? Perhaps these are questions that you would be happy to defer to the courts. It makes no sense to take an action against current owner-occupants (i.e., private interests) unless you view the action to be advancing some public purpose. An action that will harm current owners for a “public purpose” pushes the strategy into the bundle of issues around regulatory takings.

744

Dale Barnhard - Silver Spring, 20906

This proposal is a GIFT to investors and developers who have the ready CASH to buy up the older and more modest homes that would ideally be more "attainable" if sold in its current "as-is", modest condition.

This proposal also implies that the higher the density, the more "attainable" housing costs will be. Then why isn't New York City more affordable???

Planning board and council members think everyone should be content to live packed in sardine can social housing.

745

Mark Moadel - Potomac, 20854

Greetings, I am a Montgomery County home owner and oppose the Planning Department’s Attainable Housing Strategies initiative due to the following concerns: Its recommendations may create incentives for outside real estate speculators to purchase single-family homes for redevelopment.

It does not address the environmental consequences of increased land coverage from the larger building footprints of higher density development, resulting in increased imperviousness, stormwater runoff, and loss of tree cover. It does not consider its effect on “sprawl,” one of the basic tenets of Smart Growth. Instead, it recommends establishing “Priority Housing Districts” within a one-mile straight line measure from the Red and Purple Lines and non-high-capacity MARC Stations (some in the Agricultural Reserve) – a measure that is double the half-mile buffer widely accepted as the transit “walkshed.” And it recommends large scale upzoning along nine corridors, some of which do not have high-capacity transit. Its countywide rezoning of four residential single-family detached zones -almost 134,000 properties – upends the master plan process, which is geared to looking at each community carefully and includes a process for public review and engagement. It does not explain (1) how existing zoning capacity (already in place through approved and adopted master plans) factors into meeting housing targets; and (2) how the 30,000+ housing units in the county’s development “pipeline” - approved but not built – factor into meeting those targets. These projects are approved plans ready for construction. It does not address the loss of trees on properties that redevelop. Trees are important for addressing climate change and for absorbing water to lessen stormwater runoff and flooding. It does not address road capacity needs for the additional cars that likely would come from additional households.

It does not address the effects of reduced parking requirements, instead relying on street parking to accommodate additional households, many of which could be built along residential streets not wide enough to accommodate both through-traffic and cars parked on each side.

746

Christen Anastasio - Potomac, 20854

Hardworking residents should not be forced to bear the burden of developers' failure to build approved development plans!
This is not the right choice for Montgomery County!
This does not make sense for my neighborhood!

747

Daniel Bowman - Bethesda, 20814

Hello,

After watching the video regarding the housing initiative, I have these comments. Most importantly is the absence of a clear rationale for the initiative. Who does it benefit? Not low or middle income families; not current home owners; but yes it benefits housing developers.

Has there been lobbying efforts by developers who met with county officials? Has the public been made aware of lobbying by developers?

Further, increasing house density alone is unwise. Is there a concurrent plan to improve transportation in the county? Is there a plan to attract young families through more varied businesses (such as art schools, entertainment venues,etc. Bethesda has little draw except many eateries and high end stores.)

So the housing initiative alone makes no sense standing alone. And again, the skepticism regarding housing developers is eroding my trust in county government transparency.

|

748

Scott Stuckey - Bethesda, 20814

Dear Councilmembers, this massive rezoning proposal is too much too soon all at once. I heard Lisa Govoni and Josh Linden extol the virtues of the proposal on a Zoom call, eager to jump aboard this trend among elite urban planners to eliminate single-family zoning. What's missing is the evidence to justify it. As Marc Elrich has pointed out, no studies have measured the effects on our schools, traffic, and other infrastructure. What particularly bothers me is that it's ONE SIZE FITS ALL, with no regard for the characteristics of individual neighborhoods. In Parkwood, for example, walking to the Metro means navigating a dark stretch of Rock Creek Park along Beach Drive, which is unsafe at night. Yet, there seems to be an underlying assumption that we don't need cars, and thus, there's no requirement for off-street parking. That's ridiculous. Elrich has shown that there's already plenty of zoned housing capacity to last for decades. This proposal needs to go back to the drawing board. And, this time, get more input from the tens of thousands of citizens it will affect. Please.

749	Skander Van den Heuvel - Bethesda, 20814 I oppose this initiative. I am concerned it would crowd neighborhoods and schools.
750	Tamara Stuckey - Bethesda, 20814 The Montgomery County Master Plan already includes affordable housing options to address the shortage of missing middle housing, developed through a series of studies on infrastructure, schools, and traffic patterns. There is no need to introduce another attainable housing plan that hasn't undergone similar impact assessments. Why is the council pushing forward a plan that lacks thorough studies instead of focusing on implementing the existing Master Plan? Furthermore, in many established neighborhoods, duplex, triplex, and quadplex housing may not be affordable for the missing middle. In contrast, developments like the Lakewood Shopping Mall project, which will add 1,600 units, are more likely to be affordable. These types of developments offer parking spaces and access to public transportation, making them more suitable than adding multi-unit housing in established neighborhoods without the necessary infrastructure to support increased population.
751	Jon Kay - Bethesda, 20814 But more housing any way possible! If this plan builds one additional unit over the baseline then it is better than the status quo.
752	No Name - Silver Spring, 20906 This is absolutely the wrong idea in the wrong area. There are already "boarding houses" within single family homes in my neighborhood in which 6, 10 or more people live and those people, or people visiting those people, park in front of my driveway, which is clearly a working and used driveway with a car parked in it, blocking my access in or out. When I have confronted the people blocking my driveway, I get yelled at and told to "go away." I live here. It is all of these people who need to go away. I own my property unlike all of these renters or squatters. I have people urinating and defecating in my yard, trespassing on and vandalizing my property, loud parties until late at night or early in the morning and so much more. I don't need any more group housing for the large number of immigrants causing all of these problems, and the police won't do anything about them. It figures that Natali Fani-Gonzalez is behind this. Go back to where you came from and take all of your kind with you.
753	Diane Kartalia - Chevy Chase, 20815 10/14/2024 Questions and comments on Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board Recommendations to add to the Listening sessions:

1. Please spend more time with Lyric Winik on her fundamental disagreement with the characterization about Single Family Home owners this proposal and proponents have made. There is amazing expertise and goodwill in Montgomery County and why the County Council has chosen to divide us rather than unite us, please explain.
2. Please explain how this proposal fits into the other challenges of the 21st century such as Pandemic impact and response for the future; climate change, public education improvement and social and healthy well being of our county.
3. Please analyze the CE's objections in an unbiased way.
4. Please ask MCPS Board Chair, MCPS Superintendent and long term planning and budgeting to comment.
5. Please explain how the predicted METRO funding crisis will be handled by Montgomery County.
6. Please provide data on job growth broken out on transit and jobs not on transit.
7. Please survey potential new businesses about this proposal and if business is considering moving to a new large development is AHSI attractive for their employees.
8. Please survey potentially new residents on where they want to live and what infrastructure assets would attract them to Montgomery County neighborhoods.
9. Please explain why the common beliefs of over 75% of the voters who support: Diversity, Voters Rights Act, 2020 election won by Biden and Against: Citizens United, Chevron Decision, Project 2025, would support this proposal and its undemocratic roll-up and the benefiting large corporate interests. Please delay all actions until the elections in 2026.
10. Please spend more time with the "thought" leaders in every single high school cluster. In the B-CC Cluster a partial list (in my opinion): Lyric Winik, Marty Langelan, Carole Brand and Matt Gandal.
11. Please document discussions with supporters of ASHI by County Council (CC) members, County Council staff, Planning Board (PB) Members and staff since the 3/2021 CC Resolution to PB.
12. Please list all community, municipalities meetings by CC members held since 3/2021.
13. Please explain why other housing options were not developed since 3/2021.
14. Please explain why limiting this conversion of Single Family Homes to 100 permits annually is an option vs. 134,000 lots as Arlington, VA did with 58 permits annually.
15. Please analyze Marty Langelan's analysis on the long-term infrastructure deficits.
16. Suggest this proposal and MCPS long-term planning be analyzed by outside experts.
17. Please provide a breakdown of those supporting AHSI whether they think it is affordable? Or Attainable? Or neither.
18. Please explain why you have "window dressed" a market based housing strategy.
19. Please demonstrate and identify broad business support for this plan.
20. Please explain the lack of financial analysis? Provide the additional costs AHSI will add to the County Budget short term and the long term. Please provide financial projections on County revenue on the impact of AHSI as well as without AHSI.
21. Please explain why all planning processes are abandoned?
22. Please review CC actions such as the funding of the Purple Line which has increased luxury units at the expense of middle class housing.
23. Please review funding/budgeting procedures which prolong time spent on budgeting and create school funding deficits by reducing \$91 million in bonding levels months before the actual budgets are approved.

24. Please explain how AHSI has undergone a democratic review with such late notice to the voters.
25. Please explain why this policy was not included in the 2022 County elections.
26. Please explain why building more skyscrapers in Bethesda more than Baltimore and not fund extra elementary school classrooms is logical.
27. How can one propose a massive change to Single Family Housing without analysis by MCPS?
28. Please explain why the real likelihood of litigation is ignored and funds that will be spent could be allocated to affordable housing and schools.

754 Saurabh Gupta - Potomac, 20854

We don't want attainable housing initiatives in the R-200 zones. We don't need or want the multi family housing units and increase in traffic this will cause. We want to preserve our safe and clean neighborhoods. We pay plenty of housing tax and other fees to Montgomery County. You need to find other places to rezone or build more housing . We pay MORE than our fair share to the county.

755 Susan Anderson - Bethesda, 20814

Any plan that would change the housing as drastically as the plan that would allow duplex through quadraplexes into a existing neighborhood, should go through a rigorous study like the The Master Plan. Nothing about this plan seems to address the concept of affordable housing, parking, or school impact. It would just become more very expensive housing that would overwhelm the school systems and roads. Already Walter Johnson and Woodward are having problems about not enough community space. This is a clear grab by developers and has nothing to do with affordable housing. The Council needs to reject this proposal. I know that I am following this closely and will vote accordingly each election cycle.

I have served on numerous PTSA boards and given of my time and talents to this community. Please show some common sense and respect for the infrastructure.

756 Alexandria Kelly - Bethesda, 20814

Developed through comprehensive studies on infrastructure, schools, and traffic, the Master Plan stands ready for execution. Introducing a new housing initiative without similar evaluations raises questions about its necessity. Why not focus on implementing the existing framework instead?

Moreover, in many established neighborhoods, options like duplexes and triplexes often fail to meet affordability for the missing middle. And we are farther from parking options and public transit. Would love to understand the impact to the local school systems as well, as we are experiencing larger class sizes already after some big expansions and building updates within the last decade.

757	<p>Nancy Diazgranados - Bethesda, 20814</p> <p>Your plan only benefits construction companies, not low income families or current local residents. Duplex to quadruplex houses in Parkwood will be sold beyond the budget of any low income residents and without an impact study will only destroy current residential areas. I oppose your new initiatives that were clearly designed to benefit developers over your constituents. Shame on you!</p>
758	<p>Meg Grabb - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>I have asked for the last 10 years to please FIRST establish the infrastructure to handle the multi family homes. Kensington, Md has for the last 20 years (at least) had major traffic issues- including at the intersection of Knowles and connecticut. During rush hour, cars are piled in the median area, creating a bottle neck. Parking at local businesses is difficult.</p> <p>Please address driving and parking issues before instituting this approach (when you will have more cars and no way of handling it). Schools are another issue- how to grow quickly.</p> <p>It would help if the county came up with a thoughtful solution where they build infrastructure before housing.</p>
759	<p>Eric Nielsen - Kensington, 20895-4244</p> <p>I strongly support the proposed zoning changes in the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative that would allow for greater housing density in our county. The lack of affordable housing has become a major issue, and economic research consistently shows that restrictions on housing supply, including zoning rules, are a key driver of high housing costs.</p> <p>While some worry that the new housing created may not be low-priced, increasing the overall supply will help ease prices across all segments of the market. Economic research shows that as more units are built, pressure on rents and home prices decrease, benefiting households at all income levels.</p> <p>Beyond economics, this issue is also about basic fairness and equity. Restrictive zoning disproportionately harms lower-income families and young people trying to enter the housing market. By allowing more homes to be built, we can make our wonderful county more accessible and affordable for everyone.</p>
760	<p>Barron Williams - Chevy Chase, 20815-5326</p> <p>AHSI is cynical, deeply disingenuous, and pointlessly antagonizes the electorate, creating a unhelpful distraction from the real solutions. It propounds an ideology, not a meaningful increase to supply. The construction of one/two/four units at a time is grossly diseconomic. Throwing public subsidies at it to make it work would be an abuse of taxpayers. If you want to integrate neighborhoods, fix your building permitting regime to allow for the use of offsite prefabricated units, which are less than 1/2 the cost of onsite, and far less disruptive to</p>

install. To address the shortage that the public really cares about (SFH/TH, not apts), you have to stop throwing up every roadblock you can think of to greenfield development, where supply can be constructed in scale. Employers go to jurisdictions where their employees can get good housing at a reasonable cost--this is why our economy suffers. Stop making excuses and charge meaningful but transparent impact fees to cover the public cost.

761

Gabrielle Prandoni - KENSINGTON, 20895

I am apposed to the proposed plan to create affordable housing by building duplexes, triplexes and quad-plexes in designated neighborhoods. The county already has a plan to provide affordable middle housing to families wishing to purchase a home. I do not feel that the proposal takes into account the impact on schools, infrastructure, and existing communities. There is also the issue of parking that can become problematic for residents that do not have off street parking on their property. It is foolish to think that most of the residents of the proposed housing will not have cars, and will not to use them some of the time to commute to work or other activities. I feel, like most things that are proposed by the Planning Board, this is interest paid to developers and their desires to make more money rather than the quality of life for current residents.

762

Mariah Jane Murphy - Kensington, 20895

CITIZENS AGAINST REZONING / ATTAINABLE HOUSING PLAN.

My husband and I are older. We waited and saved our entire lives until we were 42 and 46 to buy a home in Parkwood, Kensington. No one helped us or felt sorry for us. We simply worked and waited until we had the opportunity. We didn't have a child until later as well because we made a financial decision. We have a tiny home on a small lot that needs a lot of work, but it we own a home.

To simply outright CHANGE THE ZONING in our neighborhood is INFURIATING and frankly IMMORAL. This will destroy our small home and our quaint neighborhood. The towering structure that potentially could built on the neighboring property will eliminate the sunlight, casting a shadow across our yard most of the day. Instead of looking out to see trees, we will see a monstrous structure. It will reduce pervious soil and will exacerbate the existing flooding issues. We will have to compete for parking as there is limited street parking in our quaint neighborhood. There will be added noise, traffic and school crowding.

According to a statement by Marc Elrich and extensive studies performed, the Montgomery County Master Plan ALREADY INCLUDES AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS to address the shortage of missing middle housing, without the addition of multi-housing units in established single family housing neighborhoods.

The Master Plan was developed through a series of studies on infrastructure, schools, and traffic patterns. Therefore, there is no need to introduce another attainable housing plan that has NOT UNDERGONE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS. Why would the council push forward a plan that lacks thorough studies instead of focusing on implementing the existing Master Plan?

Furthermore, in many established neighborhoods, duplex, triplex, and quadplex housing WILL NOT BE AFFORDABLE for the missing middle. In contrast, developments like the Lakewood Shopping Mall project, which will add 1,600 units, are more likely to be affordable. These types of developments offer parking spaces and access to public transportation, making them more suitable than adding multi-unit housing in established neighborhoods without the necessary infrastructure to support increased population.

An existing potential development in the works near White Flint Park, Rockville Pike near Edson Lane is UNDEVELOPED because the DEVELOPERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FILL THE UNITS. The developers have been sitting on the property for years. The carrying costs for an undeveloped property are incredibly high and yet, it makes more sense to lay undeveloped and wait for a housing need.

Please take the time to assess this decision. Rather than quickly forcing through a poor decision that will ruin so many citizens lives but destroying the value of the single largest investment in their lives, take the time to STOP THE PROPOSED REZONING. Thank you for your time.

Navjyot Chahal - Potomac, 20854

763

Planning's own data for September 2024 shows there are 35,240 approved but not yet built housing units of all allowed types throughout the county [https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sep2024Pipeline_RecordLevel.pdf].

And a 2020 Planning Department study [<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/residential-development-capacity-analysis/>] found that the county, excepting the municipalities of Rockville and Gaithersburg, had zoned capacity for 65,000 units!

So, why do we need the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI)?

Planning's own evidence says WE DON'T! And Planning hasn't provided evidence that AHSI will provide what the county needs; which is AFFORDABLE housing for its' residents.

Interest rates and supply line issues led to a huge decrease in market-rate development in recent years, so developers have failed to produce the housing that's been approved.

Our officials have decided that placing the burden for new housing – that apparently isn't needed and that the market is not providing! - on existing residential communities is the best way to proceed.

Does that make sense? No! Is that fair? No!

the hardworking residents should not be forced to bear the burden of developers' failure to build approved development plans.

AHSI is more interested in social engineering than providing affordable housing.
I know from past experience that AHSI will make whole areas unlivable and that it will lead to displacement of current residents.
AHSI IS NOT RIGHT FOR MOCO, when they have 35,240 unbuilt housing units and zoned capacity for nearly 30,000 more.

764 Caroline Hickey - Chevy Chase, 20815

Stop pushing this Attainable Housing Strategies nonsense that only enriches developers. County Exec Elrich has shown it to be based on fantasy, not data.

Instead, please put your efforts into improving our public schools, once among the best in the state. MCPS now ranks LAST in 8th grade proficiency.

Data below:

https://moderatelymoco.com/mcps-once-among-the-best-now-8th-grade-math-hits-last-place-and-many-subjects-outside-top-5/?fbclid=IwY2xjawF7NnVleHRuA2FlbQlxMAABHU2TzLNMknYilSCvfALxu1pvq-twK9iKmlUZ7qTIYEQpXPIMzFUNFVcOeA_aem_CGEr3iq9dRuuajnjGooxDg#google_vignette

765 Katie Engen - KENSINGTON, 20895

I oppose the current proposed initiative.

The Montgomery County Master Plan already includes affordable housing options to address the shortage of missing middle housing, without the addition of multi-housing units in established single family housing neighborhoods.

There was a series of studies on traffic, schools, and infrastructure to create this Master Plan. Offering a new/different plan that lacks any such studies is inappropriate and opens everyone to unintended outcomes and impacts. The council should not advocate for a plan that lacks proper impact assessments but should be implementing the existing Master Plan.

The missing middle likely cannot afford any new duplex, triplex, or quadplex added to established neighborhoods. In contrast, developments like the Lakewood Shopping Mall project, which will add 1,600 units, are more likely to be affordable. These types of developments offer parking spaces and access to public transportation, making them more suitable than adding multi-unit housing in established neighborhoods without the necessary infrastructure to support increased population.

Jyoti Chahal - Potomac, 20854

WHAT AHS DOESN'T DO AND MY REASONS TO OPPOSE AHS:

It does not address concerns that its recommendations may create incentives for outside real estate speculators to purchase single-family homes for redevelopment.

It does not address the environmental consequences of increased land coverage from the larger building footprints of higher density development, resulting in increased imperviousness, stormwater runoff, and loss of tree cover.

It does not consider its effect on "sprawl," one of the basic tenets of Smart Growth. Instead, it recommends establishing "Priority Housing Districts"

(PHDs) within a one-mile straight line measure from the Red and Purple Lines and non-high-capacity MARC Stations (some in the Agricultural Reserve) – a measure that is double the half-mile buffer widely accepted as the transit "walkshed." And it recommends large scale upzoning along nine corridors, some of which do not have high-capacity transit.

Its countywide rezoning of four residential single-family detached zones -almost 134,000 properties – upends the master plan process, which is geared to looking at each community carefully and includes a process for public review and engagement.

It does not explain (1) how existing zoning capacity (already in place through approved and adopted master plans) factors into meeting housing targets; and (2) how the 30,000+ housing units in the county's development "pipeline" - approved but not built – factor into meeting those targets. These projects are approved plans ready for construction – they only need to pull the permits. See May 2024 Pipeline here: https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/May2024_PipelineBuildoutChart.pdf .

It does not address the loss of trees on properties that redevelop. Trees are important for addressing climate change and for absorbing water to lessen stormwater runoff and flooding.

It does not address road capacity needs for the additional cars that likely would come from additional households.

It does not address the effects of reduced parking requirements, instead relying on street parking to accommodate additional households, many of which could be built along residential streets not wide enough to accommodate both through-traffic and cars parked on each side.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES?

Master plans adopted over the past several years have zoned for a significant amount of additional housing density at or near transit-oriented areas – centers intended to create a critical mass of people to support jobs and retail. Much of this zoned capacity remains unbuilt today. Yet AHS recommends creating new, denser market-rate housing away from the centers, proposing numerous ways to facilitate it in neighborhoods farther from jobs and retail. This incentivizes those who can afford market-rate housing to move from the centers to some areas that now offer affordable rents and home-ownership opportunities for lower income households, potentially causing displacement.

AHS acknowledges that conversion of individual properties from single-family homes to other housing types is a heavy lift for the average homeowner (see AHS report pages 45-48 describing "catalyst policies" such as property tax refunds, "conversion assistance toolkits", and

conversion loan funds). This suggests the possibility that investor-driven redevelopment is more likely, potentially affecting the County's rental housing market:

Upzoning increases land values, which in turn raises property taxes. This may incentivize property owners to sell to investors for redevelopment of one or several properties in a neighborhood – particularly owners who rent out their single-family detached properties or have purchased them to roll them over for profit.

Gentrification can occur in neighborhoods where housing is currently affordable, as higher-income residents move into new, market-rate housing.

Some renters may be displaced – currently, single-family housing stock in the County accounts for more than 2/3 of the family-sized rental units. Based on Countystat analysis, 5 – 15% of single-family detached homes in many neighborhoods are rental-occupied properties. Of the 7,500 renter-occupied units, 40% or an estimated 3,000 are affordable to a family making 65% AMI or below (based on HUD Fair Market Rent Documentation). These homes are at risk of being redeveloped into more expensive housing units. Even if renters are not displaced, rents may rise as property values increase.

Larger “footprints” on redeveloped lots mean increases in impervious land coverage, more stormwater runoff, and the potential for increased flooding. This could be exacerbated by the loss of trees removed during redevelopment in areas where there are few places to replace them.

767

Jill Lipton - Kensington, 20895

I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative.

After listening to the proposal, I heard too many "we aren't sure of that" regarding the impact on roads and schools. It is not advisable to go ahead with such strategies until the impact of that strategy is investigated more closely.

The concept is well intended, however, more information about its impact is necessary before attempting to implement it.

768

James Lee - Kensington, 20895

I strongly support the proposed zoning changes in the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative that would allow for greater housing density in our county. The lack of affordable housing has become a major issue, and economic research consistently shows that restrictions on housing supply, including zoning rules, are a key driver of high housing costs.

While some worry that the new housing created may not be low-priced, increasing the overall supply will help ease prices across all segments of the market. Economic research shows that as more units are built, pressure on rents and home prices decrease, benefiting households at all income levels.

Beyond economics, this issue is also about basic fairness and equity. Restrictive zoning disproportionately harms lower-income families and young people trying to enter the housing market. By allowing more homes to be built, we can make our wonderful county more accessible and affordable for everyone.

769	<p>Candida Harty - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>I am not in favor of this initiative. While I support increasing attainable housing, this initiative does nothing to address the already overburdened infrastructure of the area. While there are promises that developers will have to do certain work, that is not nearly sufficient. Before the county allows rezoning that will increase population density in some areas, the county must first actually address (not more bandaid quick fixes) problems with aging water pipes, worsening storm drainage, cutting down too many trees to protect increasing wires, unreliable buses, severe traffic congestion, no good biking paths to metro, and biggest of all—severely overcrowded schools with overly large class sizes (32 kids per class?!). after all that is addressed, we can turn to reconsidering this type of initiative.</p>
770	<p>Christine Cahn - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>The proposed housing strategy would result in a massive rezoning. The sole beneficiaries would be builders/developers. The designers of the proposal aren't listening to homeowners, haven't undertaken solid studies of their plans, including understanding the implications for infrastructure. I encourage the planning board to engage in real listening and not just go through the motions.</p>
771	<p>Paul Kruchoski - Silver Spring, 20910</p> <p>The Attainable Housing strategy remains exactly what we need in Montgomery County. We need more housing and more affordable housing. That can only be done with greater zoning flexibility and greater density. Thank you for your exceptional work, despite the avid and vociferous criticism that this work has received. You're doing well for our futures.</p>
772	<p>Hannah Elson - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>Good going councilmembers - - turn nice residential neighborhoods into congested urban slums, when there are plenty of other options available as to where to put high density housing.</p>
773	<p>Richard White - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>While I understand the need to increase the affordable housing stock in Montgomery County, I have serious concerns about the current proposal and the significant negative impact it would have on the Chevy Chase neighborhood. The Chevy Chase neighborhood with its historic housing stock and emphasis on families and stewardship of its open spaces is an attraction to businesses looking to relocate as they consider attracting employees and also a solid tax base for the Country. The current housing proposal, would potentially dramatically alter the character and attractiveness of the Chevy Chase neighborhood to the detriment of the whole County. As such a neighborhood can not be easily recreated. I would ask the Council to consider dramatically scaling back its proposal to allow multi-family dwellings in the interior parts of Chevy Chase.</p>
774	<p>Connie Sadler - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I wholly support the objections to the Montgomery County Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative that have already been voiced by Marc Elrich and many, many residents in Montgomery County. The AHSI is ill-conceived and fundamentally lacking in the</p>

kind of thorough study required before such a dramatic community-altering program should be approved and implemented. The AHS Report does not begin to address the numerous negative impacts of the AHSI, including environmental impacts, traffic impacts, the financial bonanza the AHSI would create for builders and developers who are clearly interested in profit and will build multi-unit structures in the middle of neighborhoods that are now zoned for single-family homes and charge the highest amounts possible for each unit. In many neighborhoods, including Rollingwood in Chevy Chase, MD where my husband and I live and own a , these multi-plex units will be priced at several million dollars each. Hardly a way of providing housing options to lower-income people or further diversifying areas of the County. Builders and developers would no doubt be able to further sub-divide lots newly allowed by the AHSI zoning changes so that the number of duplexes, triplexes and four-plexes allowed "by right" would then be further expanded, resulting in doubling of the number of multi-plex units to be allowed "by right" to occupy lots where currently one single-family home exists. There is nothing "attainable" or "affordable" about this plan for lower-income buyers and the only real beneficiaries will be the builders and developers who can cram more high-priced housing into what are and have always been single family home lots. Already sparse on-street parking will be substantially further stressed. AHSI "by right" development of multi-plex structures in place of the existing single-family zoned communities will totally disrupt the quiet, tree-filled neighborhood of Rollingwood. Flooding of streets during heavy rains, already an issue because of topography, will be exacerbated by the negative impacts to the environment. The AHSI report makes clear that many pie-in-the-sky assumptions have been made by the proponents of the AHSI, including an unfounded assumption that residents in all of the affected communities will not own or use automobiles and will instead walk lengthy distances to Metro stations, bicycle, or find other means of transportation in all kinds of weather and without regard to age, mobility, commuting distances, etc. This is a fallacy. The report neglects to provide an in-depth study on the financial impact to existing single-family communities that would be impacted by the AHSI. Many of the current residents in the 82% of the County that would be rezoned by the AHS are UNAWARE of the AHS and its negative impacts. Even those who have tried to slog through reading the Report come away confused and uncertain whether their communities are included in the rezoning, what financial impacts will occur, etc. It seems that the primary goal of AHSI as structured is to allow builders and developers to expand the number of multi-million dollar units they can construct in what are single-family zoned neighborhoods. None of this is fair to the current residents and homeowners, but it will line the pockets of builders and developers. The AHSI cannot be approved by the Council.

775

Allison DiGiovanni - chevy chase, 20815

I categorically oppose this initiative. It fails to deliver true attainable housing for our county, is based on insufficient data, and does not adequately address critical issues such as education, infrastructure, and transportation. Instead, it prioritizes the interests of specific groups

over the needs and desires of the broader population. If this initiative moves forward, I will not support Friedson for County Executive, and I will strongly advise those within my circle to do the same

776 Katherine Denby - Chevy Chase, 20815

I categorically oppose this initiative. It fails to deliver true affordable housing for our county, is based on insufficient data, and does not adequately address critical issues such as education, infrastructure, and transportation. Instead, it prioritizes the interests of specific groups over the needs and desires of the broader population. Further, this initiative was not preceded by the adequate information finding, data collection, and resident-sounding that should be a predicate of any democratic process, especially for changes of this magnitude. If this initiative moves forward, I will not support Friedson for County Executive, and I will strongly advise those within my circle to do the same.

777 Joel Miller - Chevy Chase, 20815

The prospect of the County encouraging tearing down more modest homes and cramming in luxury townhouses, condos, or McMansions in the name of “affordable housing” is appalling. Why throw this massive subsidy to developers and leave neighborhoods with oversized, overpriced housing?

If the County wants more affordable housing provide tax credits or other subsidies. Don’t pretend that the developers will altruistically provide it.

778 Frederica Wheeler - Chevy Chase, 20815

Please do not approve multi unit dwellings for the Town of Chevy chase. The lots are small here. There is not room for more cars. The streets are narrow. Already some are practically impossible because of parked cars on both sides of the streets.

779 Michael Pollard - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am opposed to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. It will not achieve the objective of assuring affordable/attainable housing for middle income individuals/families. It will degrade the quality and integrity of existing single family zoned neighborhoods. The initiative will only enrich real estate speculators, developers and agents. Further, the tree canopy, water runoff and natural wildlife habitats will be significantly and negatively affected in the Town of Chevy Chase. The County has large tracts of undeveloped land that are more appropriate for development of middle income housing and should be utilized. The Initiative is poorly thought out and should be rejected by the County Council.

780

Kristin Weber - Kensington, 20895

According to a statement by Marc Elrich, the Montgomery County Master Plan already includes affordable housing options to address the shortage of missing middle housing, without the addition of multi-housing units in established single family housing neighborhoods.

The Master Plan was developed through a series of studies on infrastructure, schools, and traffic patterns. Therefore, there is no need to introduce another attainable housing plan that hasn't undergone similar impact assessments. Why would the council push forward a plan that lacks thorough studies instead of focusing on implementing the existing Master Plan?

Furthermore, in many established neighborhoods, duplex, triplex, and quadplex housing may not be affordable for the missing middle. In contrast, developments like the Lakewood Shopping Mall project, which will add 1,600 units, are more likely to be affordable. These types of developments offer parking spaces and access to public transportation, making them more suitable than adding multi-unit housing in established neighborhoods without the necessary infrastructure to support increased population.

I strongly disagree with the proposed changes to single-family neighborhoods in Montgomery County for the above stated reasons.

781

Kelly McMahon - Chevy Chase, 20815

ENOUGH ENOUGH ENOUGH!!

I grew up in Chicago and when housing units rather than homes were built on residential streets people slowly moved away. Apartment units are not homes and there are plenty of empty apartment's/condos in downtown Bethesda that can accommodate people. Bethesda does not resemble the quaint neighborhood it was 30 years ago. Construction for the last 20 years has been a nightmare for the residents who had no voice in the construction plans yet pay some of the highest property taxes in Maryland.

782

Charles Jacobs - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for the community engagement opportunities on this initiative. I participated in the virtual session, have read the Planning Board's Recommendations and have given this issue thought. I recently retired and moved to Chevy Chase from Baltimore. I was the General Counsel of a real estate development and entertainment company that developed and operated work force housing.

As a parent of young adults that are having difficulty finding affordable next homes with a reasonable commute to work, I get the problem.

The Planning Board's proposal will not work. The problem needs to be attacked from a different angle - subsidies, income verification and an obligation on the part of developers in the county of large scale developments, to include work force housing.

As proposed, you will eliminate older housing stock infill neighborhoods that are affordable and will replace them with duplexes, triplexes, etc that will sell for more per unit. There is an example of this - a triplex, that was just constructed near the Target on Wisconsin in Bethesda.

Relaxing parking requirements per unit will create an on street parking and traffic congestion problem in many neighborhoods. With cars parked on both sides of the streets in the Town of Chevy Chase, traffic can only flow in one direction. We get through today as a result of cars taking turns going in both directions - with cars pulling into open spaces to let other cars pass in the other direction. This proposal, over time, if successful, will create gridlock and results public safety issues - will fire and emergency vehicles be able to get through.

I have the same concerns that have been repeatedly expressed concerning inadequate infrastructure and schools.

This is simply a bad plan that doesn't address the underlying problem.

Charles Jacobs

783

Anne Pyne - Silver Spring, 20901

I live in Woodmoor and have for the past 8 years. I cannot imagine the traffic lanes going from 3 each way to 2 by the busy intersection. I highly oppose that change.

I also oppose building additional apartments in this already congested area. How will the schools/infrastructure support that? I oppose.

784

Margaret Clark - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear County Council,

I don't sense intelligent planning to accommodate more dense, multi-family housing in the towns surrounding Bethesda. Already, there is crowded parking on my street. Traffic in Bethesda is difficult. People are using cement for large driveways, water runoff is a problem. We are losing what little green space is left. Schools are overcrowded. Apartment buildings in Bethesda could alleviate housing problems, but it seems developers only want to build high end buildings. Everyone wants to make more money, for themselves, for the county. The County Council could drive us away from the soon to be overcrowding .

785

Jane Wood - Chevy Chase, 20815

I fully agree with the arguments made by County Executive Marc Elrich in the Montgomery County Update on October 11, 2024. The strategy initiative is not well conceived, will destroy communities built up carefully over decades, and will overload infrastructure and other

Op public services without achieving affordable housing. The consultation process is flawed. On the very border of our Town of Chevy Chase, row houses were just built that sell for millions of dollars each. Similar buildings will sprinkle through our town adding cars, people and noise, all from the wealthy, not from the poor. Your objective of righting past wrongs through such housing will not be achieved. There are better ways, as Mr. Elrich points out.

786

Lindsay Conway - Chevy Chase Village, 20815

I am very much opposed to multi unit housing in Chevy Chase. I live in Chevy Chase Village and having multi family housing or condominiums in our neighborhood would significantly detract from the look and feel, and most importantly from the original plan for our historic neighborhood.

787

Eileen Magee - Kensington, 20895

I am opposed to this open-ended, secretive project hurriedly pulled together without citizen input. It makes me wonder what developers will be the real beneficiaries of this proposal.

788

JOANNE CONNORS - Silver Spring, 20901-2422

I am so against this for many reasons. But the main reason is that I brought my house in a single family neighborhood and I expect it to stay single family. You have already allowed houses to be turned into room rentals on my street. The lots are too small for duplexes, etc. The parking is already a problem with the room rentals and the street. Any relaxation on the parking restrictions would be detrimental to the current residents and the restaurants down the street that rely on neighborhood parking for their customers. And don't get me started about allowing five story buildings on University Boulevard. This is an outrageous plan.

789

Michael Kimberly - Chevy Chase, 20815

Regulators have an obligation to back up their policy proposals with data and rational analysis. Supposition -- even intuitive supposition -- isn't enough. The county's Attainable Housing Strategies Report is based entirely on the unsupported assumption that "greater density and development flexibility" will result in housing "attainability." But that assumption is neither supported by evidence nor intuitively plausible.

Builders developing lots are motivated by profit, not social justice. If building a triplex or duplex will make them more money, they will build a triplex or duplex. If it won't, they won't. Either way, the result will not be "attainable" housing, but profit-maximizing housing. Consider the new development at 4500 Walsh, which is offering triplex units initially offered for a whopping \$3.65M each and recently reduced to a mere \$3.3M. That is not "attainable" by any standard.

Unless the county intends to implement direct price controls -- and absolutely should not -- this new policy will succeed only in destroying the suburban character of the Town. It will do nothing to contain housing costs.

790

Kay O'Brien - CHEVY CHASE, 20815

This plan has NOT been researched or thought out thoroughly.
I am totally against it!!

791

Mary Cutler - Chevy Chase, 20815

The plan as outlined is not appropriate for our close-in neighborhood. While a duplex with driveways might work on some lots, a quadplex would be too large for most lots especially because it would not allow additional input from affected neighbors. Apartment buildings of nineteen units, without offstreet parking, on Wisconsin Ave would create a terrible situation because the neighborhood streets are narrow and can only accommodate one-side of street parking. The idea that families can live here without a car is unrealistic. The current construction of thousands of new apartments in downtown Bethesda and Friendship Heights clearly obviates the need for these small apartment buildings. No plans for upgrading infrastructure (water, sewage, additional schools etc) have been presented and solving these issues will be costly. Finally, there is no convincing evidence that the growth trajectory of Montgomery County, based on reliable data, will require this level of additional housing. This plan requires complete reworking so that it addresses the situation here.

792

Laurie Mignone - Chevy Chase, 20815

I do not support the Planning Department's recommendations, as such a significant change in zoning cannot be considered in isolation. The Strategy is missing key considerations, especially the negative impact increased population density would have on our schools, streets, and public services.

MCPS already has schools that are overcrowded and understaffed, resulting in MCPS becoming a less enticing reason to move to the county, which is in direct opposition to the Planning Department's goal.

Traffic along the Connecticut Ave and Wisconsin Ave corridors is already dense, which is another negative to attracting more people to the area. In addition, Bethesda continues to bring large scale development projects online, which will only compound the current traffic and impact on infrastructure. I do not think that it is appropriate to add more density to the Bethesda area in addition to these massive buildings that are continuing to be built.

This Strategy is making me regret my decision to move the County 11 years ago. I bought my first single family home, wanting to live in a single family neighborhood with sidewalks and tree cover. My son is already in a school that is under-resourced, and my commute to work is nearly an hour each way. This strategy will negatively impact all of my reasons for moving here, which are already making life difficult for me and my family.

I sincerely ask the County Council to stop; do not consider any legislation related to this Strategy in its current form.

793

Elizabeth Dupree - Chevy Chase, 20815

We are completely against this proposal led by Andrew Friedson. It has the potential to destroy the character of the neighborhood, while greatly benefitting developers and not adding significant housing. An option - it seems to us - that would provide much more housing and not destroy the neighborhood is using the Saks lot.

794

John Riesch - Chevy Chase, 20815

All Montco Council Members,

I have submitted to Council Member Friedman a detailed description of the reasons that I oppose the AHSI that is about to be reviewed by the Council.

The initiative is a wrongful, and probably illegal, approach to the issue of stimulating the construction of new housing in Montco. The planning work is missing many strategic pieces including a needed impact study on the many residential and County issues that the plan would impact....taxes, schools, traffic congestion, utility supply, parking, and newly created investment needs such as environmental, public parks and recreation, and County services such as police, fire, trash and road repair. The use of the term "attainable" is also incorrect as the conversion of high value single home sites into higher value multiple residences offers no possible path to new home buyers looking for lower purchase economics. Why is the County more interested in new homebuyers, and not the current residents and tax payers?

I live in Chevy Chase and anticipate a significant reduction in the value of my home, and other quality of life adverse changes if the plan is approved. It is obvious that Developers, who are financially supporting the changes, and stand to make millions of Dollars of profit, are the beneficiaries of the plan, not your current resident taxpayers and voters. Reject this plan as it is an unlawful taking of my residential rights to appropriate single family housing and zoning that is in place, and not subject to Council revision with no ballot input. Rejecting the voters of Montco voice of opposition to AHSI is a huge political mistake.

795

Jane Smith - Rockville, 20853

Please reconsider your approach to this initiative, as "one size fits most" will FOREVER change the County's SFH neighborhoods, and not for the better. There has been a shameful lack of data provided as to the ACTUAL need for these drastic plans that build more overpriced market rate housing. What is ACTUALLY needed in Montgomery County is housing that the average working family can afford that maintains the character of each neighborhood, especially in the already densely populated areas and historic districts.

Although the listening sessions were well-attended, those who knew about them and this initiative are but a fraction of the number who NEED to know about it and I feel that there has been a woeful lack of information provided to County residents affected. We purchased our

home in an SFH neighborhood for a REASON. Many reasons, actually, but I can promise you that not one of them was to be betrayed by our County officials in this manner.

796 Amanda La Forge - Chevy Chase, 20815

Please require developers to include more affordable housing when they are given permits by the County. The current 12.5 to 15% is clearly not enough. 18 to 20% is more reasonable and will get the County more moderately priced units. This won't solve the problem overnight but would be a step in the right direction.

797 Frith Crandall - Silver Spring, 20910

I have listened to all the listening sessions, and while I share in many of the concerns and comments raised in those sessions, I want to highlight my primary objections and concerns regarding the Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiatives (AHSI):

1. The AHSI is premature and overreaching in scope.

According to the Planning Board, the County needs 31,000 more housing units by 2030. See

https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/07/Local-Housing-Targets-Planning-Board-07.20.2023_Final.pdf]

In addition, the Planning's own data for September 2024 shows there are 35,240 approved but not yet built housing units of all allowed types throughout the county. [https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sep2024Pipeline_RecordLevel.pdf]].

The Council needs to take into account and allow for the planned construction of these housing units prior to enacting any zoning that would eliminate 85% of single family residential communities throughout the County. Without doing so, the County is acting prematurely.

2. The AHSI will have inequitable impacts and is exclusionary.

I have listened to all of the listening sessions. It is clear that the communities that will most likely be negatively impacted by the proposed zoning will be the working middle class Latino and Black communities in the eastern part of the county who have worked diligently to purchase and hold on to their single family homes and build communities in the zones targeted for development. These properties are the least expensive properties in the development areas and as stated in public comments, people are already being solicited by developers. These same people are not going to be the beneficiaries of the "vision" for "walkable communities" like Pike and Rose, because they must drive to their jobs, often long distances, and cannot afford to dine and shop at such places. Furthermore, county public transportation is woefully lagging. The proposed zoning will only benefit a certain class of people: those who can afford condominiums in the \$500,000 - \$850,000 range, which is a high price. [This of course assumes that the built units are sold as condominiums, not leased as rentals. I've heard nothing to guarantee this fact].

3. Any Housing Initiative Should Focus on Affordable Housing.

As stated above, the housing that would be constructed by private developers will be driven by market rate prices. In most of the communities because of the location near transit and the quality of the neighborhoods, this housing will be relatively or very expensive and affordable to an exclusive group of people. I believe that the government should be focused on incentivizing, organizing and subsidizing affordable housing, because the private sector will not do so.

4. The Proposed "Pattern Book" Plat Plans Must Limit the Amount of Impermeable Pavement.

Under the current pattern book plans, single family plots would be substantially covered with impermeable pavement to allow for increased house size and for additional parking in back. This will cause the loss of trees, including in my neighborhood, potentially large overstory trees, and create storm water runoff issues, which in my neighborhood is already a huge problem. This is also contrary to the County's own environmental goals of planting more trees!! Any pattern book plan needs to limit the amount of impermeable pavement, and protect trees, especially old growth overstory trees.

5. "By Right" Development Should Include Some Public Comment Rights

Property owners need to have some rights to comment on a development going up next to them or in their immediate neighborhood, regardless of whether it is 2, 3, 4 or more units, or if it is following a pattern book. The development could still have unique environmental or infrastructure impacts that the neighbors have a right to comment on, and there should not be a disenfranchisement of the public of a right to comment. I believe that a streamlined public comment process could be provided, but it should not be eliminated.

798

David Beightol - Chevy Chase, 20815

the county council should Press Pause on the Attainable Housing Strategy Initiative. There is plenty of land to develop more affordable housing near metro...do not destroy our neighborhoods

799

Alexandra Beatty - Chevy Chase, 20815-5301

Hello, I favor the goal of improving affordable housing opportunities for people at all income levels but oppose the proposal currently on the table. The analysis of the problems in Montgomery County and their causes has not been adequate. The argument for the proposed solution is vague and weak. I fear it will result in denser high-income housing, with insufficient services, leaving lower and middle income residents no better off. Please take the time to explore the possible options more carefully, and engage the residents of the county more systematically in debate about their potential pros and cons.

800

Bridget Frye - Bethesda, 20814

There is no data to support the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. The result will most likely not produce affordable housing for those in need. The rich developers will make more money and housing prices will continue to make affordable housing unattainable. Our communities, roads and schools are already overcrowded. I do not support this initiative.

801	<p>Ally Stahl - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>There needs to be a stipulation that multi family properties have enough off street parking. Street parking is already limited!</p>
802	<p>Ellen Cohen - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>As a 6 year resident of Chevy Chase west I invested a LOT of money to renovate my home. It is well known that most people have most of their money invested in their homes. As a past real estate agent in NJ for 20 years it is also well known that what surrounds that home you wish to buy influences the price. For instance homes on main streets are worth LESS than those on off main road homes. Depending on what you're next to also influences selling price, as in all the "attainable" houses you are talking about will reduce the price I can get for my home when I sell if I'm next to a multi story house. And attainable!! I don't think so. If a builder buys my house for say 1.5 mi, tears it down and invests a million to build multiple units what do you think he will ask? 500k? I don't think so. Seems he'll get at least 1-1.5 mil PER UNIT so 4 units will make him 4+ mil but not attainable for those people you say you're aiming for. The only ones making out like bandits are the builders.</p> <p>As I have heard Mr Friedson lives in Potomac where they voted it down. Wonder how that happened? NOT IN MY BACKYARD AS THEY SAY!! I vote this ill advised plan a NO.</p> <p>THANK YOU</p>
803	<p>James McSavaney - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>As a Pastor, I'm concerned that the initiative has no requirements for affordable housing. This strategy is not helpful for families seeking to live in Montgomery County. It is just a permission slip for developers to steamroll over concerned neighbors, sidestep infrastructure concerns, and put up multi dwelling units to sell them at unaffordable prices. It is a plan not for housing but for profiting off the reputation of the County, ultimately to its detriment. Please consider streamlining other efforts instead, especially Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 24-01, the Facilitating Affordable Inclusive Transformational Housing (FAITH) ZTA.</p>
804	<p>Joani Graves - North Bethesda, 20852-3541</p> <p>Why in the world would you mix up apartments, shacks, etc., in a residential area of single-family houses. What a mess that is going to look like. Already there is an issue of crowded streets, schools, and now to add more housing to areas that are already maxed out.</p>
805	<p>Melanie Danberg - Garrett Park, 20896</p> <p>I hope the county looks for opportunities for affordable housing in new housing areas previously zoned as single family use. When adding multiplex housing option in areas previously zoned as single family use, the county must also concurrently review what additional traffic light and or other road features are needed for safe neighborhoods.</p> <p>Additionally, the MCPS should also report how the additional housing will affect space planning. We need more affordable housing, and we need transparency for planning for this new growth.</p>

806	<p>Judy Gordon - Rockville, 20852</p> <p>The county needs more affordable housing options — lack of affordable housing is a main cause of homelessness. I'm in favor of supporting efforts in my area to increase availability of medium and low income housing.</p>
807	<p>Harry Benner - Chevy Chase., 20815</p> <p>The use of the term “attainable“ is Orwellian. It doesn't mean affordable as it suggests. It means “as dense as possible without letting poor people in.” This proposal will end single-family housing in most of Montgomery County. And who will that benefit? Certainly not those who need lower cost housing. Undoubtedly the answer is developers. Once they start to buy these properties they will make a fortune in turning them into multi-family luxury housing.. The three buildings they've already built on Walsh Street give us a preview of the atrocity that will result from this ill-conceived Proposed legislation. One result of this action will be that people who want single-family housing will leave Montgomery County and move to the district. If I wanted to maintain my single-family home and was zoned out by this legislation, I could easily buy a similar house half a mile or a mile away in DC. Why drive taxpayers out of the county? Or I could Choose to go to HowardCounty. There is no adequate parking in our neighborhood to start with. You must plan for at least two cars per family unit. With multiple family dwelling in our neighborhood there would literally be no place whatever to park. The street I live on is two lanes wide and one lane is reserved for parking. You should reflect on the fact that downtown Bethesda is a relatively easy place to park and drive to. And why is that? Sprinkled throughout Bethesda are giant concrete multi story concrete parking garages. That is what you're going to need to spread all throughout these neighborhoods that would be disrupted by your densification of housing.No thought apparently has been given to parking at all; as far as I can see no thought has been given to upgrading the electrical or storage systems as well. Sincerely, who is asking for this change? I doubt that any substantial number of citizens at all are in favor of this change. I can guarantee you one thing. I have talked to many of my neighbors, and any elected politician who supports this better be looking for a new job immediately after the election. That may be what you're interested in in fact. The developers will certainly welcome you with open arms. You are doing their bidding, not carrying out the wishes of the people you are supposed to represent. Harry Benner.</p>
808	<p>Tami MArk - Bethesda, 20814</p> <p>I urge you to reject the changes in single-family residential zoning recommended in the Montgomery Planning Board's Attainable Housing Strategies Report. In our neighborhood (Locust Hill (intersection of Wisconsin Avenue/Rockville Pike and Cedar Lane)) there is plenty of foot traffic (people walking for enjoyment, exercise and to get to and from the Medical Center Metro), a fair amount of cut-through/car traffic (to Stone Ridge School and between Wisconsin and Cedar Lane), but no sidewalks. The AHS Report recommends increased density (from duplexes to small apartment buildings) while reducing the requirements for off-street parking. This will clog the streets, make walking more hazardous, and generally reduce the quality of living in the neighborhood.</p> <p>Locust Hill is not the only County neighborhood like this. Many single family neighborhoods in the County have no sidewalks, narrow streets, and are generally laid out for single family homes.</p> <p>There are currently zoning provisions that allow accessory buildings in single family neighborhoods. Right now, a neighbor on Broad Brook Drive has a permit sign up to allow an accessory building (granny flat/in-law suite) in their back yard. A couple other neighbors already</p>

have similar accessory buildings. That's a reasonable accommodation to increased density (follow the existing practices/requirements). Duplexes, triplexes, apartment buildings totally change the character of the neighborhood to the detriment of the existing residents. Moreover, we live 1 mile from the old White Flint mall where there are miles of open space waiting for apartment buildings. I urge the Council to reject the proposed up-zoning of single-family housing.

809

Kevin Bromberg - Chevy Chase, 20815

To: County Council Members
Subject: THRIVE 2050 and AHSI
From: Kevin Bromberg, Chevy Chase, MD
Date: October 12, 2024

I have been a resident of Section 5, Chevy Chase, since 1979, and I strongly oppose the imposition of this extreme and unsupported plan to rezone 82% of currently single-family homes in Montgomery County. After carefully reviewing THRIVE 2050 and the AHSI plan, it is evident that neither the Planning Commission nor the Council has engaged in meaningful planning. These documents seem to be based on assumptions, animus against single-family zoning, and unsupported conclusions. In my 45 years in Chevy Chase, I don't recall such egregiously misguided action by the County. For those of us familiar with local history, this feels reminiscent of the Clarksburg debacle.

It is clear that over the past two years, the Council and the Planning Board have not been listening to the citizens. The much-repeated claim of substantial public outreach has hardly reached even a small fraction of the affected population. In fact, even today, within the highly informed Section 5 community of 225 households, I estimate that fewer than half of the residents are even aware of this proposal. However, all of Section 5, as well as residents across Montgomery County, will remember how the Council has handled this proposal when the next election arrives.

810

Jean Abels - Garrett Park, 20896

With constant growing demand for more housing, single family home neighborhoods or zones simply are no longer sustainable. From an unselfish point of view it totally makes sense to relax single family zoning in Garrett Park and all other zones/neighborhoods in the county.

811

Suzanne Resnick - Chevy Chase, 20815

Because of increase in traffic and parking on a narrow street, I can barely get through my street to my house. Where are even more cars going to go or park? Underground garages?

812

Balinda Hinds - Chevy Chase, 20815

We are against the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. We send our children to MCPS schools and believe county efforts are better spent improving the quality of education our children receive. More focus on curriculum and accountability catching students up from

ground lost during excessive COVID school closure. Not to mention school overcrowding, lack of funding, and transportation challenges that already exist. Additionally, please note that we are not from a family of “generational wealth” as generalized during the listening sessions.

813 Danny Lopes - Garrett Park, 20896

This should not be allowed in neighborhoods that are strictly single family dwellings. I deconstructs the fabric of the original creation of the neighborhoods.

814 Tony Lopes - Garrett Park, 20896

This is a bad idea for single family neighborhoods. It will create more traffic and make Montgomery county less desirable.

815 Dan Ullman - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to express my opposition to the ZTA and the specter of radical, unchecked zoning code changes in MoCo.

The Zoning Board's recommendation is ill-advised at best. Its assurances of “attainable housing” is an easily contradicted ruse, barely cloaking that it does not provide "affordable" housing, at all. If adapted, the plan will destroy neighborhoods, increase congestion, and will conveniently profit developers, off the backs of your constituents. Remember your constituents? Remember us? We are the ones who voted you into office. Not the imaginary residents of the MoCo in 25 years who inhabit triplexes going for \$5 Million dollars, a unit.

I wonder how many of your constituents will flee to Virginia—or DC—where you are still allowed to live in neighborhood of single family houses, if you so choose.

Consequently, the ZTA will not increase MoCo’s population, tax base, or middle class housing. Quite the contrary. Even the Zoning Board's representative conceded that the ZTA is "not a pancea." Perhaps a change that affects 82% of the housing in MoCo-- and does not fix the supposed "problem"--should be reconsidered.

My neighbors and I are motivated to stop any and all legislation stemming from the ZTA. We are organized. We are energized. We are learning from our friends in Arlington who stopped similar, ill-advised zoning legislation.

We have long electoral memories, too.

Please press pause on this unfortunate recommendation.

Thanks.

Dan Ullman

816 Martha Plotkin - Chevy Chase, 20815

This initiative is ill conceived and ignores the reality of the already impossible traffic and parking problems. Regardless of proximity to metro, residents have cars for shopping, travel and commutes away from metro. It is already impossible some times of the day to get out of my street and I am often blocked from getting out of my driveway because people park illegally when no spaces are left on the street. This isn't even affordable housing. There is so much overdevelopment in Bethesda already that one has to question both the motivation of those supporting it and the assumptions on which this is based. The only people who benefit are the developers and those who they back.

817 Joan Hirn - chevy chase, 20815

Hello! Please pause AHSI. By now, we all know it's fake, and that the real motive is developer profits, since the initiative would not provide 'affordable' housing, but instead the new housing would sell for 3 times the value of current housing in the county. The plan would disrupt the quality of life for county residents, devastate the infrastructure, undermine the value of community, and ruin the cohesiveness of MoCo neighborhoods. It would be outrageously irresponsible if the council goes forward on this, and the council would end up being held accountable. Thank you, -Section 5 Chevy Chase resident for 35 years.

818 JA Hirn - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Councilmembers,
Please PAUSE AHSI!

Luxury multi-family units, which are effectively encouraged by the plan, obviously do not expand access to attainable housing. The plan would permit duplexes, triplexes, and quadraplexes to be built throughout broad swaths of the County. Despite this being permitted in the name of attainable housing, the plan does not contain anything to ensure attainability. Inevitably, if a builder has a choice between building a luxury quadraplex or low-cost housing, the choice is obvious. The purchase price for the builder is the same either way, so why wouldn't the builder want to make more money rather than less?

No study of how to make housing attainable. This is a glaring defect in the process. None of the hundreds of pages of documents associated with the plan address how to make the multiplexes attainable. The Planning Board does not address this issue in any way.

No transparency regarding the role of builders in creating this plan. We are not against builders being paid for their work. But we would appreciate transparency. What role did builders and developers have in the preparation of this plan? The residents of Montgomery County have a right to know.

No interest in the democratic process. Why isn't this radical plan being put to a vote of the residents of Montgomery County? The idea of fundamentally changing an entire County without any indication of public support is strikingly undemocratic.

There is a lack of reliable data on new housing starts in Montgomery County. The County has used inaccurate data as the basis for recommending new housing that is needed. In fact, the County has been ridiculed publicly for its inaccurate records on this issue.

See <https://montgomeryperspective.com/2024/08/07/will-we-ever-know-whether-we-are-building-enough-housing/> The question of how much additional housing is needed must be clarified before legislating how much additional housing is necessary for the County.

An Arlington County, VA circuit judge recently struck down a county policy that eliminated single family-only zoning in that county due to inadequate study of potential impacts of allowing town homes and small condo buildings in areas not initially planned for them.

No study has been done on the effect of the housing plan on school capacity. Our children could be jammed into classes that are perhaps twice as large, and there is no plan to address that.

The Planning Board devoted one vague sentence to this issue in its 2024 report: "The Planning Board also believes that impacts of schools for the house-scaled products will be de minimis." That is the entire discussion of this issue, which is shockingly negligent, with no study cited for this unfounded belief.

No study has been done on the effect of doubling or quadrupling the population of neighborhoods with narrow roads and on-street parking. With this massive increase in traffic, will our children be safe crossing streets? Will we need to widen streets? If so, who pays for that? Will we need public parking areas to be built? Who would pay for that?

The Planning Board openly ignores the parking issue. The Planning Board states: "Creating housing with reduced parking in these areas will attract households with less of a reliance on personal automobiles." This is nonsensical since many neighborhoods, like Kenwood Park, effectively need cars. Any cursory study of the area would reveal that.

The Planning Board openly ignores the roads issue. The Planning Board simply states: "The Planning Board believes the demands on infrastructure can be addressed through existing policies." In other words, the Planning Board could not be bothered to study the issue.

No study was made of ways to convert empty office space into attainable housing. We have underused commercial real estate, and we have a housing shortage. Why isn't the first step in this process to explore conversions of commercial real estate to housing? If office space is being converted, the parking and traffic issues will have already been addressed, unlike the current plan, which massively increases the traffic and parking needs of countless neighborhoods.

The Planning Board never even mentions this issue. This is an issue being discussed widely across the country, and it is not even mentioned in the Planning Board's report.

No study has been done to determine which neighborhoods have the best access to the most effective public transportation. Many individuals seeking housing need effective access to public transportation and to nearby commercial establishments, where they can work and shop. The plan ignores these points by including virtually all neighborhoods, including many without easy access to the Metro or commercial establishments, like Kenwood Park.

The utilities for Kenwood Park (water, gas, electric) are designed for the current density. Currently, WSSC is laying new water pipes to meet the needs of the neighborhood, and these will not be adequate if the density is doubled.

No study has been done of the environmental effects of the plan. As County Executive Marc Elrich has said: the plan "does not address the environmental consequences of increased land coverage from the larger building footprints of higher density development, resulting in increased imperviousness, stormwater runoff, and loss of tree cover."

The Planning Board does not even address this issue.

In summary, the proposed plan will create a building boom of luxury multi-family units in single family zoned neighborhoods that will not create attainable housing. The building boom will result in over-crowded schools, unsafe streets for pedestrians due to a dramatic increase

in on-street parking, increased traffic on area roads and degradation of the environment. The proposed plan benefits developers and is detrimental to current tax-paying residents of single-family zoned neighborhoods.

DO NOT DO THIS, please!

JA

819

Janet Robins - Chevy Chase, 20815

I oppose the AHSI. I have attended 2 presentations on AHSI - one for Chevy Chase Section 5 and one at BCC. I was frankly amazed that such a poorly planned proposal was being seriously considered by the Council. For many years I worked in a law firm representing interstate natural gas projects. Because so many people and properties are affected by such projects, they are required by federal law to provide information about their impact on a wide range of environment issues and issues like transportation. What I learned about AHSI is that it is essentially a non-plan. At a time when we are facing increasing heat and greater rain fall because of climate change, AHSI would not create a central plan to add new homes in a way that will preserve trees and green space that can reduce heat and help absorb stormwater. It would encourage tear downs of existing small homes and their replacement with new larger structures, which will have a number of negative impact on the environment. AHSI will leave major decisions that will have significant impacts on a large portion of this county's residents up to many different developers who can crowd houses onto any number of small properties, without ensuring that there will be adequate parking for the new residents' cars or schools for their children. On Williams Lane where I live, there is already flooding at low points on the street during heavy rain storms, leading to flooding of homes and cars in a few instances. Williams Lane is a narrow street with parking permitted on only one side, leaving only one lane open to travel from either direction. Parking is often tight now, and cars going one direction often have to wait until cars coming from the other direction travel through the only open lane. BCC our local high school is at maximum capacity. What's more, while I strongly support affordable housing, this plan for "attainable housing" is not designed to create affordable housing. 19 unit buildings would be allowed at the end of my block near Connecticut Ave. - an interesting limit since, as I understand it, developers would not be required to include affordable units unless they are building 20 or more units. Montgomery County needs to do the hard work to develop more housing - affordable and attainable - in a way that will create a community where we will all want to live with adequate green space, trees, parks, storm water prevention, parking, and schools.

820

Mary Clifford - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am incredulous at this slimy, blatant gift to developers masquerading as "attainable" housing. Since there is zero provision for affordable, subsidized housing, selling each residence in each new building at market value will create housing attainable not by the "missing middle" but only by more rich people, packed in more densely. Further, the lack of inclusion of measures to address crucial issues such as no added parking, vastly heavier traffic, more crowded schools, infrastructure funding would mean that developers reap all the benefits while current and future residents are saddled with all the accompanying costs and headaches. Just for starters, I'd love to know how much of Friedson's \$700,000+ piggy bank came from developers, and how a proposal to limit Elrich [effectively] to two terms was deemed an issue of great import to voters who have chosen him twice to be their county leader, in part *because* unlike many councilmembers, he is not on the pocket of developers. Any change this sweeping requires orders of magnitude more research, discussion and, above all, transparency about who is pushing it, and why, and who actually stands to benefit the most.

821

James Anderson - Kensington, 20895

I strongly support the proposed zoning changes in the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative that would allow for greater housing density in our county. The lack of affordable housing has been and will continue to worsen and is an economic drag on the county and an obstacle to good job growth.

While some worry that the new housing created may not be low-priced, increasing the overall supply will help ease prices across all segments of the market. Economic research shows that as more units are built, pressure on rents and home prices decrease, benefiting households at all income levels.

Beyond economics, this issue is also about basic fairness and equity. Restrictive zoning disproportionately harms lower-income families and young people trying to enter the housing market. By allowing more homes to be built, we can make our wonderful county more accessible and affordable for everyone.

822

Loretta Sevier - Chevy Chase, 20815

I live in Chevy Chase and fully support your efforts to make the necessary zoning modifications that would allow for structures such as duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, small apartment buildings, and other types of Middle housing to be built within single-family zoned areas in the county. I know many of my neighbors have been very vocal in opposition to this but there are many of us who fully support this change. Thank you.

823

Allison Marvin - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to you to share my concerns about and opposition to the MoCo Planning Department's AHS Initiative to eliminate by right single family zoning in neighborhoods currently zoned for single family housing.

Specifically, my concerns are:

- Benefits developers, not current or future homeowners
- Undermines neighborhood character (often these are historic neighborhoods with decades of preservation work, tree canopy maintenance, etc.)
- Unduly burdens infrastructure already at its limits - sewage, schools, trash routes, parking
- Unclear whether it will result in net gain in attainable housing (prices could go up, not down, on lots converted from single to multi family, with only developers benefiting)
- Speculative and not thought through, forcing a blanket "solution" on over 80% of the county without any nuanced, community-specific considerations or data being taken into place.

	<p>I oppose this Initiative and ask that you reject it for the above reasons. Creating attainable and affordable housing is important, but it must be done in a way that actually will create more of such housing and not harm MoCo neighborhoods in the process.</p> <p>DO THE WORK!!</p>
824	<p>Reuven Uberman - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>I believe that the attainable housing proposal is absolutely wrong and that we should not pursue this plan.</p>
825	<p>Kathleen McNamara - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I am all in favor of this badly needed upzoning, which is necessary for a more environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable MoCo. Do not be put off by the short sighted NIMBY views of my Chevy Chase neighbors. Heed your Planning Board's smart growth expertise. Be the Council of ALL of your citizens, do the right thing, and rezone for the future of our county.</p>
826	<p>Katherine Kirvan - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>I may have already filled this out, and so my apologies, but this is of so much importance I wanted to be sure my voice was heard. I am vehemently against the AHS.</p> <p>The study lacks data on so much: traffic, storm water management, green canopies, school capacities, and on and on.</p> <p>IF you are tallying about who is for this and who is against. Count our household as a NO!!</p>
827	<p>Christopher Burger - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>After learning more about the AHS plans over the last month, I have become a single-issue voter at the County Council level. I'd like to express my concerns with the proposed AHS plans. If/when this comes to a bill, any member who votes in favor of the plan as outlined will have lost my vote FOREVER. Even though I'm not a constituent of yours today, that could change in the future.</p> <p>TLDR – There has been inadequate (or missing entirely!) data applied to this plan. There are severe unknowns on the impact on the environment (water runoff, tree coverage), parking, traffic, infrastructure (gas lines, sewage, water supply, etc.), taxes, and school crowding. Passing a bill that reflects this AHS plan – without using accurate data as part of the evaluation – is a dereliction of your duty as a public servant.</p> <p>My longer thoughts:</p> <p>Montgomery County needs an affordable housing plan that makes sense. However, after listening to the Planning Department presentation as well as attending the listening session on September 25th, I don't believe the plan as constructed is viable for the long-term needs of Montgomery County.</p>

The biggest concern I see is this plan focuses on attainable vs affordable. Recently a SFH lot in Bethesda was converted into a triplex, with one unit on the market for \$3.6M. Cramming more residents – who can afford multi-million dollar homes – into an already crowded area will only contribute to traffic, pollution, and parking problems without helping residents who need affordable housing.

There have been zero economic impact studies done. The tax revenue and costs seem to be unknown. There have been no studies on the environmental impact of this plan, including water runoff & mature tree destruction. The parking requirements (reducing required parking for new building by 75%) will make life untenable in many neighborhoods.

The Planning Department says new houses within one mile of a metro stop will have fewer cars and thus less parking is an acceptable outcome. Where is the data to support that theory? Will older residents really walk one mile to a metro stop? Can you prove – with data – that residents will have fewer cars if they are within one mile of a metro? How many fewer cars? How long will it take for the lower volume of cars to become a reality? Do you have data to prove this?

School crowding is already a problem. BCC high school is at capacity and there is no free space to add extra square footage to the school. The BCC cafeteria can only fit 50% of the FARMS eligible students. Classes are supposed to be maxed at 32 kids but there are classes with 36. Today, those who are more economically disadvantaged (who do not own cars) already struggle the most to get their kids to school or get themselves to parent activities like kids' sports or back to school night. Some children must sit on the floor of the bus to get to school today – a massive safety issue. I know there are plans to build another high school. This will involve additional busing of students, rezoning, and predicting student populations. Unfortunately, there is a proven history of inadequate (incompetent???) collaboration between the Planning Department and MCSP. Bethesda Elementary school was expanded recently; it is already above capacity. Silver Creek Middle School was built in 2017; it is already above capacity. I have ZERO faith that the AHS proposed increase in population will align with MCPS building plans. This will lead to more overcrowding and make MCPS less competitive in the future. Do you have data to prove otherwise?

More crowding at BCC means FARMS students are further disenfranchised. A new school (that, if history repeats itself, will be over capacity a few years after opening) will mean longer bus times for those without cars. I assume you support equity & equality, I know I do. But this plan does the opposite. Do you have data to prove otherwise?

With no requirement for affordable housing (interesting that affordable housing requirements start at 20 units and this plan is capped at 19!), this plan is likely to do little to solve the “missing middle” problem in our County. Do you have data to prove otherwise?

All that said, I realize doing nothing is not an answer. We need to solve the missing middle and affordable housing. I am not an expert and would love experts to develop data-driven plans. But a few thoughts of mine as a layperson:

- Keep the parking requirement (2 spaces per unit) as is. The idea that housing will be more affordable with less parking seems suspect. Where is the data to support this claim? The fact that the Planning Department said builders have the option to add more parking, thinking any builders actually will build more than what is required, is laughable at best.
- Convert empty offices into housing. More and more people are working virtually so office space is plentiful while housing is scarce. Areas with office buildings are more likely to be equipped to deal with high volumes of car and human traffic. I realize that takes a lot of work to convert plumbing, electrical, etc from commercial to residential, but there must be ways to make it economically feasible for builders and buyers.
- Develop White Flint as a test case. There's tons of open land. Try out that space, see how it works, then reconsider rolling out county-wide. Use data to make your decisions!
- Empower local neighborhoods to decide if/how to implement the AHS proposed plans. I live in a high-cost area (Section 5 of Chevy Chase). Any new duplex/triplex/quadruplex's built here will likely be sold for \$1M+. Residents who can afford a \$1M+ unit do not need the Council's help. The Council should focus on areas where housing can be sold for \$400-\$800K so teachers, nurses, firefighters, etc. can afford to live in Montgomery County. Don't disrupt the entire county so developers can get rich and wealthy residents can find a new place to live.
 - o Our neighborhood is already prone to flooding; street parking is overcrowded to begin with; even though we're within a mile of the Purple Line, this is not a walkable neighborhood. AHS plans may make sense in parts of the county, but not where I live.
- Any approval of higher density should have affordable requirements, not attainable. There must be concrete, contractually-bound obligations from builders to pay for additional infrastructure costs (new water lines, sewage, etc.). If builders develop a new neighborhood, they are required to pay for these things; the same should be true with converting SFH to multi-unit households.

In summary, the AHS plan sorely lacks data to support its conclusions. Implementing such a drastic county-wide change based on assumptions and vibes is a recipe for disaster. Please consider my alternatives. I hope and trust you will NOT vote for a bill that reflects the AHS plan based on incomplete, missing, or omitted data.

828

Gerald Smith - Chevy Chase, 20815

I live in section 5 of Chevy Chase and have enjoyed my single family neighborhood for over 25 years. I moved here from downtown D.C to escape dense housing, to have an open, healthy, and free environment for my children to grow up in. This attainable housing initiative is wrong in more ways than I have room to write, but I will abbreviate my comments as follows:

First, and most importantly, this initiative is totally against the will of the people. Call me naive, but what happened to the will of the people? Second, this notion to wipe out single families zoning in Chevy Chase Bethesda is UNNECESSARY as outlined (ad nauseam) by Council exact Mark Erlich in the YouTube video on Attainable Housing. Third, Section 5's infrastructure can barely sustain the existing number of households much less double the number of households. Parking is a nightmare, traffic is to say the least already overwhelmed, our tree canopy would be destroyed, and the runoff to the Chesapeake Bay and the damage to the local green environment for families would be irreparably harmed. Clearly this is a money grab for developers who find the council members campaigns. This is not about attainable, middle, nor affordable housing! This can be proven and has been proven over and over again. The council and planning board has offered not an ounce of data or studies that support this initiative. This is abhorrent and at best a painful violation of the trust which the constituents of Bethesda and Chevy Chase have placed in their representatives. Shame on you for putting your political careers and the special interest of developers over the well-being of the residents who have supported and built Bethesda- Chevy Chase, giving it the good, model name it has enjoyed to date.

829

Emily Walsh - Bethesda, 20816

I am strongly opposed to this initiative. It will not achieve its intended objective (I expect that in my neighborhood, it would result in million dollar condos) and instead provide attainability for developers not residents. Communities were not planned around this type of development (parking, sewer lines, etc). There are other ways to achieve this objective that would much better serve communities. Thank you.

830

Robert Silverberg - Chevy Chase, 20815

I have resided in Chevy Chase West since 1986. While I generally appreciate the well run nature of our County government, I have to dissent to the implementation of the AHSI. First, the justification for the Initiative has been disproven. The County Executive has stated that there are more than an adequate number of building permits issued to accommodate all of the forecast growth in the County population with land for this purpose. Upsetting decades of zoning policy on the basis of a fallacious assumption is unreasonable, arbitrary and capricious.

Second, the Planning Board explanation for the policy is not supported by the record. For example, without an record evidence or even a forecast, the Planning Board assumes away all community concerns for school overcrowding, water and sewer capacity, public safety, storm runoff, imperviousness, parking, fire and ambulance access, the loss of tree canopy, etc. Take parking for example, my street in Chevy Chase West is very narrow two way street and parking is limited to the north side of the street. With a car parked in the curb lane, two cars cannot comfortably pass; cars pull over in to the curb lane to make way for the other vehicle. If all the few parking spaces are taken, the natural result of reducing or eliminating a requirement for off street parking, this will make navigating our street more difficult. The

Planning Board waves this concern away by stating without any supporting data that those residing in newly attainable housing will not have personal transportation. Really, will that be so in all cases or even 50% of the new owners will no have personal vehicles?

The Planning Board struggled to support with facts the justification for the AHSI at the listening sessions. Many difficult questions posed by the County residents in attendance went unanswered or were not even attempted to be answered. The Planning Board has yet to release the Pattern Book which it claims will insure that noncompatible structures will not be built. But the Pattern Board has yet to be released and will not be public until after the Council considers approving the Initiative. Nor has the text of the zoning amendments been circulated with the Initiative documents to allow for citizen comment on the text of the rules.

Personally speaking, I live on a street with mainly 1930, 1940 and 1950 build homes. Most are modest size, 3000 square feet or less such as our house. The lots are small as well. It is hard for me to view a duplex, triplex, quadplex much less a 19 unit apartment house (our house is located on the first block of DeRussey Parkway off Wisconsin Ave.) fitting comfortably with county setbacks observed on any of our existing small lots. Another downside to the Initiative is the impact on our real estate tax assessments. As developers purchase lots at current prices, neighborhood comps will increase as will our real estate taxes. So the character of our community will be altered in ways not even forecast by the Planning Board while at the same time our taxes will increase. Zoning by right without limits as historically required in the County would be a shock to the system that is unjustified by the nature of the problem the Planning Board seeks to solve. And, by the way, there is a great amount of affordable and attainable housing in our neighborhood that, ironically, has been approved for an upscale conversion by the Planning Board. If housing is not attainable in our region of the County then why has the redevelopment project been approved? Its striking to me that the Planning Board could engage is such a slipshod process that seems to be driven more by ideology than facts and substance. There are regions in Bethesda around commercial development that could be used to provide housing opportunities without undoing the fabric of the County's historic approach to zoning and upsetting the neighborhoods that have been constructed over the decades to support the residential needs of the County without complaint or objection.

Chris Marvin - Chevy Chase, 20815

831

Hello - I am writing to you this morning to share my concerns about and opposition to the MoCo Planning Department's AHS Initiative to eliminate by right single family zoning in neighborhoods currently zoned for single family housing.

Specifically, my concerns are:

- This clearly benefits developers, not current or future homeowners. There is evidence in the Town of Chevy Chase that when we allow subdivision, a lot with a value of \$1.5m is developed into 3 or more units of approximately \$2m each.
- Undermines neighborhood character (often these are historic neighborhoods with decades of preservation work, tree canopy maintenance, etc.)
- Unduly burdens infrastructure already at its limits - sewage, schools, trash routes, parking. Schools especially make absolutely no sense - Bethesda Chevy Chase is already at capacity with no plan for addressing the CURRENT challenges - similar issues with Rosemary Hills, etc.

- Unclear whether it will result in net gain in attainable housing (prices have been shown to go up, not down, on lots converted from single to multi family, with only developers benefiting)
- The entire premise is speculative and not thought through, forcing a blanket "solution" on over 80% of the county without any nuanced, community-specific considerations or data being taken into place.

I oppose this Initiative and ask that you reject it for the above reasons. Creating attainable and affordable housing is important, but it must be done in a way that actually will create more of such housing and not harm MoCo neighborhoods in the process. Denser higher value real estate will not help the very people the plan is envisioned to assist.

Please go back to the planning process and think this through again.

832

Nathaniel Ivey - Bethesda, 20814

Dear Council Member,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed rezoning of single-family residential neighborhoods to permit the construction of triplexes and quadplexes, with the stated intention of improving equity by making these neighborhoods more accessible. While I commend the County's effort to address housing affordability and inclusivity, I believe that the current proposal is fundamentally flawed and could inadvertently exacerbate existing inequities.

The core of my concern lies in the criteria used to determine which neighborhoods will be rezoned. By targeting areas in proximity to public transport and major roads, termed "growth corridors," while excluding the wealthiest neighborhoods (such as the Western part of the county), the proposal creates a disparity that undermines the very principles of equity it seeks to uphold.

Several potential negative impacts of disallowing the wealthiest neighborhoods from being rezoned include but are not limited to:

Perpetuation of Economic Segregation: By exempting the wealthiest neighborhoods from rezoning, the proposal reinforces economic segregation. These affluent areas will continue to enjoy the benefits of single-family zoning, such as lower density, less traffic, and greater property value stability, while middle and lower-income neighborhoods bear the brunt of increased density and potential overcrowding.

Unequal Distribution of Resources: Wealthy neighborhoods often have better-funded schools, superior infrastructure, and more robust public services. By excluding these areas from rezoning, we deny potential new residents, who would benefit from more affordable housing options, access to these high-quality resources. This perpetuates a cycle where only those with means can enjoy these advantages, further widening the socioeconomic gap.

Environmental Impact: Concentrating higher density housing in certain areas could lead to overburdening existing infrastructure and public services, such as water supply, sewage systems, and transportation networks. Wealthier neighborhoods, remaining unchanged, will not share this burden, leading to potential environmental degradation and reduced quality of life in the rezoned areas.

Community Resistance and Stigmatization: The selective rezoning approach may foster resentment and resistance among residents of the targeted areas. This can lead to a stigmatization of these neighborhoods as "less desirable" or "overcrowded," further entrenching negative perceptions and hindering community cohesion.

Missed Opportunity for True Integration: Inclusive growth requires the participation of all communities. By excluding the wealthiest neighborhoods from rezoning, we miss a critical opportunity to foster true socioeconomic integration. Allowing higher density housing in these areas would promote a more diverse and inclusive community fabric, providing all residents with a richer, more varied living experience.

I urge the County to reconsider the criteria for rezoning to include all neighborhoods in the entire county, regardless of their current socioeconomic status and proximity to roads/ growth corridors. True equity requires shared responsibility and benefit across all communities. A more balanced approach would not only distribute the impacts of increased density more evenly but also pave the way for a more inclusive and integrated community. Separate, by definition, cannot be equal.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I look forward to the County's thoughtful reconsideration of the proposed rezoning criteria to better reflect our shared commitment to equity and inclusivity.

Sincerely,

Nathan S. Ivey, PhD

833

Barbara Jackson - Garrett Park, 20896

As a long time resident of the town of Garrett Park, I object to changing the current zoning to permit greater density of housing. Our town has long worked to maintain open space and trees which makes it unique within the county. Cramming in more people and cars will inevitably result in the destruction of more trees, greater impervious lot coverage, and a change in the character of the town. As a property owner, I feel that the promise of the current single family zoning will be violated and anticipate a decline in property values (of course, without any decrease in county assessments.) We are already under pressure from new developments along Strathmore Avenue and the traffic associated with five schools, all of which allow children to arrive via private cars. Greater housing density may add to the county tax base, but in the long run will ruin the desirability of living here. Not everyone choosing to live in the county does so just to be near a metro station. I am not a fan of "smart development" and fear that it will mean that what we have worked so hard to protect, will be lost forever.

Margaret Harty - Chevy Chase, 20815

Please pause this initiative.

I am concerned about the lack of study pertaining to transportation, traffic, utilities, stormwater, the tree canopy, and most importantly, the schools. Time and time again, it would appear that the County makes decisions for its residents without considerate analysis. This was recently the case when part of Chevy Chase Village was redistricted from Somerset Elementary to Westbrook Elementary.

Similarly, the Attainable Housing Strategy is sweeping and lacks nuance or consideration to stakeholders. For example, my house is in a park-like setting with minimal traffic and on a cul-de-sac. While apparently this is not an Urban Planner's ideal, the low density makes for an attractive place to raise our children. We left DC and specifically invested here nearly 3 years ago so that we could safely raise a family. We love this neighborhood and we love our neighbors.

The Attainable Housing Strategy would not only allow for quadraplexes across our neighborhood, but nearly half of my street is in a Wisconsin Avenue buffer zone that would allow for extreme up-zoning (the limits of which actually appear undefined in the Initiative). With such incentives to developers as tax reductions and relief from off-street parking requirements, there is no doubt that the end of my street would be greedily overbuilt - the character of the neighborhood gone, the people displaced, safe streets for biking succumbing to traffic, and the schools struggling with overcrowding. It would only take a few cash offers and a few willing sellers to set major construction in motion.

Robert Moses once thought we needed highways everywhere, and we know how his legacy turned out. Up-zoning, density, and affordability sound great on paper, but this plan is a windfall to developers while adversely affecting all the people in my community. Who is going to pay for domino effect on all the amenities and services, not to mention, the environment. Each class in Montgomery Public Schools is a little bigger this year due to a budget shortfall. Is anyone planning for the children?

Montgomery County appears to have blight and surface parking contributing to rapid runoff into local streams. Can we target improvements to those areas in the creation of more housing? Could there be a moratorium on car-focused suburban shopping centers or new developments on green space? Can we invest in reliable and more frequent public transportation so that we may confidently reduce our car ownership in time? Does the only way to increase County housing stock also have to be a wholesale attack on the homes of the bulk of its own constituents?

And, where is the data for the incoming population and jobs? We see that nearby Friendship Heights DC is also scaling up on Transit Oriented Development - creating dense housing just over the border. The Housing Initiative appears to lack metrics related to how much, when, and how we are partnering with other cities and counties as a region. Is this just more housing for the sake of more housing? Let's THINK this through.

835

Liz Brennan - Kensington, 20895

Attn: Montgomery County Council:

I am opposed to the proposed “attainable housing” program recently presented by Park and Planning. It is very clear that the staff had not familiarized themselves with our neighborhood before designating it as appropriate for multi-housing units.

The proposed new housing – duplex thru quad-plex does not come with any guarantees for affordable pricing. But it definitely does come with infrastructure problems including parking and increased traffic. Parkwood has narrow streets, many existing houses do not have off street parking and when someone has a gathering, no spaces on the street at all.

To lump our entire neighborhood of 900+ single family dwellings as within a mile of Metro is disingenuous – there may be some houses at the outer edge that are within a mile, but the majority of the housing is over a mile.

And in defense of the larger homes it is important to recognize that the Covid pandemic changed many things that likely will not reverse. People are working at home either part or all of the week. That means a house for a family would need to include office space – for two professionals, in addition to a suite for a nanny or in-law. That is pretty much what the new construction in our neighborhood includes. Additionally, these newer homes include off the street parking – typically a garage that sits underneath of the house. Which is more environmentally friendly than the proposed “attenable” housing which puts parking in the back yard (according to the sketches provided). Why not stop building office buildings and rezone for “attainable” housing? Give builders incentives for that and to retro-fit existing office space into housing? As opposed to jamming more housing in already saturated communities.

Or even better find a way to protect the small “starter” homes in our older neighborhoods. Right now, in Parkwood (and in greater Kensington generally) we do have a nice balance of very small, medium and larger homes.

Finally, there appears to be a lot of new multi housing construction already happening in our vicinity – in particular two: on Strathmore and one on Knowles. Those impacts on to already overcrowded streets have yet to be realized. That coupled with the already approved “accessary dwelling program” will have long term implications. And what are the plans for the HOC building? Another larger piece of property that will likely go into play once they move to their new location. All of this on the SAME road!

It is past the time to put the breaks on “infill” housing. And definitely time to start studying the quality of the existing infrastructure.

Liz Brennan

[REDACTED]
Kensington, MD 20895

[REDACTED]

836

Thomas Newkirk - Bethesda, 20816

Changing the rules after we and our neighbors bought our homes is not fair. If we had wanted to live next door to a townhouse complex or an apartment building, we would have bought a house there.

837

Karen Fadely Craig - Kensington, 20895

I live in the town of Kensington and for reasons that are unclear to me, many of my neighbors are against this change. I believe that like many individuals in the down county area that they are concerned about protecting their wealth and are afraid of the unknowns. They also don't think the County has done a sufficient job of keeping up with the improvements necessary to keep up with the population/density growth in the last 30 yrs. They point to congestion, decline in school quality, and storm water problems as evidence that the county cannot adapt to increased density.

What I see proposed is a plan that will start to provide tools to alienate these problems and transform the way that people live. Our family of 4 is committed to being a one car family and our proximity to Metro, Marc and bus lines along with growing bicycle infrastructure allows that to happen. We are also committed to "living small" and purchased a small 1950's split level home. These homes are quickly being demolished in our communities and replaced with monster 4-6 bedroom, \$2M homes. These could easily house multiple families in 1800-2000 sq ft homes. While \$600K to \$800K is not "affordable" to low income families, it is "attainable" to many dual income professional families in the DC area looking to live near metro.

The added density will provide additional tax revenue for the county to fund lagging upgrades in infrastructure to include improved bus, bike and pedestrian safety infrastructure to facilitate a car-lite lifestyle.

I know the opposition has been LOUD, but there are supporters in the community as well who are not afraid of changing demographics or lifestyles. We embrace it and look forward to it.

838

Catharina Farrell - Kensington, 20895-3401

I attended the Attainable Housing presentation last night in Kensington. This is what I heard.

-Following the Sector Plan is too hard and time consuming. While the Sector Plan addresses the needs of the different neighborhoods, the Attainable Housing plan chooses to ignore the diversity within the county and chooses an easier broad stroke approach. Equity is the

answer the Planning Board provides when asked why the Sector Plans were ignored. The term equity, however, means that the specific needs of each community will be met. A -one size fits all - approach is not equity. It's lazy planning.

-The Attainable Housing plan does not address the consequences of high density housing. These are some of the concerns brought up last night.

-School overcrowding. While the Planning Board acknowledges that there is minimal room for additional building down county, their answer is to suggest that creative solutions need to be considered.

This is not a plan or an answer to the concern.

-Parking. Lack of street parking on narrow, neighborhood streets.

The Attainable Housing plan acknowledges that two parking spaces per unit will add an additional \$50,000 to the price of a unit, no solution is provided.

-Traffic. This critical topic was barely addressed. To suggest that Kensington will become a walkable community and that families will put their cars aside and travel by foot or bike is unrealistic. Living in Montgomery County requires a car(s). We do not have a dependable mass transit system that supports a car free environment. Additional high density housing will only add to the traffic already on the roads.

-Loss of tree canopy. The Planning Board acknowledges that this is a problem. No solution is provided.

-Affordable housing. Market based housing does not address the need for affordable housing. The Planning Board suggests that overtime additional, smaller housing will bring down the price of housing. There are many examples that illustrate the opposite. For example, on Kensington Parkway, three Cape Cod houses were torn down and replaced with sixteen town houses, each costing over one million dollars. This is not affordable housing.

Overall, the Attainable Housing plan does not address the specific needs of the many different communities that make up Montgomery County. This plan also does not address the need for affordable housing or address the consequences of additional high density housing.

839

Dawn Butler - Chevy Chase, 20815

I strongly oppose the proposed Attainable Housing Strategy! Beyond significantly changing the feel of the neighborhood that I paid a premium to move into last year, there is not room for parking for multi-unit housing, the schools can't consume the significant change in population, and the strategy doesn't include things to ensure the housing is even "more attainable." There is a lot of opportunity to put attainable, and more importantly affordable, housing on streets like Wisconsin (where parking garages can be planned in) and neighborhoods are less impacted.

840

Ellis Turner - Bethesda, 20814

I am a resident of Montgomery County for nearly 40 years and I vehemently oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. Changing single-family zoning in my neighborhood to allow small apartment buildings would destroy the property values of our homes. I urge the County Council to consider other options to achieve their goals and soundly vote down this proposal.

841

Jane West - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am opposed to allowing multi dwelling units on lots which are now for single family homes. I live on Walsh St in Chevy Chase. A set of three townhouses was just built across the street from my house (where Bethesda is the zoning jurisdiction) and the first one is on the market for \$3.6 million. My house is valued at \$1.9 million. It is a fallacy to think that multi units on lots like mine would be either attainable or affordable. This is a misguided proposal that will not achieve the desired outcome and result in traffic congestion and overcrowded schools. Vote no!

842

Kevin Telford - Chevy Chase, 20815

While I applaud the county's focus on development, I am gravely concerned that there is a serious short-sightedness in creating priority housing districts and development by-right without associated considerations for additional infrastructure development. There has been a lot of discussion around NIMBY-ism over the past few years, and my biggest fear is that we are attempting to address only a small slice of the repercussions of NIMBY attitudes in the county. If we are going to encourage higher density housing, there also needs to be a rational, structured approach to ensure that the impacts to the community as it transitions to higher density do not undercut the county's attainable housing push. If we are going to build more, denser housing, we also need to allow for the planning of associated infrastructure improvements to go along with it. Furthermore, we need to be cognizant that we are managing the impacts to our communities in a sustainable fashion.

As a resident living in a proposed Priority Housing District, I would want to ensure that the county is prepared to increase transportation infrastructure to ensure we have enough road capacity for the additional cars that will come from additional households. Over the past few years, we have seen a contraction in road capacity in and around the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area. This contraction runs counter to development of the area, and the community is at risk of further road capacity constraints. While I applaud the focus on pedestrian and cyclist improvements, public policy needs to ensure that our community is prepared for the additional growth of residents, most of whom will own and operate motor vehicles. Additionally, reducing parking requirements, instead relying on street parking to accommodate will lead to a deterioration of the quality of life. Other areas of the US that have looser rules & regulations around residential development have invested in road capacity, transit and utilities in parallel. No one can call themselves a true YIMBY proponent without that same willingness to invest in infrastructure around residential density.

I would like to hear the county's plans to discuss the additional infrastructure investment that will accompany the attainable housing push so we can have truly smart growth. Otherwise, I fear we are at risk of expending a lot of political capital, emotional energy, and money on a plan that will not improve the community and will undercut the future of our county.

843

Greta Malay - Bethesda, 20816

ASHI is completely misguided and against the vast majority of your constituents and the residents impacted. This is a handout to developers at the expense of hardworking homeowners, many of whom specifically moved from urban zones to quieter, SFH, suburbs.

While affordable housing is critical, this plan clearly does NOT provide affordable housing. It is purely social engineering and pandering. You may see displacement of long term residents.

There are 35,240 unbuilt housing units and zoned capacity for nearly 30,000 more. This project is horrible for our county and not needed.

If this goes through, 2026 can't come soon enough.

County Executive Marc Elrich's note should be taken to heart.

844

jennifer p - silver spring, 20910

This proposal is going to be detrimental to our county. I have seen no analysis on how adding more housing to our community is going to impact our county other than 'adding more housing' in the most general sense of the term. As a parent with children in the public school system, they are already vastly overcrowded across the board. Two new high schools is already not going to be enough, 3,000 students at Walter Johnson High School is ridiculous. Our roads - Rockville Pike, 270, Georgia, etc are already overwhelmingly full with cars and buses. Additionally, this rezoning will be a slap in the face to those who have worked hard and built equity in their home just to have their next door neighbor sell to a developer who will put up a multiunit building. This is going to directly decrease the value of homes for residents who had absolutely no idea rezoning residential communities was a potential. A significant portion of our county is concerned about this proposal and the lack of foresight that has gone into it. Please don't turn our county into NYC, you will see your wealthy taxpayers depart.

845	<p>Alexandra O'Sick - Garrett Park, 20896</p> <p>We are not interested in having increased housing density in Garrett Park, MD. Although the lot sizes support additional housing, stormwater, parking, traffic patterns, and school capacity already exceed the current population.</p>
846	<p>Lenita Posin - Chevy Chase, 20815-4929</p> <p>As a resident of Chevy Chase section 5 I am very concerned about the Attainable housing Initiative, particularly the effect it will have on our neighborhoods. This concern includes over crowding our schools, traffic and parking issues, and home values. I also do not believe that this will lead to affordable housing- and I only see builders and developers being able to abuse this zoning to squeeze more profits. This needs to be studied further and there needs to be concrete proof that not only can these neighborhoods sustain the added housing but also that the housing will fill the needs of being "affordable"</p>
847	<p>Margaret Fogarty - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>My husband and I are strongly against this initiative. It completely contradicts why we moved to our neighborhood in Chevy Chase. We beg you to reconsider. It would very negatively impact our family in various way and so many I know in our area. We would want to leave this area completely. Thank you.</p>
848	<p>Alan Davis - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>There is plenty of underutilized and vacant land that is proximate to mass transit that is available and ready for development. The Council should direct the proposed housing zoning on land in the business districts already established along the growth corridors. There is no reason to force additional housing units in single family neighborhoods especially when better options are available. The rationale used to justify AHSI is flawed, not based on credible data or need. It is a radical and misguided approach that will drastically change our lives and communities for the worse. The council should abandon this plan and policy and instead focus on creating real economic growth that shows up in population, jobs and income demographics.</p>
849	<p>Lisa Flynn - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>This is a highly misguided idea. The results will not be affordable nor attainable housing. Instead it will be a boom to developers. It does not consider the incredible impact it would have on schools, traffic and infrastructure. Nor does it consider the exodus of those who want to live in single family environments, many of whom are high wage earners, which would impact the county's tax basis.</p>
850	<p>Trevor Matese - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>This proposal is at best poorly thought out, and at worst a cash grab from the local development community. While affordable housing should be a goal for all residents of Montgomery County, this initiative gives no thought to the collateral damage to our environment and the fabric of our communities. Loss of tree canopy, storm water runoff, and impacts on local wildlife are serious concerns of residents. In addition, condominium and apartment developments along major growth corridors would be anything but affordable due to the high cost</p>

basis of the existing land. While there is certainly a need to address affordable housing options in our county, it should be done in a thoughtful way as opposed to the free for all that is being advanced at the expense of many residents.

851 **Victoria Knopes - Chevy Chase, 20815**

I am against the attainable housing initiative in Montgomery County. The attainable housing initiative would only benefit developers as they are the only people who have the resources or money to develop these properties (yep and a few of you councilmembers are developers or work for them) and even once built they will not be "attainable" for the demographic you claim to be building these for. Will the developers then become landlords? It doesn't make sense particularly when there is housing for every income bracket in Montgomery County and new buildings going up every day on land that is zoned for this purpose. As a life long Montgomery County resident I am against this initiative. The Councilmembers actively pushing this will be voted out when their terms finish, unfortunately not soon enough.

852 **Kenneth Rubin - Chevy Chase, 20815**

Montgomery County's Attainable Housing Strategy promotes the creation of new housing configurations, such as duplexes, triplexes, and multi-unit apartment buildings that are "attainable," which the AHS defines as, "the ability of households of various incomes and sizes to obtain housing that is suitable for their needs and affordable to them." Nowhere in the AHS, however, is affordability taken into consideration in the allowability of these new housing configurations. Clearly, new housing configurations in areas where existing land and dwelling prices are already far beyond any definition of "affordable" will never achieve the objectives of the AHS. Instead, it will simply increase density of housing units at prices that are 3X even the most liberable measure of affordability (e.g. percent of household income). Only those households with incomes far above incomes intended to serve the "missing middle" will be able to afford these new units. Moreover, increased density will result in stress on schools, roads, water quality, air quality, and other environmental and health indicators.

There are numerous examples of the failures to meet stated objectives and negative impacts of poorly thought-through "missing middle" initiatives described above -- many in neighboring jurisdictions like Arlington County, VA. They are based on incomplete data and faulty analysis. One example in the Montgomery County AHS is its assertion that people are leaving Montgomery County because of the cost of housing. There is no evidence that this is occurring, and in fact, there is net population growth in Montgomery County. So, some people are leaving (for many reasons) but more people are coming into the County.

The Council needs to send the AHS back to the Planning Board to re-think ways to actually achieve more attainable housing. As it stands, the AHS will greatly miss its mark and negatively affect the welfare of hundreds of thousands of Montgomery County taxpayers. If the Council spent more time and resources on job creation and less on poorly founded social engineering, all citizens and taxpayers in the County would be far better off.

853

Jennifer Hamilton - Chevy Chase, 20815

I categorically oppose this initiative. It fails to deliver true affordable housing for our county, is based on insufficient data, and does not adequately address critical issues such as education, infrastructure, and transportation. Instead, it prioritizes the interests of specific groups over the needs and desires of the broader population. Further, this initiative was not preceded by the requisite data gathering and constituent feedback solicitation that should be a predicate of any democratic process, especially one involving changes of this magnitude. If this initiative moves forward, I will not support Friedson for County Council or County Executive, and I will strongly advise those within my circle to do the same.

854

Mary Ann Huntington - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am very much against the proposal. I attended the meeting at BCC high school to learn more. What I heard made me strongly oppose the proposal. The focus of the presentation seemed to be on the fact that the house - if a duplex, triplex, or quadplex - might be the same footprint of a McMansion, none of that takes into consideration the increase in the number of people living in the home, attending the local schools, parking their cars, driving on the already overcrowded roads, taking the already overcrowded metro, or the negative impact of our investments in our homes. The council should focus on developing areas that are currently underdeveloped - not over developing existing neighborhoods in Chevy Chase. Another reason that I am opposed to the proposal is that I don't think it will work. During the meeting at BCC people gave examples of a home that was torn down and replaced with 3 homes and each home was expensive. The developers will make money. Everyone else will lose. It's not worth the risk.

855

Nancy Dudley - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am a 20 year plus resident of Section 5 in Chevy Chase. I am also a native Washingtonian who has seen neighborhoods devastated as a result of poor planning and greedy developers working deals with those who have influence over zoning matters. Frankly, the recent "listening session" held at BCC high, during which the majority of speakers objected to the lack of planning by the planning board, felt less like a true "listening session" and more like an insincere "box checking exercise" by the Council. I took particular exception to the opening presentation that felt designed to shame current homeowners; we were to feel guilty once you all made us aware that our currently OWNED PRIVATE PROPERTY exceeded certain limitations. And where were the planning board's answers to the impact of our quality of life? May I remind you: We the citizens who pay your salaries, work for us. Where are the presentations and studies that show the pros and cons of environmental, traffic, sewage, street congestion, CRIME, and other impacts that that proposed multiplex housing WILL produce? The so called ATTAINABLE Strategies Initiative is a social justice initiative disguised as an effort to "help certain citizens" when in fact it will be hurting the lives of many citizens through weaponizing the housing and planning board entities. You have stirred the wrong hornet's nest of citizenry.

856	<p>Irene Briggs - Silver Spring, 20906</p> <p>I am firmly against the proposal. I live in the Aspen Hill/Wheaton section. We are already overwhelmed with single-family housing, and the county has allowed multi-families to live within a tiny structure. As a result, I, as a 26-year county homeowner, am finding that life in my neighborhood has changed dramatically, and not in a pleasant way.</p> <p>I can barely get out of my driveway because of the number of cars that speed through my neighborhood. There is more trash in the neighborhood than ever before, and I don't remember when I last saw a street cleaner. If the county goes through with this plan, I will take a long look as to whether I want to remain here.</p>
857	<p>Meagan O'Neill - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I am HIGHLY concerned about this initiative and STRONGLY OPPOSE housing development in the Chevy Chase section 5 neighborhood and immediate surrounding streets. This would be too drastic of a change to the longstanding history we who live there cherish.</p> <p>Keep the housing developments focused closer to Chevy Chase circle, not in the single-family homes on the Maryland side of the circle. Housing development makes much more sense to aggregate along Connecticut Ave. starting just past the CC circle and moving further downtown. The other ripe area is on the Wisconsin side of Chevy Chase (Friendship Heights metro area and moving further downtown along Wisconsin). Don't spread it out into Maryland - attract a younger population into DC by offering more of a new city hub feel on the district sides of CC.</p> <p>Otherwise there will be new safety concerns you introduce to Chevy Chase MD. Young families like my own represent first-generation Chevy-Chasers and first-time home owners who dreamed of being in this area; my husband and I saved for a decade to live in CC MD and will be devastated if the area is disrupted.</p>
858	<p>Upendra Shardanand - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>As a resident of Chevy Chase Section 5, I'm in favor of the proposal.</p>
859	<p>David Kirsch - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I would like to strongly support the AHSI initiative. We need more flexibility, more innovation, more doing and less hand-wringing and regulatory review. Would AHSI create some problems? Sure. But doing nothing -- or "pausing" as the critics would have us do -- merely makes the problems harder to solve. Our housing crisis has taken decades to get to this point. Let's do something now.</p>
860	<p>Ann Bittman - CHEVY CHASE, 20815</p> <p>I believe the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative is a misguided effort that will not have the desired result of increasing attainable housing in the county. It will only result in developers being able to build a higher number of expensive homes, increase the density of these</p>

high-proced homes, overload county services (roads, schools, etc.) and will crush our single family home communities. Please do not pursue this strategy!

861 Jon Siegel - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am a resident of Chevy Chase Section 5 and am opposed to this plan. You are not going to encourage affordable housing by adding density in established neighborhoods. Do you really think that if you demolish a \$1.5 million house in our town and allow someone to build multiple units, they aren't just going to sell 3 units at over \$1 million each? Someone recently bought a single family house in the Town of Chevy Chase and was able to build multiple units on the lot given the location and they are asking for \$3 million per unit. You need to incentivize affordable housing by reducing the cost to build affordable housing through initiatives like tax credits, subsidies and other programs. As currently constructed, this plan is essentially a give away to developers and investors who can just make more money - trust me, I am one of them.

862 Admiral Edmund Giambastiani - Chevy Chase, 20815

I had previously sent this note to the following Council Members Jawando, Albornoz, Glass and Sayles—however, now it is intended for the entire council.

I am writing you regarding my strong objections regarding the Attainable Housing proposal which I recently learned of at a listening session held at the Chevy Chase Community Center on 10 September. I like a very large percentage of the Chevy Chase Community also attended the listening session on September 25th.

I am a retired US Navy Admiral, having spent 41 years in uniform. My wife and I purchased our current residence at [REDACTED], in Chevy Chase section 5 in 2017. During our career we have lived in over two dozen locations around the United States. This includes Maryland, Virginia, Washington state, Washington DC, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Hawaii, South Carolina, California, New Hampshire and Florida. And we have lived in a number of these states multiple times as home owners.

In all of the locations I have lived around the country, I have never experienced a proposal that is this FLAWED with regard to planning and disregard to all the infrastructure problems (traffic, parking, utilities, storm water etc.) that would be insurmountable. The long term negative impact on these communities would be devastating.

Thank you for your consideration.

Edmund P. Giambastiani, Jr
Admiral, U.S. Navy (ret)
Seventh Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Chevy Chase, MD 20815

863 **Alexandra Shockey - Potomac, 20854**

I strongly oppose this plan.

It doesn't address so many important issues - affordability, tree removal/replacement/climate and flooding issues, outside developers. Please see Erlich's report on why to vote no.

864 **Estefania Calderon - Garrett Park, 20896**

The Attainable Housing Strategies do not fit all neighborhoods in Montgomery County. While I understand the need for more affordable and available housing, allowing single-family homes to be converted into quadplexes can be problematic in certain areas such as Garrett Park. For these kinds of developments, the County needs to consider additional infrastructure and legislation that should accompany them, such as traffic management, road sizes (are the roads big enough to sustain higher traffic?), parking options, access to public transportation, between others. Additionally, we need to consider how to conserve green areas. Converting single houses into complexes will definitely take away the green spaces that many single-family homes currently have. If the County needs to offer additional housing options, it should take into consideration other aspects, including the provision and access to various services without causing overcrowding situations. This is definitely not the right solution and I oppose to this initiative.

865 **Alan Davis - Chevy Chase, 20815**

I appreciate the listening sessions on the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI), all of which I attended or viewed, plus the Planning Board's Speaker Series on housing. I've also read many academic studies about eliminating exclusively single-family detached zoning, and I believe the results are mixed at best. I agree with many of the concerns raised by attendees about infrastructure, parking, one-size-fits all zoning, deficient notification and public input, environment etc. I believe the Planning Department and Planning Board have lost credibility with their failure to provide to the public adequate data to support AHSI – and that the evidence available from their own studies in fact undermines the proposal, however good their intentions might be. I ask that you consider the following points.

Contradictory or misleading underlying data raises questions about whether AHSI is even needed.

- The Planning Department's own pipeline records state that as of September 2024 there are 35,240 unbuilt approved units (<https://montgomeryplanning.org/tools/research/development-pipeline/>).

- The Residential Capacity Analysis in 2020 (<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/residential-development-capacity-analysis/>) found that the county had zoned capacity for 65,000 units.

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- The recent finding that the county did not accurately report the number of housing units in issued permits (https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2024_reports/OLOReport2024-10.pdf) strongly suggests that underlying data used by Planning led to inaccurate, low conclusions about the numbers of existing housing stock and future capacity.
 - Income data presented to support the claimed need for attainable housing appears to be for individuals, not dual-income families. Without data on two-income families the income analysis is misleading.
 - Planning's analysis showing a rise in lower income residents, and COG's finding that 75% of new residents will need housing assistance, does not make sense with AHSI's focus on "attainable" as opposed to "affordable" housing (<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Income-Shifts-Research-Brief-Final.pdf>).
 - AHSI fails to consider the lack of jobs for young professionals, both starting positions and opportunities to advance. https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/12_17Advancing-the-Pike-District-Briefing_Staff-Report_121720.pdf notes that White Flint has not attracted housing development because there are not enough jobs in the area. This is probably a more important factor in middle-income people leaving the county than housing issues, yet AHSI contains no recognition of this dynamic.
 - COG has changed the population projections downward several times but Planning continues to use the original, higher projections.

Transportation assumptions are unrealistic.

- We do not have a robust, reliable, frequent and affordable mass transit system.
- Expectations that people will give up cars are not supported in local research. COG's population projections when considered in light of Planning's 2023 Travel Monitoring Report (<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023TravelMonitoringReport.pdf>) suggest that a predicted 20% population increase could more than offset the decline in car travel as a result of the pandemic.
- This report also shows a decline in bicycle travel.
- It also shows that in every instance it takes longer to travel by public transit than by automobile.
- The report relies on data from 2022 at the latest, when commuting was still reduced due to Covid. An update is needed: the pandemic threat is diminished and there are increasing calls for people to return to the office.

AHSI is unfair to current residents.

- The Residential Capacity Analysis in 2020 (https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/residential-development-capacity-analysis/#_ftn1) suggests that because various market factors are holding back market rate developers, our planners and the Planning Board have decided it is acceptable to burden older established communities and their residents with additional housing that the market is not providing.
 - The proposed developer incentives and waivers will increase the tax burden on existing residents to pay for the infrastructure necessary to increase capacity for new residents.
 - The burden on unincorporated communities, which often have smaller lots and narrower streets, will be exacerbated if municipalities and homeowners' associations are exempted from meeting any additional housing requirements or protected against specific zoning changes.
 - It is unclear what AHSI will do to existing master plans. Current residents invested in their neighborhoods because of expectations created by master plans.
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- It is unclear how, and even whether, the master planning process will be used in the future, and whether there is a meaningful role for public input.

Officials and planners are sending contradictory messages regarding the need for AHSI.

- We have been told by council members, planning commissioners and staff that the proposed changes need to be made now, on a large scale, countywide, to meet potential housing needs.
- We have also been told change will be incremental.
- These contradictions highlight the imperative to make any zoning changes through master plans. Without master and sector planning, implementation of the changes will be haphazard and unfair, as reflected, for example, in data showing that the Bethesda/Chevy Chase area already has 28 ongoing projects slated to deliver 6,978 units (including 942 MPDUs) in the next several years, which exceeds the target of 3,425 units. (<https://www.townofchevychase.org/DocumentCenter/View/4547/TOCC-Testimony-AHSI-3-21-2024>)

The effort to "sell" AHSI has included questionable claims and assumptions and omits RE/SJ issues.

- Planners claim that height, lot coverage, and setbacks will remain the same as for single-family houses. This has not been the case with other housing changes, notably ADUs.
 - Planning's Missing Middle Housing Market Study (https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Missing-Middle-Market-Study_03-04-2021_Staff-Report.pdf) pages 2-5 lists among obstacles to missing middle that "The existing R60 zoning/development standards do not physically accommodate Missing Middle housing, even a duplex. Lot coverage, height limits, and setbacks were the most common items mentioned in relation to challenges with development standards."
 - AHSI assumes that developers will choose to build so-called attainable housing but the Missing Middle Market Study raises questions about how attainable multiplexes would be. (https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Missing-Middle-Market-Study_03-04-2021_Staff-Report.pdf, see page 12.)
 - Despite the OLO report (<https://www.scribd.com/document/558161463/OLO-RESJ-Review-of-Thrive-2-9-22-Revised>) and the outside consultant's findings on racial equity and social justice in Thrive Montgomery 2050, there is nothing in AHSI regarding displacement and gentrification, which are far more likely to affect lower income and Brown and Black communities.
 - Population and behavior projections become less reliable as they reach further into the future. AHSI also seems to include an implicit assumption that demand for single-family housing will diminish. A one-size-fits-all plan such as AHSI must include defined metrics and time periods for review and adjustment.
 - The developer of three \$3,650,00 townhouses at 4500 Walsh Street in downtown Bethesda chose not to take advantage of a change in zoning from R-60 to CRT 0.5 C 0.25 R 0.5 H 70. The CRT zoning would have allowed him to build a 70' tall apartment/condo building, and if he provided at least 17.6% MPDUs he could have had another floor or two including more market rate apartments.
 - Despite approved development applications already in Bethesda since adoption of the 2017 Bethesda Downtown Plan approaching the soft cap of 30.4 million square feet, amenities and infrastructure in the plan have not kept pace. With AHSI, Planning's claim that development provides funding for needed infrastructure and amenities in the County is ludicrous, especially as the Planning Board proposes more incentives including reductions and waivers in taxes and fees.
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The Council must look at related planning efforts. For example:

- Planning is proposing to remove the density cap on development in Bethesda via a minor master plan amendment - despite the fact that, as noted above, none of the parks or amenities (for example, a recreation center) the plan calls for have been delivered. (Planning's recommendation to remove the cap will be published on Thursday, October 17, 2024.)
- A new master plan is in the works for Friendship Heights.
- The cumulative effect of AHSI, removal of the density cap in the Bethesda Downtown Plan, and adding density to Friendship Heights will make Wisconsin Avenue/355 un navigable and living conditions around it difficult for every resident, visitor, and employee in the area.

AHSI would continue Planning's effort to reduce public input.

- The first draft of Thrive included specific language to drastically reduce public input, the first clear effort to do so. AHSI's proposal to allow more by-right development and administrative approvals as Thrive is implemented reduces public input.
- AHSI does not adequately address when, where, or how neighbors can raise concerns about development that is problematic. For example: drainage issues that affect neighboring properties, onsite parking for multiple cars within side and rear setbacks that reduce tree canopy and create air and noise pollution for neighbors.

There is a lack of clarity about the process going forward.

- The Planning, Housing, and Parks Committee has not made public its schedule or process for moving forward with AHSI.
- The Council needs to consider the accuracy of the underlying data and projections made by Planning, and determine what additional studies Council staff or Planning or outside experts must do. Reassurances from Planning without data are meaningless (<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/attainable-housing-strategies-initiative/attainable-housing-strategies-what-were-hearing/>).
- The necessary studies must be integrated into any housing proposal.

AHSI is the wrong program for our County. MoCo needs a realistic, transparent housing plan, supported by data and impact analysis. AHSI is not that.

866 Richard Richard Gilmore - Chevy Chase, 20815

I attended 2 presentations/ listening sessions and have read background materials on the initiative. I have been struck by the stovepipe approach to the development of the plan (no contact with the infrastructure group study, no comprehensive impact assessment), the promotion of the plan as "affordable" housing which it clearly is not; and the contradictory messages delivered by Council reps and the Housing plan officials. I agree with those who see this as a boldface boondoggle for real estate developers in a misguided effort to increase the County's revenue base.

867 Chris Bruch - Chevy Chase, 20815

I support duplexes, subject to scale and massing conformity with adjacent properties.

I do not support by-right tri, quads or mini apartments buildings in R-60 single family neighborhoods.

I support townhomes, as a buffer use, on properties adjacent to commercial.

868 Kate Jahnig - Chevy Chase, 20815

The Attainable Housing Strategies is a terrible idea. No one who lives here wants it.

869 Regina Grieb - Garrett Park, 20896

Having lived in Garrett Park since the 1950's, I remember as a child hearing about the possibility of duplexes or other possible housing combination besides single family homes. Over the years it was challenging to see some of the older properties sold and then the yards subdivided to "cram" in two homes where one used to be. I would rather the single family tradition continue in this neighborhood.

870 Village Council Village of North Chevy Chase - Village of North Chevy Chase, 20815

VILLAGE OF NORTH CHEVY CHASE
PO BOX 15887, CHEVY CHASE, MD 20815

October 16, 2024

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative

Dear Council President Friedson and Members of the Montgomery County Council,

We, the members of the Council of the Village of North Chevy Chase, home to 211 households and 682 residents located within the proposed Priority Housing District Boundary with R-40 R-60 R-90 zoning blocks, agree that Montgomery County faces a housing shortage that requires well-designed solutions to address this challenge. The proposed Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) fails to address the housing shortage and will irrevocably transform the community we cherish. We are voicing strong opposition to the AHS for the following reasons:

AHSI housing is not attainable. Condo and townhouses priced at \$450,000-\$500,000 (the low end of market prices for proposed housing) will require an annual income of over \$100,000 which is more than starting salaries for Montgomery County (MC) Department of

Transportation bus operators (\$51,000); MC police officers (\$69,000), and MC public school teachers (\$70,000). The strategy benefits developers, not hardworking residents seeking attainable housing.

No studies have been conducted to assess the impact on infrastructure and the environment. Given the current challenges with clogged roads (Connecticut Avenue being our Western boundary), increasing parking issues, and more frequent storm water management challenges, we cannot support a plan that is not based on impact assessments. These challenges require multi-billion-dollar solutions!

The one-mile pedestrian shed is incorrect. Research shows the average US pedestrian is willing to walk only about 10 minutes or about 0.25 miles, not 1 mile.

Reducing parking requirements will add cars to the street, impacting pedestrian safety and storm water management.

How will we maintain vision zero with more cars on the road? How will we ensure our children receive excellent education in our public schools without demographic modeling of population growth and considering budget cuts and already overcrowded schools?

Although Council President Friedson has stated that there is no legislation currently before the Council, the planning board has rushed through the strategy's development process and recommended it for the Council to now review. This is a mistake.

The Council of the Village of North Chevy Chase strongly opposes the proposed Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative as it fails to address the housing shortage, is not based on evidence, and will impact the environment, pedestrian safety, and congestion negatively.

Sincerely,

The Village Council
Village of North Chevy Chase

871

Barbara Winnik - Chevy Chase, 20815

Council members,

I am a 42 year resident of Chevy Chase Village. I strongly disagree with the initiative that is being brought before you. I live in one of the five original Village houses. However, I'm surrounded by houses that were built in the 50s and 60s. I would not be surprised if those would be sold and made into apartment buildings. I have a large piece of property and I am sure if this happened the value of my and other residence of similar background would be devalued. I also don't see the need for more housing in Montgomery county and certainly not in single-family house neighborhoods

M Langelan - Chevy Chase, 20815

Marty Langelan
[REDACTED]

Resident, Village of Martin's Additions

October 15, 2024

ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS: THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY "ATTAINABLE HOUSING" PLAN

As an economist and civil rights advocate, I strongly support affordable housing. I oppose the Attainable Housing Strategy Initiative (AHSI). If approved, the AHSI would cancel much of Montgomery County's single-family zoning and give developers the right to put multi-family buildings on countless small neighborhood lots – with enormous costs for the communities that would have to deal with the congestion and infrastructure impact.

The AHSI is not designed to provide affordable housing or reduce socioeconomic inequality. It is part of a wider national effort to eliminate single-family zoning in order to open up large new profit and revenue streams for real estate builders and corporate investors. Other regions across the country are also being pushed to adopt the same kind of wholesale re-zoning.

What a bonanza for developers, to be able to construct and sell high-profit multiplexes "by right" on lot after lot, with no obligation to build the necessary community infrastructure or provide a single unit of affordable housing. It is inexcusable to do that anywhere – and even more indefensible to do it under the guise of "attainable housing."

There is no economic basis to assume that only a handful of multiplexes would be built. Why construct a single-family home, or even a duplex, when you can put a 4-unit quad on the lot and sell each unit for a million or more? Contrary to the County Planning staff's entirely speculative assertion that the impact would be "minimal," many of our communities could see intense demolition, with denser housing stacked on block after block. The AHSI is likely to be particularly destructive to the areas that have a sizable population of Black, Latino, and immigrant families.

Under the proposed plan, the new multiplex units would sell or rent at market rates. None of the new housing would have to be even remotely affordable.

- The existing requirements for lower-priced affordable units apply only when a residential development site includes 20 housing units or more. The AHSI allows up to 19 units on a site. That certainly does seem to signal that affordable housing is not the intent of the proposal.
- Since there is no mandate for affordability, the zoning change is likely to do nothing to produce moderately priced "missing middle" housing or provide any financially "attainable" low-cost housing options for the thousands of County residents who earn less than \$50,000 a year. Re-zoning would have the opposite effect, making it highly profitable to strip the current affordable housing out of the neighborhoods.
- Each of the new multiplex units might be smaller than a detached single-family home, but multiplex buildings do not cost less to construct. A quad building requires four of everything: kitchens, bathrooms, HVAC, etc.

Add the profit margins on each unit, and the purchase and rental prices soar. As the new Bethesda triplex on Walsh St. demonstrates, each of the new units can be twice the selling price of the older home the builder demolished. That is not affordable housing.

The proposal sets no limit on how many neighborhood properties could be torn down for multiplexes.

- The potential profits for private developers are so large that the neighborhood lots could fall like dominos, as developers outbid families to buy up nearly every older house on the market and replace it with a high-price / high-rent multiplex building. The way the economic incentives are designed, it's doubtful that much of the older housing stock would survive in some areas. Putting quads on just 25% of the lots would double the local population. A full set of triplexes or quads would put 60 to 80 households on streets that now have 20.

Here's what that kind of increased density would mean in the existing single-family neighborhoods:

- Dangerous traffic overloads on the narrow suburban streets, with hundreds of additional cars, service vans, and delivery trucks.
 - A significant decrease in pedestrian safety.
 - Massive neighborhood parking problems. The proposed plan would make that even worse by reducing some of the existing requirements for developers to build off-street parking.
 - More school overcrowding.
 - More transportation gridlock on the down-county arteries, and lower air quality as a result of the congestion. That has a public health impact.
 - Extensive flooding and storm-water damage in the communities where the old infrastructure is already overwhelmed every time it rains.
 - Widespread environmental damage: significant loss of the tree canopy, permeable surfaces, yards, gardens, and green space. We have already experienced some of this loss when developers clear-cut the old lots and stretch the existing building code to the limit. The AHSI includes no environmental impact analysis.
 - It takes decades to produce suburbs with mature tree canopies. They are immensely valuable; they reduce air pollution for the region, help control water run-off, and reduce heat islands. The multiplex buildings in the AHSI plan would leave no room for canopy trees on a typical lot.
 - While the plan envisions retaining the minimum County setbacks, it's not yet clear whether towns would be able to maintain the setbacks, height, and other regulations in their local building codes. Zoning changes can override municipal ordinances. Small towns like Martin's Additions that are responsible for their own local streets and services could potentially be bankrupted by the infrastructure costs. Many of the older municipalities were not built with the infrastructure capacity to handle denser housing loads. Adding a few duplexes or small accessory units may be manageable. Doubling or tripling the current housing density is not.
 - The "attainable housing" proposal omits any fiscal impact analysis. Who pays to rebuild the streets for heavier traffic? Who pays to double the town's sewer-line capacity?
 - Who pays to upgrade the old community gas lines, electric grid, and storm drains?
 - How much would it cost each town just to handle double the volume of trash collection?
 - How many new fire hydrants would it take to meet the fire code? What if the old community water lines don't supply enough pressure to make the additional hydrants work? Is the town liable? Would it have to install new water mains?
- To put 50 quads in a new housing development, the builders would have to provide the infrastructure. But if the same 50 quads go on the small lots in a neighborhood, none of the builders would have to face responsibility for the community capacity. The proposed zoning

change could inflict crushing costs on the local municipalities. Retrofitting the infrastructure in older communities can be far more expensive and difficult than installing the infrastructure for a new development. There is no data to show that “impact fees” and town tax revenues could come even close to covering the costs.

Adding density without affordability solves nothing. It merely maximizes private profits. The developers reap the benefits while offloading the public costs and adverse effects.

Re-zoning is likely to reduce the amount of affordable housing. The small older houses that still remain in many single-family neighborhoods, homes that sell and rent below market average, are an essential supply of affordable housing – and are the prime target for tear-downs. The County already loses affordable housing when builders bulldoze an older home for a McMansion. The right to construct a far more profitable triplex or quad sets up financial incentives to turbocharge the rate of demolition.

- Re-zoning the neighborhood lots to increase the supply of expensive multiplexes would systematically reallocate land usage away from affordable housing. The “trickle-down” theory of housing has been debunked. There is no good evidence that adding more supply at the high end of the housing market magically creates more supply at the lower end, within any reasonable time frame. It just makes affordable housing scarcer.

Socioeconomic Equity: The Planning Board’s language about “exclusionary” communities is misleading. The AHSI would not remedy the history of housing discrimination. Many residents who oppose racism oppose this re-zoning proposal because the suburbs that have a significant share of Black, Latino, and immigrant renters and homeowners, and currently have affordable homes, are likely to be among the areas hit hardest by the proposed zoning change. The last thing most local communities need is housing demolition for million-dollar multiplexes.

- What creates “exclusionary” communities is the fact that private for-profit developers and corporate investors skew the housing supply to the upper end of the market. The AHSI does not correct that market imbalance.
- Re-zoning can fuel rapid price inflation, driven by large developers and investment firms. That only makes it harder for historically excluded groups to purchase homes.
- Replacing affordable rental homes with market-rate multiplexes displaces renters.
- Re-zoning also displaces homeowners. Many historically excluded groups saved for years to own homes in the communities that the AHSI would now target for heavy new density. Re-zoning can first disrupt communities with gentrification, then cause the kind of congestion that reduces the value of the remaining homes, undermining the economic assets of the families who remain.

Property Values: The first round of new multiplex development is likely to inflate property values as developers bid up the price of the lots. The second stage could see a glut of high-price multiplexes, with depressed property values for the remaining single-family homes that are surrounded by treeless quads and congestion.

- The public school system is already struggling under the current density. Any further overcrowding that diminishes educational quality is likely to diminish property values as well.

Lack of Infrastructure Planning and Funding: Concentrating a surge of new density in the down-County area could push dozens of communities into a large simultaneous crisis of infrastructure overload.

- The AHSI provides no economic data to document how long it would take Pepco, WSSC, and Washington Gas to handle that surge in the volume of work, how they plan to gear up to do it, or how much of it would have to be funded by steep utility rate increases and/or taxes.

- What is the projected impact of the AHSI on the County residents' utility bills and tax rates?

Unequal Application: The AHSI would impose a sweeping zoning change with damaging economic effects in many areas of the County. However, it notably omits Potomac and several other mid-County areas that have land available for multi-family housing. Why shield Potomac from the congestion and environmental costs that developers could inflict "by right" in other neighborhoods? Lack of mass transit is not an explanation; many other communities have no nearby access to rapid bus transit or Metro, yet are included in the AHSI re-zoning plan. The unequal application of the proposed zoning change raises serious questions about the plan's equity and legitimacy.

Employment and Construction-Sector Effects: Any major housing production initiative will create jobs. The economic difference depends on the social utility of what is being built. The AHSI re-zoning plan would divert construction resources away from the affordable housing projects the County needs. A multiplex building boom, producing market-rate units to maximize private profits, has a negative social utility in this context: It would not only decrease the current stock of affordable housing by demolition, but drive up the cost of construction labor and materials, making new affordable housing more expensive to build and even less "attainable."

Inadequate Justification: There is no data to show that the County needs a major zoning change to meet the need for affordable housing. As County Executive Marc Elrich correctly points out, the AHSI is unnecessary: There is more than enough housing already planned to handle the County's projected population growth through 2050. Some projects are now in progress; more are waiting in the pipeline with permits already approved.

- Elrich notes that the AHSI re-zoning proposal has no sound factual basis – the premise is not based on accurate current data or a realistic economic analysis – and the proposed plan offers no solution to the need for affordability.

- The County has no lack of expensive upscale housing, no crisis or shortage in that portion of the market, and no need to adopt a re-zoning plan to produce more of the same. Any pretense that the AHSI would generate affordable housing quickly falls apart under scrutiny. Elrich has publicly called the AHSI a fraud.

There is no reasonable public basis to approve a zoning plan that would add to the surplus of high-cost housing, and make the actual housing crisis – the shortage of affordable housing – worse.

Who would benefit from this zoning change? Real estate developers, investors, and the large private capital firms that are buying up available housing in neighborhoods all over the country.

Who would be harmed? The people of Montgomery County. In addition to the economic impact, the AHSI would have a profound societal cost. We and our neighbors are part of a warm, complex, inclusive multicultural community that provides the essential support network for young families and elders and has been life-saving at times. When neighborhoods are re-zoned, it's not just the trees and houses that are lost.

- Re-zoning and congestion adversely affect many quality-of-life factors, including fire and rescue access, school capacity, green space, care-giving for people with disabilities, aging-in-place programs, walkability, historic preservation, County environmental goals, and many other issues. The decrease in affordable housing under the AHSI undercuts any rationale for such harm and only makes it more egregious.
- The AHSI prioritizes real estate industry profits over any other consideration. Governments have a responsibility to operate in the public interest, not to maximize private industry profits at public expense.

Productive Alternatives: It makes economic sense to add housing in and near the County job centers, where the future job growth will occur and sufficient infrastructure capacity is already in place. Generic statements about the housing crisis are no substitute for operational

data on how and where to construct affordable housing. Elrich is right to take a practical approach: Develop accurate housing data, identify the priority projects, and then work on getting that affordable housing built.

- Instead of tearing down the neighborhoods, give developers incentives to convert the 20% vacant office space in downtown Silver Spring, Bethesda, etc., into residential housing. Put housing near jobs, to lower transportation costs. Require at least 30% of the new units to actually be affordable.
- Make good use of the White Flint, Geico, Lakeforest, and White Oak sites for affordable housing.
- Provide more housing vouchers for public employees.
- Expand the affordable housing supply with more public financing (federal, state, and county); partner with municipal governments, community groups, and religious organizations for planned low-cost housing, not market-rate development.
- Focus on affordable development within a half-mile of rapid transit centers. The new luxury housing at Chevy Chase Lake looks like a significant missed opportunity for affordability. (The normal half-mile walkshed should apply. The AHSI's proposed one-mile perimeter appears to be unwarranted – unsupported by walkability data and serving only to permit a much larger number of high-profit quads as a financial favor to developers.)
- Consult local communities about possible sites, feasibility, planning, and potential impact. Many County residents support affordable housing. Wholesale re-zoning is destructive, but local initiatives can be remarkably effective (e.g., Takoma Park). There are many useful avenues. Not one of them requires the abolition of single-family zoning. There is no economic justification to subject communities to a wide-open free-for-all of demolition, density, and congestion.

Proposed Planning Review: In response to the public objections to the “attainable housing” strategy, the County Planning officials have now proposed to review the impact 2-4 years after the plan is adopted. That is not an acceptable response.

- In 2-4 years, much of the damage would already be done. Zoning changes like this one create a profit premium for fast action (the first developers to construct the new multiplexes are likely to reap the highest profits). Hundreds of existing homes could be demolished in 2-4 years.
- The pledge to review the impact is so vague that it is meaningless. There is no available documentation that identifies the review's proposed methodology, the criteria, or the factors that would be assessed.
- And there is certainly no need to “wait to see how this plays out,” as one County Planning staff member recently suggested. The economics are basic. The outcome of re-zoning is well known. That outcome is readily visible in countless examples of neighborhoods that now have a few surviving single-family homes in a sea of condos and townhouses.

Questionable Government Procedure: Ending single-family zoning is such an enormous change that it should be evaluated within the County Master Plan process, with full public analysis, notice, and hearings, not treated as just a zoning text amendment (ZTA). The Montgomery County Council normally takes some pride in good government process. Citizens, local municipalities, County and state government officials, and community organizations should insist on a Master Plan review process here.

- A number of residents have also publicly requested that any such large-scale zoning change be put to a County-wide election referendum before adoption. In light of the serious long-term effects that re-zoning would have on County residents' lives, communities, and financial assets, I concur with that recommendation.
- There is also one additional cost factor for the County Council to consider: Zoning changes of this magnitude can trigger expensive, protracted lawsuits. Several jurisdictions in Virginia are now being sued for canceling single-family zoning; Arlington County just lost in

court. The legal costs of proceeding with the “attainable housing” plan could be significant; the re-zoning proposal is so problematic that it would be difficult to defend. Use our tax dollars for housing, not for zoning litigation.

Summary: The mis-named “attainable housing” plan will not produce affordable housing or address equity concerns. Zoning changes like this one create adverse financial incentives that promote neighborhood demolition, maximizing the financial benefits to private investors while imposing severe long-term congestion costs, environmental damage, and infrastructure burdens on local communities. The proposal is not supported by current housing data, by a credible economic analysis, by an infrastructure assessment or fiscal impact review, or by an environmental impact analysis. Instead of improving economic equity, it is likely to decimate the communities that are home to a substantial number of Black, Latino, and immigrant families.

The AHSI has no valid economic basis. If adopted, it would be counterproductive, reducing the supply of moderate and lower-cost housing and diverting needed resources, as builders tear down affordable neighborhood housing to construct high-price multiplexes.

An objective observer might reasonably conclude that the AHSI uses the language about the housing crisis merely as a smokescreen, as a pretext to maximize corporate profit-taking. This is not a progressive housing policy. This is a corporate zoning maneuver that would harm County residents, solely to benefit the financial self-interest of real estate developers and investors.

Re-zoning without accounting for affordability, congestion, and environmental impact causes substantial community harm. The AHSI is contrary to the public interest.

The County has far better ways to provide affordable housing.

Action: I recommend that the County Councilmembers safeguard the public interest – and their own reputations – by directing the County Planning officials to replace the AHSI zoning proposal with a priority plan for affordability:

(1) Preserve and expand the supply of moderate and lower-cost housing. (2) Avoid large-scale re-zoning and litigation. (3) Address infrastructure needs and local community input, including socioeconomic equity. (4) Evaluate any major housing policy changes via the Master Plan process, not in a legislative ZTA.

873

Joanna Gidrewicz - Chevy Chase, 20016

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I agree there is a housing crisis, but I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative as it will not result in affordable housing. Attainable housing is not affordable to MC DOT bus operators (starting salary \$51,000); MC police officers (starting salary \$69,000), and MC public school teachers (starting salary \$70,000). The strategy benefits developers, not hard-working residents seeking attainable housing.

This county-wide zoning strategy is not a solution to the housing crisis and will greatly impact our public-school population and quality of education; pedestrian/cyclist safety; traffic; storm water management; canopy and green spaces; and parking. Please do not approve the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. It is not a solution to the housing crisis.

874

Tim Sommer - Kensington, 20895

My questions/comments/concerns are mainly focused on understanding what studies have been conducted (and therefore what plans have been made/proposed) with respect to the overall impact on "infrastructure":

Traffic - Have traffic patterns/congestion already been modeled? If so what assumptions were made as to the number of individuals that would use mass transit versus personal vehicles?

Water- What is the expected impact on Water supply, and how will the increased needs be met? What is the condition of the pipelines serving the areas you expect to experience the largest population increase? What is the cost to expand/replace if/as needed?

Sewer- What have the studies shown regarding the impact of the increased population on the current system(s)? What work is needed to meet the increase in demand, and what are the projected costs?

Electric Grid - Is there a need to expand the supply? If so, how would this be accomplished, and how long would it take, and what is the cost?

Cell Phone Towers - Are additional towers necessary? And if so, what is the plan, the time frame for construction, and the cost?

Waste Collection - Similar to the areas above, what studies have been conducted to illustrate the increase in need/demand, and how would this be met?

Police, EMS, Firefighters - How would these forces/groups need to be expanded? And what is the lead time needed to increase headcount and ensure all individuals are properly trained? Can they projected increased number of individuals be "housed" within the current facilities? Or would additional facilities be required? If so, how much would this cost and what is the process to determine location(s)? What is the current response time for these groups and can you guarantee they would not lengthen during this process?

Will developers/builders - often having access to more capital than individuals - ultimately "inflate" the purchase prices of the properties and therefore outbid the majority of individual prospective homeowners?

Thank you

875

Alan Seifert - Chevy Chase, 20815

My wife and I have been residents of Montgomery County since 1982. The AHS proposal is the most disturbing legislative proposal to come forward in all our years of living in the County.

First and foremost the proponents have not demonstrated that AHS would achieve the supposed objective of addressing the County's housing needs. There is no evidence presented that demonstrates that affordable housing will be generated in the communities that would suffer major disruptions. On the contrary, there is strong evidence and reason to conclude that despite neighborhoods being upended by demolition of existing single family residences and construction of multiunit residences, the end product will be residences that are NOT affordable by the residents who are supposed to benefit.

Remarkably, no impact studies have been conducted as to the many increased needs for additional services that would necessarily result from increases in population in single family residence neighborhoods that have had relatively stable needs for services for decades. What about increased school enrollment? What about garbage collection? What about increased stress on the sewer system? What about increased flooding because of increased hardtop? How will increased need for parking and traffic be addressed? These are just some of the many real world consequences that have not been studied or even addressed. That AHS is even being considered without a plan to address infrastructure, schools, traffic and environment is the absolute antithesis of good and responsible government.

All of this leads us to conclude the motivation for AHS is unvarnished catering to the special interests of developers and/or incompetence. AHS must be rejected.

876

Michael Zielinski - Chevy Chase, 20815-3216

I am opposed to the "attainable housing" proposal (P). While the "missing middle" of affordable housing is an important issue - the P does not purport to solve any such problem. Rather, the ability to cram multiple units onto existing small lots - as a matter of right - is a recipe for chaos. I live in the Village of Martin's Additions, where there is a prevalence of 50-foot wide lots (like our's) on narrow streets with limited parking. A few years ago, when small municipalities were granted limited zoning authority, I chaired a committee to propose ordinances addressed to such things as set-backs - height limits - lot and front yard coverage, all to try and preserve the character of our community. Those laws were enacted and have been effectively applied to numerous construction projects. Now, the P would likely eviscerate many of those measures, and threaten substantial unrestricted increases in density that would have many harmful effects, as pointed out by more knowledgeable commenters. Most of those impacts have not even been considered or studied.

As many have urged - PRESS PAUSE -- or, better yet - STOP.

877

WILLIAM ELWOOD - GARRETT PARK, 20896-0068

Small-scale strategies seem appropriate and realistic ways to increase attainable dwelling units in my neighborhood, which is close to RideOn, WMATA, MARC, Garrett Park Elementary School, and many additional MoCo amenities. Such small-scale construction would need to be sympathetic with the existing fabric and set-backs for Garrett Park.

878

Courtenay Ellis - Potomac, 208564

1. No due process notice to affected homeowners by official US mail.2. No analysis of impact on existing home values and the county's property tax base valuation. 3. No poll done to support the Harris assertion "this is what people want" and no determination as to which people's views are relevant. 4. No recognition that townhomes and condominiums will not be more attainable since they can currently cost over \$1 million.4. No analysis of impact on schools, traffic, roads, air quality, water supplies, congestion, parking, from contemplated 10 to 13 fold increase in density.5.Replaces one-owner fee simple protections with potential litigation in multiplex titles.

879

Tom Murphy - Kensington, 20895

I am not in favor of this initiative. My understanding from our County Executive is that there are unfilled vacancies in buildings designed for affordable (I believe this extends to attainable as well) housing. It would be inefficient to forsake those. Aside from operating inefficiently, the qualitative effect on this neighborhood will undoubtedly be negative. Assuming even a nominal multiplier of 2x, the amount of cars, traffic, and amplified building replacements (e.g., ERB's large structure rebuilds in place of otherwise proportionally sound domiciles) will likely make the living experience less desirable for all.

As a means to understand impacts of this initiative, was there a referential precedent that was examined? If not, examination of a data set in that regard would be warranted.

On another note, albeit more philosophical, I can declare that in purchasing my home, I didn't simply wave a magic wand. I waited until I had saved enough money for the down payment and purchased this home later in life. Similarly, I waited until I had enough resources to provide for a child before having one. I am not asserting that there are those who act in these responsible and prudent ways and still need assistance, but perhaps it would be worthwhile determining how much of the assistance provisions sought by this initiative are due to compensating for poor circumstance instead of poor design.

880

Eugene Flannery - Garrett Park, 20896

I am firmly against this initiative. Multi-unit/family buildings in Garrett Park will not work and are not acceptable. First, we do not have the infrastructure to support the increased parking and traffic alone. Beyond that, this will ruin why I, and many others I know, wanted to come

to this town and invested a life's savings to buy a house here. For years, my family and i would drive through the town admiring the beautiful homes, amazing lots, the trees dreaming of one day being able to live here. At the time we lived in a 1500 SQFT home in Silver Spring where we lived for 10 years. We saved our money and worked hard with this goal in mind. We have now lived here for 15 years.

So now, if this goes through, the entire reason we wanted to live here could be ruined. We may as well have stayed in Silver Spring, kept our money, or moved out of the county had this been foreseen. This is unacceptable to homeowners who rely on their home as their most valuable asset.

881

Richard Murnane - Garrett Park, 20896

While I support this effort in general, I think that a strategy requires much more work to be able to be suitably applicable for the wide range of neighborhoods in "MoCo".

As an example, consider the town in which I live. Having 4 households on a single lot would likely require a significant amount of additional parking. Most houses don't have a garage or a long driveway. Plus, most of the streets lack a sidewalk and if the cars were parked on the street it would endanger pedestrians, especially with the additional traffic.

On a separate front, increasing the "hardscape" to accommodate the additional housing would increase storm runoff.

882

Melissa Deehring - North Chevy Chase, 20715

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I agree there is a housing crisis, and I was one of the new residents who could not afford to buy in until recently (in my 40's), but I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative.

The strategy benefits developers, not hard-working residents seeking attainable housing, particularly in North Chevy Chase Village.

Please do not approve the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative or its plans for North Chevy Chase Village. It is not a sustainable solution to the housing crisis, will encourage aggressive developers to displace current owners and may even lead to more serious issues such as elder abuse, predatory lending, and other tactics in the name of making money off development as a result, will further increase on ramp/off ramp MDOT congestion and health hazards (particularly at Connecticut/Jones Bridge/Kensington Parkway), and other options exist that are more neighborhood and resident friendly (and have not been seriously considered because they make less money for developers). Developers and expensive loans are the problem, not the solution.

883

Elisa Freeman - Chevy chase, 20815

I totally DISAGREE with this initiative as proposed. If passed, you can be assured that you will lose my vote

884

Kristin Altar - Garrett Park, 20896

I am strongly against this proposal. I do not believe the long term consequences of this proposal have been considered enough such as home owners losing the ability to control what happens on or the ability to sell their property, the infrastructure for needed services like schools, hospitals etc., increased traffic, and the safety issues traffic creates, wear and tear on roads, need for lots more parking areas on our towns narrow and already crowded streets, increased crime related to increased traffic and visibility, less privacy for families, more noise in homes, crowding in our homes. I believe this is a poorly conceived idea and will create resentment in neighborhoods.

885

Donald Horowitz - Chevy Chase, 20815

The Attainable Housing plan is the most aggressive attempt by a local legislature to disregard the interests of the constituents it was elected to served that I have seen in many decades of studying and writing about government action. Its ultimate success depends on the departure of current residents from their homes and neighborhoods--a true outrage. After 30 years in N. Carolina, my wife and I moved back to Chevy Chase, spent a good part of our accumulated savings buying a home in which we could live out our remaining years (we are in our 80s) until our death. That plan is now threatened by the callous and poorly designed and unlawful plan, which we will fight vigorously.

886

Renee & Tim McCune - Chevy Chase, 20815

Good evening,

We write in opposition of the proposed plan and echo the many reasons already shared in the listening sessions for why this plan should be re-considered, including concerns about school overcrowding, inadequate parking in neighborhoods, safety concerns with increasingly congested neighborhood roads, storm water runoff/flooded basements, a strain on neighborhood utilities and services, and how it would completely change the characteristic of affected neighborhoods. Moreover, this in no way provides affordable housing; rather it is a boon for developers.

On a personal note, we live on a dead end street in Chevy Chase Village near the Friendship Heights metro that we understand would be subject to all of the proposed zoning changes including up to 19 unit apartment buildings. On our street there is no round about to turn around like sometimes seen in suburban neighborhoods such as Potomac, but rather just private driveways at the dead end. We do not have sidewalks. Even now, with several vacant houses on our dead end street, it is a constant parade of delivery trucks, garbage/recycling trucks. landscape and other service vehicles, construction vehicles, people parking to visit the Collection, people trying to get to Wisconsin and having to turn around with no outlet, and homeowners' vehicles. Our car has been sideswiped by trucks attempting to get through the narrow street. It it hard to imagine even adding a duplex or two (and a few extra cars parked and driving on the street), much less cars from a 19 unit or less apartment building. We also fear that it could make it very difficult for emergency vehicles to access the street if needed.

There are many children, including our own two, in the neighborhood. The increased congestion, coupled with the lack of sidewalks, would make it unsafe for children to walk to the bus stop or play outside. There are also many people, including elderly people, who walk in the neighborhood, and this scenario would make it less safe for them as well.

Additionally, our children have already been subject to one unwanted school re-zoning (no longer able to attend our neighborhood school) and they are still in crowded classes. In part this overcrowding is due to apartment and condo buildings build in recent years in the Bethesda/Chevy Chase area without a plan for how to handle the increased pressure on the schools. This plan would only add to the existing issue of crowded schools, without a solution to alleviate that crowding.

Please consider the toll this plan would take on existing neighborhoods such as ours, and focus on other possibilities for attaining the goals of this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration,

Renee and Tim McCune

Nona Olson - Kensington, 20895

887

The attempt to eliminate single family zoning and rely on developers to create compatible neighborhood housing is ridiculous - not a well thought out plan and not successful in areas that have tried it. The planning board never reached out to each community to see what they had - as detailed in their sector plan - that could be adapted to middle income housing. The AHS pits neighbors against neighbors and automatically increases the prices of small single family homes which - if the AHS is implemented - will be worth a lot more to developers for redevelopment than currently for another buyer. And the details of the plan aren't there;

where do trash and recycling cans go - now 4 or 6 vs 2

where do the AC units go - now 2 or 3

where are the details for the common area driveway/parking areas maintenance.

One roof on stacked residences - who repairs

Who oversees the management of these common features and what is the expected fee for that. Is every buyer expected to work that out?

Where do cars go - one car per house is unrealistic - and there are visitors and deliveries etc. A single block with 2 new triplexes could easily have 12 cars vs 4 cars from 2 single family homes without off street parking.

What about loss of green space, trees, sunlight for adjacent homes - the models show no yards and driveways only inches from the property line. And the models are incredibly misleading with the beautiful exterior detail that will not convey to reality.

The AHS is anti community and pro development at the expense of community. Wheaton has street after street of affordable single family homes and duplexes - with HUGE parking issues as residents must own a car to get around but lack off street parking. That parking issue becomes a distraction from the affordability - or maybe they are affordable because of it.

The county council had an opportunity to cap building height of remodels to 30' - they chose 35' allowing an extra floor.

The county council had an opportunity to work with small landlords, many who have rentals without mortgages and could provide favorable rents if rental payments could be guaranteed. They opted to empower the Montgomery County Renters Alliance and anti-landlord legislation, such as laborious rent and property recovery procedures.

The county council could have been more proactive in the monitoring of the Housing Opportunity Commission's performance (HOC). HOC does indeed keep people off the street but unlike Habitat for Humanity which ensures the occupants of their new homes (albeit buyers) have the basic tools for success, HOC simply doles out money for partial rent leaving a wake of unpaid rent and damage. With all the voucher recipients it has to be assumed that some have no financial management skills and they don't receive any. They don't receive guidance for anything and that should be an assumed need as they struggle to make ends meet. The result is higher rents to cover lost rent and damage. The result is also fewer small landlords willing to enter into a contract with HOC because of administrative missteps.

Florida set aside \$X for nurses, teachers and first responders to buy into designated areas where their services were needed but were unaffordable for them to live.

West Virginia selected certain areas and offered cash, gym memberships etc to those with certain skills who would relocate to those areas. It proved successful and new areas have been added.

My point is the County Council has never proactively looked into low income or affordable housing opportunities and has never really entertained other ideas besides simply pushing it off to large entities such as HOC (which is certainly needed but lacks oversight skills for voucher recipients). And now we have another push off - the Attainable Housing Strategies (AHS) - which lets developers decide, by right, what to build (per a Playbook as yet undeveloped). AHS is simply more housing, it has nothing to do with affordable housing, and is simply a plan to take away single family housing zoning - retroactively - across the board - at great profit to one group. And all the questions and concerns raised above will remain if this goes thru. (Again, please read the Minneapolis experience report). One size does not fit all.

Is there opportunity for affordable housing within the existing sector plans with perhaps slight modification? Probably so - that's where the energy should be focused. I happen to like my single family home with a yard and trees and sunlight and my experience in a single family neighborhood - that doesn't mean I don't recognize that all communities don't look like Kensington, which without its incorporation and mayor and town council, wouldn't look like it does either. Be creative, focus on affordable housing, look at condos that are underwater, vacant buildings, a true liaison with the small landlord community. As county representatives all should be visiting every bit of the community they represent for grassroots info on what's needed and what's available in that area, not relying on a boiler plate one size fits all strategy.

I have attended two information sessions, heard good questions which remain unanswered, have read the AHS report, and reports from communities in other states that have implemented the proposed strategy (with negative effects), find no justification for implementing the

AHS and am strongly AGAINST the removal of single family housing zoning, and any exception to a change to single family housing zoning outside of our sector plan.

888 Aletta Schaap - Chevy Chase, 20815

I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. There is a real-life example of the folly of this initiative which is currently taking place in the Town of Chevy Chase.

A single-family house on the corner of Walsh Street and West Avenue. It was purchased by developers for just over \$1M. The developers have transformed the lot into three condos each on the market for over \$3M each for a total asking price of \$10,070,000 for the three on the same lot. (These are currently listed on Redfin.)

This represents extremely high prices and an obscene profit. The new building has totally transformed the look of that part of Chevy Chase.

Please use real life examples and in depth studies to form any new housing strategy.

889 Claudia Gaffey - Kensington, 20895

I am against the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. Kensington and other parts of Montgomery County do not have the infrastructure in place to handle multifamily homes. Our schools are already crowded now and cannot absorb a significant increase in the children population. There is no space in our streets to have more cars parked. Also, traffic congestion would increase even more. This project is being pushed too fast without the proper studies to backup what is being proposed. The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative will not solve the problems it is intended to solve and will create more problems in areas of the county that are already experiencing overcrowding. Please do not move this project forward!

890 Janet Chap - Chevy Chase, 20815

This proposal will increase traffic, stormwater runoff, and school crowding while contributing to climate warming through the loss of mature trees. What it will not do is increase the supply of attainable housing in my Chevy Chase neighborhood. That is because only developers have the resources to tear down a freestanding house in Chevy Chase and then maximize profits by building a duplex, triplex or fourplex with luxury finishes for which they'll charge top dollar. This currently happens every time a spec house is built: charming 1930's cottages are torn down and large boxy houses replace them to be sold for enormous amounts of money.

I have listened to Mr. Harris's presentation online and I have streamed the listening session at BCC high school. It is true that Chevy Chase has a shameful history of excluding certain residents based on race and religion. That, however, is in the distant past and it is equally shameful to refer to more affluent neighborhoods as exclusionary. We are a capitalist country and my husband or I ever made the amount of money some entertainers and sports figures make but I would not describe the neighborhoods in which those people live as exclusionary but rather as unaffordable to us.

	<p>Like it or not, owning a single family detached home is still for many the American dream. Will companies move to Montgomery County if their employees lack the option of purchasing in neighborhoods zoned for single family detached housing?</p> <p>The council needs to provide information on how many new housing units are being planned or have been recently built in the affected areas. How many in Bethesda? I see so much new construction there. How many at Chevy Chase Lake and how many more are planned? In summary, this plan is presented as one-size-fits-all but I can't imagine adding multifamily building's in my daughter's Chevy Chase Section 3 neighborhood with its 16-foot wide streets. There are others ways of increasing the supply of attainable housing without opening the Pandora's box of eliminating single family zoning.</p>
891	<p>Ekaterine Gureshidze - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Please DO NOT destroy the unique character of the single family home communities that have existed for more than 100 years. There is plenty of other areas in MC where multifamily housing can be built!!! I and my family are strongly opposed to it.</p>
892	<p>Bernard Foster - Potomac, 20854</p> <p>For all of the reasons expressed by the County Executive in his analysis of the AHS Initiative, such Initiative should be rejected in its entirety, or, at a minimum, subjected to further study. Such Initiative is, on its face, incomplete because it contains virtually no analysis of the environmental, economic, or other consequences of the implementation its proposals. Thus, the Initiative is patently incomplete and premature.</p>
893	<p>J C - Bethesda, 20814</p> <p>The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative rezoning is unfair and goes against serving the needs of the whole community</p>
894	<p>Holly Worthington - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Please do not pass this zoning change. It is not the best approach to creating affordable housing. I am completely opposed to this proposal.</p>
895	<p>Donna Vostal - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>It is clear from reading the comments of the meeting that the issues common to all of us, infrastructure, property values and quality of life of current homeowners have not bee addressed with adequate data driven information. We need more information. Our lives are already significantly impacted by growth, we need to make fact based decisions on this topic. Thank you.</p>
896	<p>Julian Jacobs - Garrett Park, 20896</p> <p>My wife, Donna, and I strongly oppose the Montgomery County Council Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI). We recognize that, in general, lower and middle income wage earners can not afford to purchase housing in many parts of Montgomery Co. But AHSI will do little to change that. Building multiple units without financial support for potential homebuyers or incentives to developers will lead to more out of reach pricing and cause other problems, such as parking, traffic and school problems.</p>

897	<p>Debra Egan - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>As a parkwood resident I am against the plan as it is outdated considering the high level of telework, the reasons Mr. Elrich outlined, the definition of attainable meaning \$1 M cramped quads, the lack of how crowded parking will cause disruption and disagreements in the neighborhood, lack of green space, developers taking advantage and profiting from this law with no guardrails and once again the communities with lots of land and money won't be touched. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
898	<p>John Burklow - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with the County Council's plan to change housing policies that would introduce duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes into the Parkwood neighborhood. I agree with County Executive Elrich's arguments against the proposal. It is not the appropriate solution to the housing shortage in the county and will not provide attainable housing. It would, however, fill the pockets of the developers. Not to sound cynical, but they are the only winners in this plan. I encourage planners go back to the drawing board and conceptualize a truly equitable plan for the entire county that will address the problem. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in.</p>
899	<p>Todd Rosentover - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I'd like to see more specifics, but I'm broadly in favor of getting more housing built in Montgomery County and eliminating the current requirements of "single family housing" on my block and in my neighborhood. Don't let the shouting of "preserve our neighborhoods" drown out those of us who less loudly support change.</p>
900	<p>Janice O'Brien - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Not in favor of the council's Attainable Housing Strategies as presented. Neighborhoods were formed, some 100 years ago, for a particular purpose of unity or theme Interjecting more citified buildings in formed neighborhoods just to house more people is really trashing a well planned and formed area. Multi family building should be grouped in areas, just as towns are formed</p>
901	<p>Angela Lancaster - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Dear Council Members:</p> <p>We have lived in Chevy Chase Village for 32 years, and we are not the only residents who have lived here for many decades. Once you live here, it is very difficult to find a more pleasant place to raise a family and to grow old in your own home. We were attracted to the Village because of its historical nature, single family housing and gracious gardens and tree canopy.</p> <p>While we understand the county's desire to provide more housing for people living here or wanting to live here, proposing to allow multi-family housing in a residential area where single family housing has prevailed for more than 130 years is not the way to do it.</p> <p>There is property close to the metro that has not been built up. Where there is housing density, like at Friendship Heights or Chevy Chase Lake, housing could be expanded. Office building could be converted to housing. There are many options that should be explored before an historic neighborhood like Chevy Chase is used to increase housing opportunities.</p>

The historic nature of Chevy Chase needs to be preserved. What a shame to destroy a street by allowing a high-rise apartment between and among single family dwellings. Our history is important and should be preserved for future generations.

Please reconsider your position and try to find a compromise that would not cause so much unhappiness in a well-settled community. Thank you for reading this letter and thinking about a different path to achieve your objectives.

902

Christine Kessides - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to support the AHSI proposals in principle. Of course, the devil is always in the implementation details, but I think it is essential, and inevitable, that single family zoning be looked at critically almost everywhere, including in Montgomery County.

Housing affordability is one of the major social justice issues of our era. It will not be resolved without adjustments to land use and access, and these are always sensitive. (A few decades ago our neighborhoods in NW DC had restrictive covenants against sales to Jews and Blacks. No doubt the owners thought these were essential "to preserve the character of the community". Fortunately the covenants were dropped, although diversity hasn't improved enough everywhere because affordability remains a major obstacle. And that includes to the younger generation, our own children.)

Densifying the MC areas with access to services and transport corridors is going to be essential for a healthy population and economy going forward. The demands on infrastructure and schools will need to be carefully managed, but these demands are already evident with the increased housing in the outskirts of the county, which contributes to growing traffic congestion on the corridors such as Connecticut Ave. So careful detailed planning of infrastructure and services to accommodate the population in the new attainable housing will be a condition for success of the AHSI.

903

Kay Titus - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am against the Attainable Housing Initiative because of the impact on services, schools, and traffic in the county. I do not think the potential impact has been considered adequately.

904

Jeremy White - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to you today to voice my fervent opposition to Montgomery County's proposed Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI). I relocated to Chevy Chase, MD in 2018 from Washington, DC when my wife and I decided to start having kids. Out of all of the places in the DMV we could have chosen to live, we chose this area because of the strong sense of community and the physical makeup of its neighborhoods that provide space for my children to play safely in the clean air. The proposed AHSI threatens to ruin all of the factors that make our area a desirable place to live and convert our home into just another spoke in the Northeast Megalopolis. As a veteran and employee of the federal government, I have devoted my life to serving this country and the democracy by which it is governed. However, I find myself in the position where I now feel that that democratic process is failing me as my elected leaders are considering unilaterally acting against the best interests of their constituents in favor of the real estate developers who are financing their campaigns. There is nothing more important to your constituents than our very homes and a decision that would so drastically impact our lives should only be made as a result of a ballot measure where each citizen can have their voice heard through the power of their vote. While there are a

multitude of factors that I typically take into account before casting my vote for any particular candidate, I want to make it clear to you and the rest of the Council that when it comes to the AHSI, I am a single issue voter and will not support any politician who votes in favor of it.

Ending 100 years of single-family zoning is such an enormous change that it should be evaluated within the County Master Plan process, with full public analysis, notice, and hearings, not treated as just a zoning text amendment (ZTA). The Montgomery County Council used to care about good government process. The county planning office is frankly derelict in its duty by turning over the task of solving the affordable housing crisis to developers who have no interest in building anything but units that they can sell for millions of dollars a piece. If this is allowed to happen this short sighted plan will end up bankrupting our towns as the developers will be under no obligation to upgrade the infrastructure (sewage, storm drainage, roads, electric grid) that will be necessary to accommodate the influx of tens of thousands of more people. I urge you to remember your duty as a public servant and vote no on this rezoning initiative.

Sincerely,

Jeremy White

905

Bradford Brown - Bethesda, 20817

I rarely agree with the County Executive but in this case, I do. The attainable housing proposal operates outside the master plan. That is there for a reason and that is to ensure that infrastructure can keep up. We live in a community of two lane roads. Try getting onto 7 Locks Road on any morning. It is bumper to bumper and yet this proposal wants to add more building and more cars. If the Committee wants to add this type of housing in neighborhoods walkable to downtown Bethesda that can be discussed but other neighborhoods that are one family are not equipped for more housing and more cars and they are not walkable to Bethesda.

We have been in Bethesda for 20 years. We moved out of the city to have more space and less congestion. The notion that the attainable housing plan can operate outside the master plan and uproot neighborhoods is ill advised and will certainly result in challenges. We would not support the Council or our council member in pushing this measure forward.

906

Kristine Gielow - Chevy Chase, 20815

Hello,

I am alarmed and disappointed with actions taken thus far regarding the "Attainable Housing Strategies" efforts. I strongly oppose these recommendations, based on both procedural and substantive grounds.

First, as a lawyer with a background in real property law, I am shocked at the lack of transparency given to affected homeowners that will be impacted by the proposed zoning changes to allow for multi-family units to be built “by right” in existing areas currently zoned solely for single-family residences by the Planning Board. I have been to the “Attainable Housing Strategies initiative” website and opened the Planning Board’s Final Report. It does not inform residents, in clear language and with a detailed map, if their individual property/community would be impacted by the proposal and what level of multi-family units (large-, medium-, small-scale) would be authorized and where. For instance, in my neighborhood of Chevy Chase Village, I am told by local community leaders that there are several levels of development being considered in different areas within the Village, yet none of this is made clear based upon the information posted on online or contained within the June 2024 Board’s recommendations.

You may also be aware that community interest has now been sparked to an extent that a larger in-person venue at Bethesda Chevy Chase High School was needed for a recent listening session. It is my heartfelt hope that the Council/Planning Board will stop and listen, knowing that their outreach and notice efforts thus far have fallen short. Failing to offer additional listening sessions, and to stop accepting written feedback at this juncture—just when citizens are starting to comprehend what this proposal might mean to existing residential neighborhoods—would be a clear indication that the Council does not value transparency and due process.

In addition to these procedural concerns, I cannot support the “Attainable Housing Strategies” proposal on a substantive level for many reasons. I know that other people have written to the Council to discuss infrastructure concerns that should be addressed prior to authorizing any zoning change, such as tax implications, schooling (my children have already bussed 40 minutes to their full-capacity elementary school), parking, loss of permeable surface areas, stormwater/drainage issues, etc. Others have already pointed out the contradictions with housing stock predictions over the next 30 years. Therefore, I will not belabor these very valid concerns that have not been adequately addressed by the Planning Board.

However, I do write to you to explain why I am so disheartened by the focus of this proposal in the first instance. As to why single-family zoned neighborhoods are the target of this initiative, it was explained that it is much more economically advantageous for a developer to raze a single-family home and build a multi-family unit than it is to raze an existing large building or retrofit an office/commercial building for residential use. If this is true, it leads me to the fundamental question of why, if the ultimate need is to provide more housing stock, a developer’s profit is more important than then the prospects and expectations of current homeowners who have purchased their existing homes precisely because they wanted to live in a single-family zoned neighborhood? At this juncture, I cannot accept that there are not less intrusive means to accomplishing the goal of this study (additional housing stock) that will also protect the character of our existing neighborhoods, even if that means it is less profitable for the developers/investors.

And if single-family residential areas absolutely must be rezoned to allow multi-unit dwellings, the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative fails to provide any assurances that it will be done in the least intrusive way possible and with community input. I love my neighborhood. It was designated as a historic district by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission in order to “protect and enhance the County’s historic and architectural heritage for the benefit of present and future generations of Montgomery County residents.” See Chevy Chase Village Historic District – Expansion, amendment adopted April 1998 (identifying Chevy Chase Village as “one of the most intact and

important examples of suburban planning and architectural expression build in the region before World War II"). I knew that purchasing a home in a historical district would mean that I would have to accept limitations on my ability to use and renovate my property, but I also believed that it meant that the character of my neighborhood would be preserved. If this proposal were to be approved, I would be defrauded of those protections I relied upon based on the property's existing zoning, the Village's Charter, Code & Policies, and by its historic designation.

I am extremely disappointed with the Planning Board's vague, rushed, and one-sized, fits-all approach to alter existing residentially-zoned communities to allow for the construction of multi-dwelling units. Please do not support this initiative.

907

Brian Ciampa - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I agree there is a housing crisis, but I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative as it will not result in affordable housing. Attainable housing is not affordable to MC DOT bus operators (starting salary \$51,000); MC police officers (starting salary \$69,000), and MC public school teachers (starting salary \$70,000). The strategy benefits developers, not hard-working residents seeking attainable housing.

This county-wide zoning strategy is not a solution to the housing crisis and will greatly impact our public-school population and quality of education; pedestrian/cyclist safety; traffic; storm water management; canopy and green spaces; and parking. Please do not approve the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. It is not a solution to the housing crisis.

908

Jill Kolakowski - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am against the building of duplexes and townhomes and apartment buildings in the Town Of Chevy Chase.

909

Henri Barkey - Chevy Chase, 20815

I attended one of the listening sessions, and it became evident that the planning board has not considered the impact on resource use (water, sanitation, etc.), infrastructure needs, and traffic. Even in the post-Covid era, when many people work from home, traffic along the two main corridors, Wisconsin and Connecticut, has become unbearable. Adding more dwellings in the immediate vicinity of these two corridors in the absence of significant road development will make our commutes intolerable.

Moreover, according to the Montgomery County Development Pipeline report, the scale of the issue is staggering-there are over 35,000 unbuilt housing dwellings.

Finally, the plan seems to target the densest parts of the county for further development.

The opposition to this plan is quite overwhelming. As our elected representatives on the Council, it would be incumbent on you to factor in the community's v views.

910

Scott Gordon - Kensington, 20895

My Wife and I are residents of Kensington and have been following the discussions of this initiative in the news through our listserve and we also attended a listening session at the town hall. Based on the information we have seen and heard, we are not in favor of the proposed initiative. It seems as though the Planning Department was given the task to find a quick solution to a complex problem. The strategies that are being put forward seem to reflect a one-size fits all solution across the County that does not seem to take into account the unique nature of our Town or any of the older established communities that exist closer in to the District. The majority of houses in the town of Kensington are already on fairly small lots and we have issues with narrower streets and parking. Adding more density with multiple dwelling units will only make these problems worse. The proximity to the MARC station is being used as a rationale for reducing the number of parking spaces that would be needed for these new dwellings but MARC is not a viable solution for errands or other local activities so new owners would still need access to at least one automobile, which would only make the current issues with parking that much worse. We also heard that local schools are already above their planned allocation and there is no land nearby to build new schools. Adding significant density in this area will only add to this problem and there were no proposed solutions to this issue that were part of this initiative. It seems like the proposed initiatives are weighted in favor of developers to encourage this increase in attainable housing but it will be at the expense of older single-family neighborhoods and loss of green-space if more density is added. It seems like it would be better to address the attainable housing issues as part of the County's master plan, target less densely populated areas for increased growth, and expand the infrastructure in those areas to support that growth.

911

M Langelan - Chevy Chase, 20815

Marty Langelan



Resident, Village of Martin's Additions
October 15, 2024

ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS: THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY "ATTAINABLE HOUSING" PLAN

As an economist and civil rights advocate, I strongly support affordable housing. I oppose the Attainable Housing Strategy Initiative (AHSI) because it would decrease the supply of affordable housing. If approved, the AHSI would cancel much of Montgomery County's single-family zoning and give developers the right to put multi-family buildings on countless small neighborhood lots – with enormous costs for the communities that would have to deal with the congestion and infrastructure impact.

The AHSI is not designed to provide affordable housing or reduce socioeconomic inequality. It is part of a wider national effort to eliminate single-family zoning in order to open up large new profit and revenue streams for real estate builders and corporate investors. Other regions across the country are also being pushed to adopt the same kind of wholesale re-zoning.

What a bonanza for developers, to be able to construct and sell high-profit multiplexes "by right" on lot after lot, with no obligation to build the necessary community infrastructure or provide a single unit of affordable housing. It is inexcusable to do that anywhere – and even more indefensible to do it under the guise of "attainable housing."

There is no economic basis to assume that only a handful of multiplexes would be built. Why construct a single-family home, or even a duplex, when you can put a 4-unit quad on the lot and sell each unit for a million or more? Contrary to the County Planning staff's entirely speculative assertion that the impact would be "minimal," many of our communities could see intense demolition, with denser housing stacked on block after block. The AHSI is likely to be particularly destructive to the areas that have a sizable population of Black, Latino, and immigrant families.

Under the proposed plan, the new multiplex units would sell or rent at market rates. None of the new housing would have to be even remotely affordable.

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The existing requirements for lower-priced affordable units apply only when a residential development site includes 20 housing units or more. The AHSI allows up to 19 units on a site. That certainly does seem to signal that affordable housing is not the intent of the proposal.

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Since there is no mandate for affordability, the zoning change is likely to do nothing to produce moderately priced "missing middle" housing or provide any financially "attainable" low-cost housing options for the thousands of County residents who earn less than \$50,000 a year. Re-zoning would have the opposite effect, making it highly profitable to strip the current affordable housing out of the neighborhoods.

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Each of the new multiplex units might be smaller than a detached single-family home, but multiplex buildings do not cost less to construct. A quad building requires four of everything: kitchens, bathrooms, HVAC, etc.

Add the profit margins on each unit, and the purchase and rental prices soar. As the new Bethesda triplex on Walsh St. demonstrates, each of the new units can be twice the selling price of the older home the builder demolished. That is not affordable housing.

The proposal sets no limit on how many neighborhood properties could be torn down for multiplexes.

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The potential profits for private developers are so large that the neighborhood lots could fall like dominos, as developers outbid families to buy up nearly every older house on the market and replace it with a high-price / high-rent multiplex building. The way the economic incentives are designed, it's doubtful that much of the older housing stock would survive in some areas.

Putting quads on just 25% of the lots would double the local population. A full set of triplexes or quads would put 60 to 80 households on streets that now have 20.

Here's what that kind of increased density would mean in the existing single-family neighborhoods:

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Dangerous traffic overloads on the narrow suburban streets, with hundreds of additional cars, service vans, and delivery trucks.

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A significant decrease in pedestrian safety.

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Massive neighborhood parking problems. The proposed plan would make that even worse by reducing some of the existing requirements for developers to build off-street parking.

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More school overcrowding.

- More transportation gridlock on the down-county arteries, and lower air quality as a result of the congestion. That has a public health impact.
 - Extensive flooding and storm-water damage in the communities where the old infrastructure is already overwhelmed every time it rains.
 - Widespread environmental damage: significant loss of the tree canopy, permeable surfaces, yards, gardens, and green space. We have already experienced some of this loss when developers clear-cut the old lots and stretch the existing building code to the limit. The AHSI includes no environmental impact analysis.
 - It takes decades to produce suburbs with mature tree canopies. They are immensely valuable; they reduce air pollution for the region, help control water run-off, and reduce heat islands. The multiplex buildings in the AHSI plan would leave no room for canopy trees on a typical lot.
 - While the plan envisions retaining the minimum County setbacks, it's not yet clear whether towns would be able to maintain the setbacks, height, and other regulations in their local building codes. Zoning changes can override municipal ordinances. Small towns like Martin's Additions that are responsible for their own local streets and services could potentially be bankrupted by the infrastructure costs. Many of the older municipalities were not built with the infrastructure capacity to handle denser housing loads. Adding a few duplexes or small accessory units may be manageable. Doubling or tripling the current housing density is not.
 - The "attainable housing" proposal omits any fiscal impact analysis. Who pays to rebuild the streets for heavier traffic? Who pays to double the town's sewer-line capacity?
 - Who pays to upgrade the old community gas lines, electric grid, and storm drains?
 - How much would it cost each town just to handle double the volume of trash collection?
 - How many new fire hydrants would it take to meet the fire code? What if the old community water lines don't supply enough pressure to make the additional hydrants work? Is the town liable? Would it have to install new water mains?
- To put 50 quads in a new housing development, the builders would have to provide the infrastructure. But if the same 50 quads go on the small lots in a neighborhood, none of the builders would have to face responsibility for the community capacity. The proposed zoning change could inflict crushing costs on the local municipalities. Retrofitting the infrastructure in older communities can be far more expensive and difficult than installing the infrastructure for a new development. There is no data to show that "impact fees" and town tax revenues could come even close to covering the costs.
- Adding density without affordability solves nothing. It merely maximizes private profits. The developers reap the benefits while offloading the public costs and adverse effects.

Re-zoning is likely to reduce the amount of affordable housing. The small older houses that still remain in many single-family neighborhoods, homes that sell and rent below market average, are an essential supply of affordable housing – and are the prime target for tear-downs. The County already loses affordable housing when builders bulldoze an older home for a McMansion. The right to construct a far more profitable triplex or quad sets up financial incentives to turbocharge the rate of demolition.

- Re-zoning the neighborhood lots to increase the supply of expensive multiplexes would systematically reallocate land usage away from affordable housing. The “trickle-down” theory of housing has been debunked. There is no good evidence that adding more supply at the high end of the housing market magically creates more supply at the lower end, within any reasonable time frame. It just makes affordable housing scarcer.

Socioeconomic Equity: The Planning Board’s language about “exclusionary” communities is misleading. The AHSI would not remedy the history of housing discrimination. Many residents who oppose racism oppose this re-zoning proposal because the suburbs that have a significant share of Black, Latino, and immigrant renters and homeowners, and currently have affordable homes, are likely to be among the areas hit hardest by the proposed zoning change. The last thing most local communities need is housing demolition for million-dollar multiplexes.

- What creates “exclusionary” communities is the fact that private for-profit developers and corporate investors skew the housing supply to the upper end of the market. The AHSI does not correct that market imbalance.

- Re-zoning can fuel rapid price inflation, driven by large developers and investment firms. That only makes it harder for historically excluded groups to purchase homes.

- Replacing affordable rental homes with market-rate multiplexes displaces renters.

- Re-zoning also displaces homeowners. Many historically excluded groups saved for years to own homes in the communities that the AHSI would now target for heavy new density. Re-zoning can first disrupt communities with gentrification, then cause the kind of congestion that reduces the value of the remaining homes, undermining the economic assets of the families who remain.

Property Values: The first round of new multiplex development is likely to inflate property values as developers bid up the price of the lots. The second stage could see a glut of high-price multiplexes, with depressed property values for the remaining single-family homes that are surrounded by treeless quads and congestion.

- The public school system is already struggling under the current density. Any further overcrowding that diminishes educational quality is likely to diminish property values as well.

Lack of Infrastructure Planning and Funding: Concentrating a surge of new density in the down-County area could push dozens of communities into a large simultaneous crisis of infrastructure overload.

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The AHSI provides no economic data to document how long it would take Pepco, WSSC, and Washington Gas to handle that surge in the volume of work, how they plan to gear up to do it, or how much of it would have to be funded by steep utility rate increases and/or taxes.

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What is the projected impact of the AHSI on the County residents' utility bills and tax rates?

Unequal Application: The AHSI would impose a sweeping zoning change with damaging economic effects in many areas of the County. However, it notably omits Potomac and several other mid-County areas that have land available for multi-family housing. Why shield Potomac from the congestion and environmental costs that developers could inflict "by right" in other neighborhoods? Lack of mass transit is not an explanation; many other communities have no nearby access to rapid bus transit or Metro, yet are included in the AHSI re-zoning plan. The unequal application of the proposed zoning change raises serious questions about the plan's equity and legitimacy.

Employment and Construction-Sector Effects: Any major housing production initiative will create jobs. The economic difference depends on the social utility of what is being built. The AHSI re-zoning plan would divert construction resources away from the affordable housing projects the County needs. A multiplex building boom, producing market-rate units to maximize private profits, has a negative social utility in this context: It would not only decrease the current stock of affordable housing by demolition, but drive up the cost of construction labor and materials, making new affordable housing more expensive to build and even less "attainable."

Inadequate Justification: There is no data to show that the County needs a major zoning change to meet the need for affordable housing. As County Executive Marc Elrich correctly points out, the AHSI is unnecessary: There is more than enough housing already planned to handle the County's projected population growth through 2050. Some projects are now in progress; more are waiting in the pipeline with permits already approved.

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Elrich notes that the AHSI re-zoning proposal has no sound factual basis – the premise is not based on accurate current data or a realistic economic analysis – and the proposed plan offers no solution to the need for affordability.

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The County has no lack of expensive upscale housing, no crisis or shortage in that portion of the market, and no need to adopt a re-zoning plan to produce more of the same. Any pretense that the AHSI would generate affordable housing quickly falls apart under scrutiny. Elrich has publicly called the AHSI a fraud.

There is no reasonable public basis to approve a zoning plan that would add to the surplus of high-cost housing, and make the actual housing crisis – the shortage of affordable housing – worse.

Who would benefit from this zoning change? Real estate developers, investors, and the large private capital firms that are buying up available housing in neighborhoods all over the country.

Who would be harmed? The people of Montgomery County. In addition to the economic impact, the AHSI would have a profound societal cost. We and our neighbors are part of a warm, complex, inclusive multicultural community that provides the essential support network for young families and elders and has been life-saving at times. When neighborhoods are re-zoned, it's not just the trees and houses that are lost.

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Re-zoning and congestion adversely affect many quality-of-life factors, including fire and rescue access, school capacity, green space, care-giving for people with disabilities, aging-in-place programs, walkability, historic preservation, County environmental goals, and many other issues. The decrease in affordable housing under the AHSI undercuts any rationale for such harm and only makes it more egregious.

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The AHSI prioritizes real estate industry profits over any other consideration. Governments have a responsibility to operate in the public interest, not to maximize private industry profits at public expense.

Productive Alternatives: It makes economic sense to add housing in and near the County job centers, where the future job growth will occur and sufficient infrastructure capacity is already in place. Generic statements about the housing crisis are no substitute for operational data on how and where to construct affordable housing. Elrich is right to take a practical approach: Develop accurate housing data, identify the priority projects, and then work on getting that affordable housing built.

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Instead of tearing down the neighborhoods, give developers incentives to convert the 20% vacant office space in downtown Silver Spring, Bethesda, etc., into residential housing. Put housing near jobs, to lower transportation costs. Require at least 30% of the new units to actually be affordable.

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Make good use of the White Flint, Geico, Lakeforest, and White Oak sites for affordable housing.

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Provide more housing vouchers for public employees.

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Expand the affordable housing supply with more public financing (federal, state, and county); partner with municipal governments, community groups, and religious organizations for planned low-cost housing, not market-rate development.

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Focus on affordable development within a half-mile of rapid transit centers. The new luxury housing at Chevy Chase Lake looks like a significant missed opportunity for affordability. (The normal half-mile walkshed should apply. The AHSI's proposed one-mile perimeter appears to be unwarranted – unsupported by walkability data and serving only to permit a much larger number of high-profit quads as a financial favor to developers.)

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Consult local communities about possible sites, feasibility, planning, and potential impact. Many County residents support affordable housing. Wholesale re-zoning is destructive, but local initiatives can be remarkably effective (e.g., Takoma Park).

There are many useful ways to proceed. Not one of them requires the abolition of single-family zoning. There is no economic justification to subject communities to a wide-open free-for-all of demolition, density, and congestion.

Proposed Planning Review: In response to the public objections to the “attainable housing” strategy, the County Planning officials have now proposed to review the impact 2-4 years after the plan is adopted. That is not an acceptable response.

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In 2-4 years, much of the damage would already be done. Zoning changes like this one create a profit premium for fast action (the first developers to construct the new multiplexes are likely to reap the highest profits). Hundreds of existing homes could be demolished in 2-4 years.

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The pledge to review the impact is so vague that it is meaningless. There is no available documentation that identifies the review's proposed methodology, the criteria, or the factors that would be assessed.

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And there is certainly no need to "wait to see how this plays out," as one County Planning staff member recently suggested. The economics are basic. The outcome of re-zoning is well known. That outcome is readily visible in countless examples of neighborhoods that now have a few surviving single-family homes in a sea of condos and townhouses.

Questionable Government Procedure: Ending single-family zoning is such an enormous change that it should be evaluated within the County Master Plan process, with full public analysis, notice, and hearings, not treated as just a zoning text amendment (ZTA). The Montgomery County Council normally takes some pride in good government process. Citizens, local municipalities, County and state government officials, and community organizations should insist on a Master Plan review process here.

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A number of residents have also publicly requested that any such large-scale zoning change be put to a County-wide election referendum before adoption. In light of the serious long-term effects that re-zoning would have on County residents' lives, communities, and financial assets, I concur with that recommendation.

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There is also one additional cost factor for the County Council to consider: Zoning changes of this magnitude can trigger expensive, protracted lawsuits. Several jurisdictions in Virginia are now being sued for canceling single-family zoning; Arlington County just lost in court. The legal costs of proceeding with the "attainable housing" plan could be significant; the re-zoning proposal is so problematic that it would be difficult to defend. Use our tax dollars for housing, not for zoning litigation.

Summary: The mis-named "attainable housing" plan will not produce affordable housing or address equity concerns. Zoning changes like this one create adverse financial incentives that promote neighborhood demolition, maximizing the financial benefits to private investors while imposing severe long-term congestion costs, environmental damage, and infrastructure burdens on local communities. The proposal is not supported by current housing data, by a credible economic analysis, by an infrastructure assessment or fiscal impact review, or by an environmental impact analysis. Instead of improving economic equity, it is likely to decimate the communities that are home to a substantial number of Black, Latino, and immigrant families.

The AHSI has no valid economic basis. If adopted, it would be counterproductive, reducing the supply of moderate and lower-cost housing and diverting needed resources, as builders tear down affordable neighborhood housing to construct high-price multiplexes.

An objective observer might reasonably conclude that the AHSI uses the language about the housing crisis merely as a smokescreen, as a pretext to maximize corporate profit-taking. This is not a progressive housing policy. This is a corporate zoning maneuver that would harm County residents, solely to benefit the financial self-interest of real estate developers and investors.

Re-zoning without accounting for affordability, congestion, and environmental impact causes substantial community harm. The AHSI is contrary to the public interest.

The County has far better ways to provide affordable housing.

Action: I recommend that the County Councilmembers safeguard the public interest – and their own reputations – by directing the County Planning officials to replace the AHSI zoning proposal with a priority plan for affordability:

(1) Preserve and expand the supply of moderate and lower-cost housing. (2) Avoid large-scale re-zoning and litigation. (3) Address infrastructure needs and local community input, including socioeconomic equity. (4) Evaluate any major housing policy changes via the Master Plan process, not in a legislative ZTA.

912

Harriet Getzels - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Planners, Re. Section 5:

Section 5 has been our home since 2004. We have been overseas since last summer and it is now mid October. From several time zones away, we have tried to keep up with the tsunami of information about the impact of changes proposed for our community. Much of this appears to be conceived by unelected officials.

Peter and I have read and re-read the maps, codes, colours, definition of need and proposals. I am sorry to say that none of it is clear. I understand how need and population growth has been defined. However, I need more data as to how all the projections have been made. I am rather amazed at the lack of clarity. For example, I never liked or believed in the need for 'McMansions.' In fact, when we moved to the area in 2001 after living abroad for 24 years, I was aghast that these oversized houses were being built far and wide in our neighbourhoods. At the time, it was common knowledge that oversized, open-plan homes for families would fail to conserve energy and cost a lot to run. It was not difficult to understand that McMansions failed to fit in with the climate change efficiencies in cost and consumption that made sense for an affordable, sustainable future. Large family homes could have been built with better efficiencies, but this was not done.

From what I've been able to understand, it seems to me that the very same people, planners and realtors who promoted the construction of McMansions are now promoting the opposite type of building plan. Why should I support this, knowing how misconceived their idea of oversized, single-family homes had been twenty years ago?

Zoning in Montgomery County has often been an enigma. Huge half-empty office-apartment buildings stand tall in Bethesda with little or no retail taking up offers to open businesses on the ground floors. Retail spaces sit empty year after year. Small family businesses that have been in Old Bethesda for decades are no longer a priority. This harkens back to the extent to which realtors and landowners determine what will be done with our commercial spaces. I lost trust in these landowners and our county planners when they made the decision to let Barnes and Noble 'go away.' Unwittingly, the three-story bookstore had become a much-loved flagship community gathering place. The shop was always crowded with people of all ages and every walk of life. I know no one in the community that supported the closure of Barnes and Noble on that site. But my understanding was that the landowners wanted higher rents, and therefore the profitable bookstore had to go. Why, after that fiasco, should anyone trust our community planners to make decisions on behalf of the community?

If the plan, maps and charts were transparent to people who at least have a graduate education, I'd comment more specifically. However, I have no takeaways other than planners in Montgomery County want to change who lives where. This is an area that established itself in the past century to be what it has become today. With the speed of information, lack of transparency, and pressure to make decisions in too short a time span, it is utterly clear that the planners are imposing a move from the outside in, with little or no grassroots vision of need or support.

My husband and I were unable to attend public meetings virtually due to being in other time zones. Nevertheless, much as I've tried to keep up, I have not come away with a positive view of this effort. Transparency and clarity must be the highest priority. Naming the beneficiaries of this scheme is paramount. Without that, for us the effort has fallen far short. We do not support what has been proposed.

Harriet and Peter Getzels
October 17, 2024

913

Gerald Smith - Chevy Chase, 20815

County Council,

I have lived in Section 5 of Chevy Chase, MD for over 32 years.

Proudly, Section 5 currently has a good inventory of "Attainable" single family homes that are affordable to the "middle" income market. The current Planning Boards proposal to wipe-out single family zoning will allow a developer to bid-up the selling price of our existing "middle" priced homes, secure those properties, and then erect up to a quad of townhouses that will be affordable to only a very rich and exclusive sector of buyers (e.g. Walsh St). This is not a potential scenerio, it is a guaranteed outcome.

How in God's good name is this proposed zoning change anything less than counterproductive towards the purported goal of providing MORE "Attainable" housing in Section 5 of Chevy Chase, when if fact it will LESSEN the opportunities for "Attainable" middle housing buyers? Clearly, the only one who benefits from your one-size-fits-all strategy are developers and the very rich buyers for whom they will be building multi-million dollar housing market.

While simplistic in outline, the REAL effects noted above will be to decimatate 130 year old single family home communities that already provide "Attainable" housing opportunities, not to mention obliterate the existing healthy and green environments that we all have built for our families over the years, not to mention aggravate beyond comprehension the already choaked traffic and parking problems we currently suffer, not to mention overwhelm our already over crowded schools, not to mention tragically and forever destroy any sense of trust, respect, or credibility for those who represent and govern our community.

The will of the people, i.e. your voting constituents, is OVERWHELMINGLY opposed to the Planning Board's current proposed rezoning recommendation to the Country Council. The only important question remaining is whether the County Council will have the humility to admit they have irresponsibly jumped onto the political fad of the moment, have not done their own due diligence around the environmental impact, have chosen to ignore the data and evidence of Marc Erlich's own studies that clearly show the lack of necessity for such a change, and have tragically lied to their own constitutes who have elected them. Last, shame on you for attempting to oust the

only credible member of your governing board because he has presented evidence that runs contrary to your own personal political trajectories, however flawed and misinformed they are.

I urge you to PRESS PAUSE and do the right thing, starting with FIRING the entire Planning Board for gross incompetence/ negligence and simply start all over in a more responsible and comprehensive manner that reflects the spirit behind your constituents who have built Chevy Chase as we know it today.

Thank you.

Gerald Smith
[REDACTED]

Section 5
Chevy Chase, Maryland

914

Paula O'Brien - Bethesda, 20816

I am a resident of the Wood Acres neighborhood in Bethesda. I don't agree with those who believe the way to address the legacy of racial and religious covenants of the mid-20th century is in effect to eliminate single-family housing (SFH) zoning. Today, the barrier to entry to SFH in higher priced suburban areas is the market-based cost, not egregious but thankfully now obsolete covenants in which current homeowners had no hand, and which would have prevented many of my neighbors (including in Wood Acres) from purchasing homes here.

I don't believe that allowing increased density will bring those market-based costs down to levels affordable to the missing middle in high land value zip code areas such as ours, as evident from the market-based asking prices of more than \$1 million for the townhomes going up at Westbard, and the ones that the same developer (EYA) built on Little Falls Pkwy between River Rd. and Mass. Ave.

In my opinion, the AHSI needs a lot more work:

(a) Since a market-based approach won't increase the supply of "missing middle housing" in high land value areas (in fact, it will increase the supply of high-priced housing), what's needed are government subsidies for first-time homeowners with household income within a specified range where the low end is the ceiling for MoCo's MPDU (moderately priced housing unit) subsidized housing eligibility. And to cover the cost of the subsidies, as well as to help pay for the externalities of higher density (infrastructure, schools, environment, etc.), the Council needs to raise taxes on developers, rather than cater to them, to the extent developers are donors to their re-election campaigns.

I ask that the County take a trial period/pilot approach, given that there isn't much successful experience yet of any significant scale with "missing middle housing" initiatives elsewhere in the country, as documented by the Urban Institute.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,