

Paula O'Brien

Bethesda, MD 20816

915 Regina Reed - Chevy Chase, 20815

Please Pause this initiative. The impacts have not been studied sufficiently- including impacts related to the environment, traffic, schools, roads and other infrastructure. There appears to be a strong need and desire for single family home. There is currently a surplus of multi family in my area. There should be sufficient options for all Moco residents- this initiative is not equitable and it significantly changes most single family neighborhoods in the County, to the benefit of developers.

916 Judith Regan - Chevy Chase, 20815

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.

917 Lauren Ashburn - Chevy Chase, 20815

This plan must NOT go forward. It will ruin our community and line builders' pockets, not provide lower/middle income housing.

918 Melissa Deehring - North Chevy Chase Village, 20815

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I agree there is a housing crisis, and I was one of the people who could not afford to buy a house until recently (in my 40's), but I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative as it will not result in affordable housing, particularly in North Chevy Chase Village.

The current strategy benefits developers, not residents seeking attainable housing.

This zoning strategy is not a solution to the housing crisis and, in North Chevy Chase Village, will further increase existing on ramp/off ramp MDOT traffic near Connecticut/Jones Bridge/Kensington Parkway; lead to increased associated pollution of Rock Creek park and its waterways; encourage possibly predatory tactics to displace current owners in the name of money (including tactics that could increase elder abuse and predatory lending door-to-door sales; and will merely result in more cheaply built "luxury" townhomes and apartments. I

also question whether this plan for medium 4-story apartment buildings on my street will even pass muster with the Walter Reed/DoD folks who don't even allow drones to fly above our neighborhood, let alone pass an MDOT traffic study on rush hour blockages at the Connecticut 495 entrance.

Rezoning the 1950's houses along the Connecticut corridor on Inverness Drive and Kenilworth Drive and between Kensington Parkway is to forsake the young families (like mine) who have recently paid ridiculously high prices and interest rates to live in them. We chose this neighborhood in large part for the trees and gardens for our kids and now envision our future being a constant battle with developers slowly buying up homes from older residents only to knock them down and replace them with massive apartment buildings; while we, the young families allegedly being helped with this initiative, will instead be condemned to the shadows (Connecticut is West from our street and all but the morning sun will be cut if medium four story apartment buildings replace current one and two story older homes).

Please do not approve the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative, particularly the portion that rezones North Chevy Chase Village to allow medium scale housing. It was explained in the zoom call that the goal of this initiative is inclusion and not the destruction of existing neighborhoods' souls. However, sacrificing the more affordable homes, the sunlight and our trees and park for the sake of medium scale housing will do just that. As this currently exists, this is not a sustainable solution to the housing crisis and will hurt the young families in North Chevy Chase Village, not help bring more.

Sincerely,
Melissa Deehring

[REDACTED]
North Chevy Chase Village, MD
20815

919

Caroline Hickey - Chevy Chase, 20815

The large crowds and passionate arguments from residents at the listening sessions have surely given you some idea of how Montgomery County residents feel about the Attainable Housing Plan.

We strongly oppose this plan.

For many MoCo residents, this is the hill we will die on. There is nothing more sacred than our most significant financial investment -- our home. We need our home values to retire. We need to be able to commute to work, and many of these "growth corridors" you've identified are already a nightmare. We need our sewers and stormwater systems to function (they don't). We need our schools to be focused on math and literacy, not cramming 40 kids in a classroom with too few desks.

We are good people who contribute our taxes, talents, and service to this county. As our elected representatives, your job is to fight for us.

The planning team needs to go back to the drawing board, as their plan does nothing to solve the problem of missing "middle housing." All it does is enrich developers and cause 25 new problems through densification.

920 James Petrick - Chevy Chase, 20815

I want to register my strong disagreement with both the content and process of this initiative. Content: There is significant disagreement over the extent of the need for this type of housing and whether in fact already approved development projects within the County will meet most or all of this need. Instead of trying to meet the need within existing measures, the Council is proposing the most extreme solution possible by eliminating all single family zoning in the entire County. There has been no study of the effects of the proposal on traffic, parking, schools, or the delivery of other vital services. Process: There has been no meaningful citizen input on this proposal or the so-called studies supporting it. Countervailing facts have not be considered and compromise solutions not entertained. Rather, the entire "process" has appeared to be a foregone conclusion without consideration of the wishes of the County citizens.

921 Jonathan Hill - CHEVY CHASE VILLAGE, 20815

Dear Mr. Friedson,

We have recently seen the proposal for changing the zoning for our home located at [REDACTED], Chevy Chase. This proposal is not something that we, as long-term residents in this area, have requested or want.

While we cannot claim to have reviewed all the material relevant this proposal, but we are concerned about the impact these changes will have on an area that is already stressed from a lack of on street parking. The roads in our neighborhood are very narrow and on-street parking can be an issue. Fire and rescue vehicles get stuck on the street and cannot turn around, requiring them to back out, which is time consuming and difficult, at a time where speed is of the essence. Larger equipment cannot even come down the street. More cars will only exasrbate this situation.

Our concerns are augmented as well by the impact of proposed changes at Friendship Heights and the anticipated zoning changes at what is known as the "Saks" property. High rise development, as it may be called, is already planned for the Brooks Brothers building site located immediately across from Saks. These changes will only increase the vehicle and foot traffic that area is already experiencing.

A change from single family housing to multi- family housing (duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes) will increase costs for the Village of Chevy Chase and its taxpayers for services such as refuse, street repair, schools, roads sewer and water. Where will all these cars park? Who will pay for the increased services costs associated with the increase in population density? No doubt the home owners in this area.

One of the attractive features of this neighborhood is the greenspace and parks that have been preserved based upon the current population. Augmenting the number of people living in this extremely restricted space, as shown on the available maps, by allowing multi-family dwelling will only increase the pressure on those facilities and services.

Certainly, there is a major question as to physical compatibility with existing used, single-family v multifamily. Given the high cost of property in the proposed areas, one must wonder whether multi-family housing would be economically feasible. What is now a coherent neighborhood could well become an unsightly mix. Architectural covenants could be an issue. Larger multi-family homes may not be compatible with the home size and arcitecture already here. Additionally the narrow cooridor to which these proposed changes propose to apply, will concentrate high density housing in a small area, stressing that area and those who live there.

Home ownership is a long-recognized means for families to create equity to be used for retirement. Having owned our home for well over 30 years and dealing with retirement and aging issues, now is not the time for government to take steps to lower the value of the largest asset most of our neighbors and ourselves have.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Jonathan B. HILL


Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

Jennifer Gentile - Rockville, 20852

922

This might be the worst idea you people have had so far. People in this country have a right to buy a house in a single family home neighborhood and have it stay that way. That is our American dream and how dare you take away what we have worked so hard to obtain!

This stupid plan of yours is just going to make builders more money. Destroy our communities, further overwhelm the decaying infrastructure around these neighborhoods, and increase traffic!
What you have done around the Luxmanor neighborhood and the last 10 years has made it impossible to enjoy our community! We now have cars zipping through it to avoid old Georgetown due to your worthless bike lanes. All our schools are bursting at the seams. You should be ashamed of the mess you've made. Leave our neighborhoods alone!

923

Dirk Cassard - CHEVY CHASE, 208156724

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.

924

Denis Mitchell - Kensington, 20895

This initiative is a bad idea to the extent to allows developers to build duplexes, triplexes and quadriplexes in neighborhoods zoned for single family homes.

First, this will not fix the problem. These multi-unit dwellings will not be affordable. Rather, they will still cost many hundreds of thousands of dollars and, in some cases, over a million dollars. Simply put, they will not address the affordable housing problem. How do we know this? Because they will be constructed by developers who are looking to make a substantial profit. They will buy properties in the re-zoned area for market price, knock down the existing house, build multi-unit structures which collectively sell for two or three or four times what the developer bought the single family house for. This is exactly what happened when such housing has been placed in desirable neighborhoods. For example, on Knowles avenue and Connecticut Avenue, the row homes recently constructed there sell for near or over \$1 million each. There is no reason to believe that that anything different will happen with duplexes or triplexes in the neighborhoods around that area.

There are downsides, including increased traffic in neighborhoods, increased congestion in schools, and undercutting the selections of people who made substantial investments in their homes in neighborhoods of specific types, only to have those neighborhoods changed on them. There are many places to live in this county in a more dense area. Those who chose to live in neighborhoods zoned as single family homes did so for a reason. They traded convenience of living in downtown Spring Spring, Rockville or Bethesda for the tranquility of a neighborhood with single family homes. Those choices should not be disrupted.

There are ways of supplying affordable housing that do not result in (1) boondoggles for developers and (2) disruption of citizens' chosen places to live. The current proposal is not it.

Thank you.

925

Benjamin Psillas - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am totally against the Attainable Housing Strategy. First, it's not "attainable" given these units will be multi-million properties. Second, your plans will ruin a very historical part of Montgomery County. Third, this will increase safety risk. Fourth, it will increase congestion, parking issues, etc.

926

Alicia Abell - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Plan.

I wonder how thoroughly anyone on the unelected Moco Planning Board has thought through the proposal to virtually end single-family zoning in our county. Are they aware that individuals coming from other places, looking to buy a home and settle their family somewhere, are not going to choose a county that allows almost any homeowner/developer to tear down their house and put up a quad at any time? Do you think anyone would invest their savings and their future retirement on a neighborhood whose population could double, triple or quadruple in just a few years as houses are torn down? How do you think MCPS, which already has low proficiency in math and other subjects, will handle the constant changes and growth in student body size?

This proposal will push residents OUT of Moco into neighboring counties and states and deter new people from settling here, not to mention destroying the quality of life for our current tax-paying residents who have invested in their homes under the assumption that their neighborhood would not become a cash cow for developers.

Finally, financial modeling shows that the supposedly "attainable" housing the proposal puts forth is actually not affordable for its target audience. Again, this proposal appears to have been hastily and poorly formulated.

Whom do you represent? Developers or Montgomery County residents?

927

Sherri Greeves - Chevy Chase, 20815

I agree and understand that there is a housing crisis but strongly opposes the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) as it will not result in affordable housing. The housing that the strategy presents as 'attainable' —condos at around \$500,000 and townhomes estimated around \$750,000 — are not affordable to MC DOT bus operators (\$51,000); MC police officers (\$69,000), and MC public school teachers (\$70,000). The strategy benefits developers, not hard-working residents seeking attainable housing.

The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (ASHI) will allow for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes to be built on long established neighborhoods and will exacerbate storm water management, parking, and traffic challenges - especially on Jones Bridge Road, Connecticut Avenue, and Kensington Parkway. This area is already jammed daily with traffic to the beltway and requires caution as many run lights.

Village children attending our local public schools, especially North Chevy Chase Elementary School, will be affected by the traffic and have dealt with larger class sizes for years, but especially this year due to budget cuts. The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) will increase student population which could potentially be managed at Rosemary Hills (capacity: 644; current enrollment: 541); Silver Creek MS (capacity: 930; current enrollment: 800); and Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS (capacity: 2,398; current enrollment: 2,335) but will quickly face over-census with the proposed housing increases.

928

Faith Psillas - Chevy Chase, 20815

Creating more dense housing for our growing city is going to RUIN our neighborhoods. Nothing about this plan helps affordable housing. It only makes the rich ATTAIN what the builders build.

The same county council that issues all the permits for these huge apartment buildings for the rich (ie..up Conn. Av and 95) are the same people saying we need more housing. The more permits you issue for these monstrosities , you then need all that goes with it (parking, water, restaurants...it will never end. Stop issuing the permits in the first place.

As it stands now, a bus driver takes 2 lanes to go up and down Conn Av...why on earth that topic is not addressed is beyond me.

Fix the things that need fixing before starting and creating more problems.

To end...nothing about the multi housing builds in this day and age are at all attractive. They usually are cheap looking and poorly built, not at all in keeping with such a historical city.

929

Kathleen Mitchell - Kensington, 20895

I would like to submit comments reflecting my strong opposition to amending the zoning as one of the attainable housing strategies in Montgomery County.

First of all, this is being sold as an attainable housing strategy for missing middle income. In fact, the limited data that is available locally and nationally, suggests exactly the opposite would occur. Housing prices, whether it be a single family home or multi-unit structure, would increase substantially. There is no data supporting that this change would actually make housing prices more affordable and attainable for middle income families. It is dishonest to market this as an attainable housing strategy when it only serves to enrich developers.

This strategy has not undergone the proper impact studies. The decaying infrastructure, unbearable traffic patterns, parking, utility systems, storm run-off, loss of tree canopy and overcrowded schools are just a few things that will be exacerbated by these changes. Furthermore, there are already multiple options, or tools as Andrew Friedson refers to them, in the county master plan to address and increase housing opportunities for middle income households. I would like to see the county implement well researched plans that address infrastructure and provide for these concerns prospectively rather than retrofitting communities ill-equipped for such change.

Please do not change the character and community I have worked so hard to attain. I have lived in multiple urban areas throughout my life. Ultimately, I sought to find a tranquil neighborhood that, not only was convenient, but provides the community and atmosphere I sought to raise my family. The planning committee proposals are clearly targeting select areas that are unaffected by city or community restrictions with arbitrary lines drawn to maximize the ease of building and therefore profits for developers. Altering the character of the neighborhood by densely populating a few very small local neighborhoods would destroy these communities and offer no solution to the missing middle housing crisis.

930

Audrey Kahane - Silver Spring, 20910

Building large, multi-family structures on lots that were not designed for them will require removing trees and greenery, and adding substantial paving if parking is to be provided. This will create problems with storm water management in our hilly neighborhood, and result in more pollution of Sligo Creek. Loss of the tree canopy and green space also impacts warming, a real problem with the increasing number of extremely hot days.

Our streets lack sidewalks, and the increase in traffic from additional residents and delivery trucks will make our neighborhood unsafe for walking. Two-way traffic on the narrow streets would become difficult if cars are parked on both sides of the street, interfering with access for fire trucks and ambulances, endangering residents in emergency situations.

The increase in traffic and residents, the larger housing structures, and the loss of the mature trees will also mean more noise. This degrades the quality of life for people who chose this neighborhood because of the quiet atmosphere and beautiful landscaping.

Many residents are also concerned about the impact on schools. Local schools already have large class sizes and won't be able to accommodate big increases in students. What are the plans for additional schools?

I understand the need for more affordable housing, but this plan, which says new housing units will sell at market prices, seems designed to allow developers to maximize profits while residents absorb environmental and transportation impacts and loss of quality of life.

There are so many consequences to the kind of transformation the Council is proposing. I ask that you do a more complete analysis of the impact on our neighborhood, and make an effort to address the concerns and secure the approval of the community before moving ahead with such a drastic and potentially destructive change.

931

Heather Gerth - Bethesda, 20816

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 them (including in Wood Acres) from purchasing homes there.

I also don't believe that allowing increased density will bring those market-based costs down to levels affordable to the missing middle (which, according to MoCo's Planning Commission, is exemplified by teachers and firefighters, for whom average salaries are \$84,000 and \$64,000, respectively, according to the web) 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) to take a differentiated approach based on land value differences within the county, and to consider policies more aligned with the approach of Fairfax County rather than that of Arlington and Alexandria (see Experience in suburban VA below)
- (b) to take into account MoCo's existing zoned capacity
- (c) to take into account the impact of increased density on infrastructure, schools, and the environment
- (d) to take into account neighborhood-level input
- (e) to include a timeframe with specific targets, and metrics for monitoring progress toward achieving them, in order to determine whether the policy is working and if it isn't, whether to modify or cancel it

A 2023 Urban Institute study entitled "Land Use Reforms and Housing Costs: Does Allowing for Increased Density Lead to Greater Affordability?" (<https://www.urban.org/research/publication/land-use-reforms-and-housing-costs>) concluded that "reforms that loosen restrictions are associated with a statistically significant 0.8 percent increase in housing supply within three to nine years of reform passage, accounting for new and existing stock. This increase occurs predominantly for units at the higher end of the rent price distribution; we find no statistically significant evidence that additional lower-cost units became available or became less expensive in the years following reforms."

Lastly, we barely have enough parking on our street right now. I have no idea where any additional cars would be able to park. Trucks can barely get down our street.

932	<p>Georgina Guernica - Bethesda, 20816</p> <p>I oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. As Marc Elrich has stated, there is sufficient zoning for attainable housing under the county's plan with thousands of units that have been approved but not built and there is capacity for additional units within the existing structure. Also, the proposal doesn't sufficiently analyze the impact of the proposed re-zoning on infrastructure. I also oppose the "of right" provisions in AHSI.</p>
933	<p>Ryan Worch - Rockville, 20852</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal that would allow multifamily units to be built in single-family neighborhoods across Montgomery County. As a resident of Rockville, I firmly believe that this plan would have devastating consequences for our community and should not be implemented.</p>

Reasons Why This Proposal is a Terrible Idea:

Destruction of Neighborhood Character: The proposal fails to adequately address the significant impact that multifamily units would have on the character and aesthetics of our well-established single-family neighborhoods. The introduction of duplexes, triplexes, and other multi-unit buildings would drastically alter the landscape and feel of our communities.

Increased Traffic and Congestion: The influx of new residents from multifamily units would lead to a substantial increase in traffic on our already congested roads. This would not only create frustrating delays for commuters but also pose safety risks for pedestrians and cyclists in our neighborhoods.

Strain on Public Services: Our schools, parks, libraries, and other public amenities are currently operating at or near capacity. Adding more residents without a corresponding increase in funding and resources would stretch these services thin and diminish the quality of life for all community members.

Decreased Property Values: Studies have shown that the presence of multifamily units in single-family neighborhoods can lead to a decrease in property values for surrounding homes. This would be detrimental to homeowners who have invested in our community and are counting on their homes as a significant asset.

Lack of Affordability: While the proposal aims to increase housing options, it fails to guarantee that the new multifamily units will be affordable for low- and middle-income families. There is a risk that these units will cater to higher-income residents, further exacerbating the housing affordability crisis in Montgomery County.

I urge you to carefully consider the negative consequences of this proposal and prioritize the well-being and quality of life for existing residents. Montgomery County should explore alternative solutions to address housing needs that do not come at the expense of our established single-family neighborhoods.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I hope you will reconsider this proposal and work towards a more balanced and thoughtful approach to housing development in our community.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Bruser - Chevy Chase, 20815

934

My wife and I strongly oppose the "attainable housing" initiative. The plan for multi-unit housing would not only destroy the single-family character of our neighborhood (Brookdale), it would greatly increase congestion, reduce parking space, and increase danger for pedestrians and children in a neighborhood that has no sidewalks. Beyond that, the plan DOES NOT MAKE SENSE for our neighborhood, in at least two respects: 1) Officials say the county needs 31,000 more housing units by 2030, but Planning Board data says more than 35,000 units already approved for building throughout the county remain unbuilt. 2) While the county strongly needs AFFORDABLE housing, the AHSI is based on "market rate" housing which would be beyond the means of target buyers in our neighborhood.

935	<p>Arthur Cox - Chevy Chase, 208115</p> <p>We are opposed to the Affordable Housing Strategies Initiative. This proposal is poorly thought out, It will have significant adverse impacts on established neighborhoods, will not provide "affordable housing" and ultimately make Montgomery County a less attractive place to live for all.</p>
936	<p>Christine Deerin - Kensington, 20895</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I am against it.2. I believe the housing would be built but still be a fortune.3. I did not purchase my home to be next to apartments or condos, I bought it to be in a neighborhood with similar houses.
937	<p>April Kates - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Dear Sirs:</p> <p>I cannot express how strongly I disagree with this initiative. Please consider the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. If enacted, this proposal will break up many cohesive neighborhoods by inserting transient rental apartment buildings in the middle of stable single family homes. You should not allow the building of apartments in the middle of ANY single family housing neighborhood. A duplex is one thing, but anything more is not right. The setbacks from the property line must be left as is.2. The proposal is faulty and it appears that homeowners in all levels of existing housing disagree with the proposal. The county councilors in favor of this proposal are elected officials but they are not doing the bidding of the homeowners who pay taxes here. If no taxpayers want it, who is asking for it???3. There are other options to provide more affordable housing options, there are many empty lots that could be made into small (2000 sq ft) homes with small yards (Think Levittown) that would be exactly what 'beginning' homeowners could afford. This is what the county should be encouraging, not building more apartment buildings and breaking up established residential areas with quad and more-plexes.4. Place limits on upsizing older houses - for example, developers are buying up small houses that are for sale, and tearing them down and building 4000-6000 sq foot homes which are not affordable. They are sold at a higher price than all the surrounding properties. They decrease the number of affordable homes by removing smaller cheaper houses from the housing stock. Stop this practice. Put a limit on the number of sq ft a new home can be over the size of what was originally there. This may stop developers from buying up old housing stock, but it gives an opportunity for a young family to buy a fixer-upper.

938

D Kulik - Bethesda, 20816

There has been no substantive review of this initiative/proposal likely harmful impact on traffic, roads, schools, and other infrastructure as well as no review of the environmental impact.

939

Jan Lilja - Bethesda, 20816

I am writing to state my concerns and opposition to AHSI as currently drafted. I concur with County Executive Ehrlich that sufficient housing units have already been approved to accommodate anticipated population growth. To date, I have not seen this statement disputed or questioned by the planning Department.

Second, I am familiar with the 2023 Urban Institute study which found that density initiatives resulted in small positive increases in development, PRIMARILY in upper-income areas and not resulting in additional attainable housing, but additional expensive housing (where profit margins are greater). QED, doesn't help teachers, firemen, etc.

Third, I believe this initiative will lead more prospective buyers to purchase in Counties other than MoCO, such as Northern Virginia, or Frederick County where they will have greater assurance of the future of their prospective neighborhood.

Fundamentally, this is a well-meaning but misguided effort. It seems to me the real estate development community must be behind this. A betrayal from our public servants is afoot.

I urge you to stick with the Master Planning effort, which is successfully resulted in a great deal of increased residential in the Westbard area (yes, obviously not attainable for the most part, see UI study reference above)but which is more thoughtful and takes into account infrastructure, transportation, educational requirements rather than the proposed hodgepodge pop-up surprise development now advocated by the Planning Department.

If you truly want to assist teachers, firemen, etc. with housing, I encourage you to consider a solution from the income (demand) side, rather than the supply side. Consider the effectiveness of a Housing allowance for our County public servants, perhaps associated with longevity and performance. That would be more targeted, effective and would make the County more successful at attracting and retaining the highest performing and committed public servants.

940

Ellen Bork - Bethesda, 20814

Please add my name to the list of Montgomery County residents who oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. I am deeply concerned about a reversal of the zoning rules based on inadequate study and analysis of the impact on residents, services, and the environment -- and without a vote by residents to boot. The proposal seems to disregard previously approved plans to add to the housing inventory. In short, the action under consideration is ill-advised so long as major questions have not been investigated and shared with citizens. Such a huge change in the county should surely be approached more thoroughly and expertly and gain the consent of residents.

Thank you very much,

Ellen Bork

941

Ben Coit - Rockville, 20852

Permitting multi-unit development in neighborhoods that are currently zoned for single family units is a terrible idea. It will ruin existing communities, will further stress infrastructure that cannot support additional density (roads, parking, etc.), and does not account for the fact that our schools in the identified development quarter are already overcrowded. Adding MORE density only makes the existing challenges we're facing in our community worse -- not better. The idea that this is even being proposed as a possible solution is short-sighted and done by leaders who do not truly understand our community.

Let's not even mention the fact that the county would be destroying hard earned equity in the homes in these communities by allowing a 4-6 unit apartment building to be constructed next to a single family home. Contrary to comments made by certain county leaders who are in support of this measure, 99% of the people I know in the community are not here because of "generational wealth" and were "gifted their home" by their parents. I come from a family of a County Police Officer and County Teacher -- there was ZERO generational wealth that led to me living in my community. I worked hard and was fortunate enough to purchase a home in my community.

Do not destroy our existing communities with this plan.

942

HOLLOWAY HEWATT - KENSINGTON, 20895-4021

Hello, I am OPPOSED to this new proposal for my neighborhood. There is currently NOT ENOUGH PARKING on my street. More cars will make parking impossible. Not every house has a garage. Mine does not. The infrastructure is very old and CANNOT handle multiple units in one building using the one sewer line. The flooding issues in our neighborhood are unprecedented. There was an actual rescue on Parkwood Drive a couple of years ago. A woman was trapped in her car with rushing water drowning the car. Let's call it what it really is... more tax money for the county.

943

Timothy Morrell - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Montgomery County Council,

The plan specifically surrounding the intersection at Jones Mill & Connecticut Ave is not only not constructive, it is wholly infeasible. The traffic on that section of Ct. is bisected so anyone attempting to gain access to the new housing from the opposite side of Ct. would have to make a number of u-turns and pass throughs on side streets, which is already occurring due to the poorly conceived traffic management plan at that intersection. Furthermore, the additional traffic and parking load on this already heavily trafficked section will tip over the makeup of the neighborhood into a significantly much more urban traffic environment. My home, which I just acquired within the last 2 years and which we're paying dearly for under the current interest rate regime, constitutes our family's main investment, which is underwritten by the solid school system and the single family home neighborhood that we struggled to attain and continue to struggle to afford. Any significant change to that makeup will shake the foundations of our investment in our home.

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. There are ample significantly well positioned development sites for high and medium density housing in Woodmont triangle area of Bethesda and in Close-in Wheaton. I encourage a revision of this plan to include public private partnerships in those areas instead of devaluing the investments of entire swathes of the county's neighborhoods which provide the character and amenity which make it the attractive housing destination that it is. The only benefit here is in the hands of developers.

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.

944

Robert Zalutsky - Garrett Park, 20896

Strongly opposed to this proposal. The changes to single family zoned areas would not provide attainable housing but would simply increase profits for developers who build multifamily units that would not be attainable to most people. This appears to be the hidden agenda for this proposal. The changes would also create multiple problems with regard to safety and quality of life. Garrett Park, for example, has narrow streets with poor lighting, few sidewalks, and many cars already parking on the street, causing safety concerns for pedestrians, including many old people and children going to the local schools. The proposed building units would certainly increase the traffic and parking issues and/or have a major impact on green space since anyone who could afford the units (which would be too expensive to be really "attainable") would have at least one or two cars. Re safety, also note that Strathmore/Knowles avenue, the only access to GP, is also often jammed with traffic as it is, causing problems for access of emergency vehicles, and major new developments already underway with poor traffic remediation planning will worsen this problem (the required traffic plan for the new development on Strathmore should not have been accepted because it relied on data during the pandemic and prior to major new developments). There are much better approaches to providing attainable housing in this area, e.g. requiring some proportion of affordable housing in the large area of the former White Flint mall which is accessible to metro and has been vacant for nearly a decade.

945

Vanessa Santos - Bethesda, 20816-1125

This is a terrible terrible plan and this is not what i want done to my community. Stop this now.

946

Joseph Kaufman - Bethesda, 20816

I strongly oppose the Initiative. I am active in my community and have attended several neighborhood events. The overwhelming view of my neighbors is also strong opposition to the Initiative. Further, there is no way any of us could ever vote for a Councilmember that supports the Initiative. Any Councilmember that supports an Initiative that is so strongly opposed by the community is a Councilmember who simply does not listen to and follow the will of his/her constituents.

I have also attended several of the listening sessions. Opposition to the Initiative dominates the discussion. So, again, how could any Councilmember support such a hated Initiative.

On the merits, the Initiative is deeply flawed. The Initiative fails to take into account the covenants that many communities have in place limiting housing to single-family residences. Those are valid and legally enforceable covenants. The Maryland courts have a long tradition of upholding the validity of such covenants, and Maryland courts strongly favor private land rights over the ability of governments to interfere with those private land rights. If the Initiative is put into place, the County will inevitably have to defend against lawsuits seeking to uphold the lawfulness of those covenants and to enjoin the County from intruding on private land rights. The County will lose those lawsuits. So another problem with a Councilmember who supports the Initiative is that Councilmember will then be wasting taxpayer dollars defending a lawsuit that the County will lose. Voters despise having their tax dollars wasted.

Lastly, the Initiative fails to take into account the impact of increased density on infrastructure, schools, and the environment. Those things are supposed to be the calling card of MoCo and what makes MoCo great. The Initiative will damage those key facets of MoCo life, all in the name of pursuing an Initiative that the voters do not even want.

Simply put, "Affordable Housing" sounds good on paper. Well, most paper. Not the paper the Initiative was written on. Thank you for your time and consideration of these points.

947

Paul Lane - Bethesda, 20816

County Council: Please do not approve the AHS and GIP proposals from the Planning Board. My opposition to these proposals is the same as our County Executive Elrich, and consistent with his October 4, 2024 Montgomery County Update. These two proposals are a reckless abuse of power by the Planning Board, and exhibit an a lack of consideration of the negative impacts and their ineffectiveness for our communities. I will never vote for any Council member who fails to oppose the proposals at this time.

948

Maya Malhotra - N. Chevy Chase, 20815

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

From: "Maya Malhotra" [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2024 11:58am
To: lisa.govoni@montgomeryplanning.org
Cc: "NCC Village" <nccinfo@northchevychase.org>
Subject: Re AHSI

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.

Most of the lot sizes and street widths in our Village subdivision are simply not designed to cope with the added burdens of increasing their building footprint or forcing additional parking spaces.

Sincerely,
Maya Malhotra
Dundee Driveway

949

Robert Jenets - Bethesda, 20816

I am against the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative as it is proposed. I know the thought is that allowing builders to easily replace a single family home with multiple units will increase the supply of affordable housing. But that is a false premise. I am aware of such a replacement happening in Chevy Chase right now where a single family home is being replaced with three townhomes. Each one is priced at about \$3,500,000. The zoning changes being proposed are not likely to have the intended outcome and conversely, will have more negative impact with regard to parking, traffic, school overcrowding, etc.

950

Courtenay Ellis - Potomac, 20854

██████████ Courtenay Ellis Further Comments

6. No plan to compensate existing single zoned residence homeowners for decline in their property values caused by multiplexing adjacent/neighboring properties. 7. No assessment of impact of potential panic selling by existing single-family homeowners fearing destruction of their home values. 8. No assessment of future cost to taxpayers of proposal to assist property owners in meeting costs incurred in converting single home lots to multiplex lots. 9. No assessment of the impact on landfills & the environment of all the waste generated by knocking down & discarding existing single-family homes. 10. No consideration of the need for stability & for homeowners/taxpayers to be able to rely on existing zoning & law. 10. No assessment of the human cost involved in the disruption of knocking houses down & rebuilding differently. 11. No consideration of attainable housing options in other areas/parts of the country that people can afford. 12. No record of guidance from the Council beyond one page letter from now-gone Hans Riemer to the Planning Board triggering this shocking process. 13. No mention of any budget or budget limit on the costs of preparing/conducting the AHS study and report & no disclosure of the costs to the taxpayer of this process to date.

951

Jennifer Beaudet - Kensington, 20895

I strongly oppose any measures to increase density of housing in Kensington. Further, our Marc Train station is already fully utilized and cannot adequately accommodate an influx of additional riders. The proposed plan will kill the positive attributes of living in this gem of a town. What we need are more schools, bike lanes, and more green space, NOT overcrowding and the depletion of resources.

We actually know each other in this town. We walk to local businesses and say hi to neighbors. Our kids play in the streets and in the parks. It's our escape from our over crowded schools and roads. Our mental health depends on it. Let's keep some sanity.

Thank you.
Jen Beaudet

952

Philip Mercorella - Chevy Chase, 20815

My wife and I have reviewed information on the so called Attainable Housing Strategies initiative and we strongly recommend that the Montgomery County Council REFUSE TO APPROVE THIS INITIATIVE.

It appears to be poorly conceived and benefits developers and builders rather than the citizens of the county. There is no evidence to suggest such a radical proposal is even needed and it definitely has the potential to have unintended negative consequences for the county. We think the Council will be derelict in its duty if it passes this initiative.

953

Patricia Metzger - chevy chase, 20815

Children:

The change in zoning in Montgomery county will no doubt have an effect on Suburban areas with low density, quiet streets, and larger properties. This type of area allows children to freely play outside. With other children. That's what urban areas lack also. That's why people scrimp and save to move to suburbia. Loss of green space, in the form of backyards will be a sad loss for children, and the environment.

Traffic congestion:

After seeing the Jones Bridge and Conn. construction still going on for the past 4 years, I also doubt effective and in-time traffic infrastructure upgrades will happen at the scale of this plan. Add to that the state's failure to come anywhere close to plan on the purple line in chevy chase, and I feel there is a less than 50% chance projects will happen even by 2050.

Developers:

Developers are the friends of Montgomery county council, as seen by the installation of the worst grocery store I've ever encountered, Amazon Fresh, in Chevy Chase Lake. They had no refrigeration last week and no notification to residents. I walk to get my groceries and I had to walk home with nothing b/c I didn't know. I walked again and found out they changed their payment method. Again, I walked home with nothing. where is the community engagement for this store. It is a disgrace to grocery stores. Also I often discover that the food I buy has gone bad when I arrive home. The community of Chevy chase lake clearly said we did not want this as our local grocery store. I would recommend further engaging the community on this. I know it's hard.

-Patricia Metzger

chevy chase, md 20815

954

Carl Blake - Kensington, 20895

Council Members,

While the attainable housing initiative offers greater flexibility allowing developers to build structures that can accommodate multiple families, what remains unsolved is a solution in parallel to address school overcrowding.

Without also addressing the school shortage issues in multiple areas of the County, particularly in the down County and east County areas, we would find ourselves exacerbating the problem by increasing the number of residents in these areas through this initiative. I urge you to withdraw this plan for further study at this time.

955

Nicholas Marcou - Bethesda, 20816

I strongly oppose changing the zoning for the below reasons. I will be very organized in voting against council members who support this. Those who support it are not listening to your constituency.

#1 Neighborhood Character Disruption: The introduction of duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes in single-family zones could significantly alter the established character of many neighborhoods.

#2 Increased Traffic and Parking Issues: Allowing higher-density housing without fully addressing parking and traffic infrastructure may strain existing streets and parking availability.

#3 Property Value Concerns: Changes in zoning and housing density may lead to uncertainty and fluctuations in property values.

#4 Limited Affordability Impact: The strategy targets middle-income housing but might not sufficiently address the needs of low-income residents. There is scant evidence to support that this approach will alleviate any real affordability problems.

#5 Master Planning Due Process: Deviating from established neighborhood zoning in master plans may undermine community engagement and careful long-term planning. Each neighborhood has its own situation and you cannot force legislation through like this in such a broad way. You need to listen to each distinct neighborhood area before proposing rezoning.

956

Alonzo Chisolm - Kensington, 20895

I am very concerned about the AHS initiative. While affordable housing may be a concern in certain areas in Montgomery County, the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative will not adequately address this concern. Instead we risk fundamentally changing the character of our communities, putting additional strain on our infrastructures by allowing MFH on SF lots, and overburdening our already overcapacity schools districts.

957

Blake Hering - Kensington, 20895

Eliminating single family zoning will destroy the fabric of our neighborhoods in Kensington. We live on a quiet street and no sidewalks. Street parking is already at a minimum and will make passing cars in the neighborhood a nightmare. Saving for years, my wife and I made our dream come true to own a single family home in a neighborhood of similar homes. Tearing them down for Duplexes, Triplexes, and Quadplexes will ruin the fabric of the neighborhood. An already crowded area, Kensington, will no longer be a desirable place to call home. The schools are at the max, the traffic is terrible, and to add more density may sound wonderful for tax collection but to the detriment of the population. I am against rezoning. Adding density in commercial zones with retail on the bottom and apartments/condos on top, is how other jurisdictions have done it. Housing values will also drop living next to the plexes. I am in real estate and the equity we have all built for retirement will be wiped away. Please do not destroy our neighborhoods.

958

John Ratino - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am a long-time Montgomery County resident and homeowner, and I am writing to express my opposition to the Planning Board's currently recommended zoning changes to support attainable housing in Montgomery County.

While making attainable housing available in Montgomery County is certainly a worthwhile goal, the currently proposed zoning changes attempt to do so by putting every resident located in a Priority Housing District at unacceptable risk. From the perspective of many tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of Montgomery County residents, the proposed changes pose a direct challenge to their environments, lifestyles, tax and utility costs and home values. While these risks may well be overstated in some neighborhoods, they clearly have not been adequately addressed by the Planning Board or the County Council to date. As a result, there is a crisis mentality verging on panic occurring in many neighborhoods, and many neighborhood associations are rapidly organizing to fund political and legal opposition. I really can't remember a more contentious situation ever occurring in Montgomery County.

My hope is that the County Council slows down, re-evaluates all available options for achieving attainable housing, and then goes forward on a path that minimizes rather than exacerbates the fears of so many current Montgomery County residents. In particular, I think the notion of allowing duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes in the middle of established single-family neighborhoods is not well-founded. Recent experience in Portland and Minneapolis indicates that the actual rate of construction of multi-family units in such neighborhoods resulting from these types of zoning changes will likely be very slow, yet the risk is very real and extremely inflammatory for existing homeowners because they typically worry about the risk of a worst-case scenario occurring next door and the current proposal provides no way for them to avoid that risk. It is this risk in particular that is sucking away most of the oxygen that in other circumstances could actually provide neighborhood support for a less contentious attainable housing strategy. I suggest that it be dropped from the current proposal and that the County Council look to other available options to support attainable housing.

Thank you for considering my position on this matter.

959

William Worthy - Bethesda, 20816

This strategy seems to be poorly thought out based on property values on lower Montgomery County. I would not support this idea.

960

Lori Laitman - Potomac, 20854

I have many concerns, the most pressing to be environmental impact. Were proper studies done to examine the consequences from increasing the density of housing? What will it do to the air and water quality, the traffic congestion that is already horrible? This seems ill thought out — and I oppose the measure.

961

Laurie McNulty - Brookeville, 20833

I have concerns about the intent of this plan matching the actualization. I believe this opens developers up to continuing to purchase single family homes and lots and extraordinary prices and reducing affordable and reasonable access to housing. It also does not account for the infrastructure deficits, parking, water, gas, electric etc. Already overwhelmed and underfunded school systems would not be able to keep up with demands of significant increases in families. None of this is thought out or accounted for in rezoning. This is a poorly thought out plan that does not actually provide affordable, sustainable housing for county residents.

962

Leanne Tobias - Bethesda, 20816

Listening sessions before the Council demonstrate that housing needs to be made more affordable in Montgomery County, but that AHSI is not the way to accomplish this. The Council needs to go back to the drawing board and produce a policy that County residents can support.

Instead of upzoning ~82% of the County's single-family housing, the County should consider the following options:

1. Partnering with developers to facilitate the conversion of underutilized commercial buildings, including office buildings with appropriate floorplates, to multi-family housing. While larger office buildings are typically difficult to convert to multi-family housing, those with smaller floorplates are not. NAIOP reports that office conversions since 2010 in projects of 50+ units have created 35,667 multi-family units across the U.S. <https://www.naiop.org/globalassets/research-and-publications/report/new-uses-for-office-buildings-life-science-medical-and-multifamily-conversions/researchreportnew-uses-for-office-buildings-report.pdf>

2. Enacting a replacement requirement for naturally-occurring affordable housing (NOAH) in conjunction with the redevelopment projects. California has enacted a 2 for 1 affordable housing replacement policy for certain industrial development projects.

3. Expanding the MPDU program by broadening eligible income levels and/or increasing the set-aside requirement.

4. Working with developers to facilitate the construction of starter housing and affordable housing on existing redevelopment sites, such as White Flint. Tax exemptions or fee reductions are two potential incentives that could be employed; there are no doubt others. The County is already required to evaluate all CIP projects for the inclusion of affordable housing. Budget (bridge loans, grants) can be dedicated to facilitate identified affordable housing projects.

5. Reviewing and revising the County's residential building code and permitting processes to reduce construction timelines, thereby reducing production costs. If needed, additional budget can be committed to this effort.

6. Reviewing and revising the County's residential building code and permitting process to comply with the new Maryland law permitting the construction of manufactured and modular housing in all single-family zones. Commit additional budget to this effort if needed.

7. Reducing the maximum floor-area ratio (FAR) for single-family construction to discourage the production of McMansions. Similarly, set-back requirements could be increased and/or lot coverage ratios reduced. Middleburg, VA recently enacted such an ordinance. https://www.loudounnow.com/news/middleburg-adopts-far-standard-to-limit-house-sizes/article_2d6b28fc-8067-11ef-8d6b-b752e94d3a59.html

8. Impose development fees to protect rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods and discourage tear-downs. Chicago has enacted a demolition surcharge to discourage tear-downs in selected gentrifying neighborhoods. The surcharge has been extended twice and has proved effective in preserving existing housing and more affordable rental units. <https://therealdeal.com/chicago/2024/09/19/chicagos-anti-gentrification-ordinance-penalizes-tear-downs/>

The above policy suggestions are targeted to produce affordable and starter housing and/or preserve more affordable existing housing by discouraging the construction of McMansions. Unlike AHSI, these policies support the housing needs of County residents.

If the County wishes to consider upzoning, the following restrictions should apply:

- In existing neighborhoods, upzoning should be restricted to owner-occupants. Additional parking should be required to be provided off-street.
- Additional multiplex zoning should be restricted to redevelopment and greenfield sites with sufficient infrastructure to support denser construction.
- Upzoning should be implemented through site-specific master plans and rezonings, not through a County-wide zoning text amendment.
- The County should enact legislation to protect mature trees and limit stormwater runoff in connection with all redevelopment.

963

Lisa Gelb - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am very concerned with what I understand is a proposal to permit multi-family housing in locations that currently are single family residences. I am strongly opposed to permitting such multi-family units to be built without any additional review or approval process. If the purpose of the proposal is to expand "affordable" housing in lower Montgomery County, there is no reason to think that the proposal would accomplish that goal. The plan sounds like it would increase density but not increase affordable homes. In addition, construction already in my neighborhood is so dense in many areas, and newer homes generally cover such a large portion of the lot that even existing structures pose environmental threats, particularly lack of drainage and space for storm run-off. If the Council is serious about creating affordable housing, it needs to study the environmental impacts and develop a plan that will actually achieve the stated goal. A plan should consider transportation options and other neighborhood amenities. For example, my neighborhood is not walking distance to a metro station. The only grocery store within walking distance is Brookville Market, a boutique, expensive market. It is essential to consider essential infrastructure in a particular area, to determine how viable an area is to support low income residents. Finally, a well-considered plan needs to address traffic impacts of increased density. I do not believe the proposal has conducted environmental, traffic, or affordability analyses. And any plan should permit case-by-case review. Some projects might be delayed or blocked, but there might be justifiable reasons to put on the brakes.

964

Gregory Grinc - Kensington, 20895

The proposal as described is a disaster for stable neighborhoods and property values. Allowing properties to turn onto duplexes or small apartment units will destroy the reasons that people have flocked to our wonderful county and neighborhoods.

965

Paul Besozzi - Kensington, 20895

I have listened to and/or read a number of explanations of the need for upzoning 82% of the county - something like potentially over 150,000 single family homes - as proposed by the plan. None have them have convinced me of its necessity or wisdom, particularly as it relates to providing truly "affordable housing." Rather it sounds like a solution in search of a problem. I urge the Council to reject it or at the very a minimum explain, in a more fully transparent way, its full spectrum of impacts and the need for such a broad-based, seemingly draconian zoning device.

966

Tracey D Angelo - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear County Council,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. After attending two --and listening to a third-- of your Listening Sessions, it is clear to me proper studies on infrastructure impacts have not been conducted and that the biggest beneficiaries of the AHSI are developers.

My reasons for disagreement with the AHSI are so wide-ranging they are impossible to contain in this short letter. So, I will limit myself to a few of the most egregious qualities of this scheme. First, infrastructure. These concerns went completely unanswered in the listening sessions, but cannot be ignored. From roads, to schools, to water supply, to sewage, to green space, to tree canopy, to aging power grid, single-family neighborhoods in Montgomery County are unprepared for the effects resulting from the dramatically increased density that AHSI would permit. Please don't move AHSI further along without some serious study and planning for how the county would ameliorate the impacts of increased density on infrastructure.

Secondly, AHSI is a sledgehammer approach when a scalpel would be more appropriate. Rezoning 82% of the county without a lot of further study AND the support of the communities that you are impacting is irresponsible. Why not try it out in some sample areas that are ripe for development, like White Flint? With newer development, you would be able to manage adequate infrastructure for planned density.

Furthermore, in the listening sessions that I observed, most of the residents who spoke in support of AHSI were conflating it with Affordable Housing. That's not surprising because, while the planning board did technically distinguish between the two concepts during the listening sessions, much of their slide show and discussion focused on affordability. It feels like the planning board and County Council are being misleading in their efforts to sell this scheme to county residents and have yet to make a convincing argument about how AHSI fits into a larger plan for more affordable housing in the county. All you have said at the listening sessions is this is "tool in the toolkit" to address housing issues in Montgomery County. What does this even mean? Residents of Montgomery County need many more answers, and I think a vote, before the zoning in our neighborhoods is changed by fiat.

I moved to Montgomery County when I was six years old. Now I am 56 and, except for one five year blip, I have stayed in Montgomery County. I choose (and sacrifice) to live here because of qualities that differentiate it from DC—a little more breathing room, trees, outdoor space. If AHSI is enacted, I may have to rethink that. But, while I am here, I will be paying very close attention to how my Council Representatives handle this matter and vote accordingly.

Sincerely,
Tracey D'Angelo

Sebastian Rodriguez - Chevy Chase, 20815

967

The plan as stated does not achieve its purpose and does not utilize the potential already in place to maximize housing units vs. destroying single family home neighborhoods. The Planning Board's own data for September 2024 shows there are 35,240 approved but not yet built housing units throughout the county. How is this not being tapped out before single family neighborhoods are rezoned? There is PLENTY of empty real estate that is not being utilized.

The plan's unjustified underutilization of space that currently exists to encroach on these neighborhoods will have a significant impact on the community. It will create increasingly overcrowded roads on small, ageing roads, which will create dangerous conditions for

pedestrians and children, especially when many of the roads in our neighborhood, including the one on my street, does NOT HAVE SIDEWALKS. We moved to this neighborhood from DC for our children to be able to walk safely in their neighborhood and to school. Building high density housing will destroy that.

The rush this is being forced through is very very concerning. It seems you are intentionally trying to steamroll citizen input and treat all of MOCO with a single brush.

Take a pause. Maximize space already available. And be precise and targeted with future changes. I beg you. Don't ruin what makes MoCo such a wonderful place to live

968

Eileen Sarsfield - Kensington, 20895

My husband, Jim and I are not in favor of this proposal for numerous reasons:

- 1) These data are not clear and does not make a case that there is a crisis of housing in Montgomery County; The problem is not conclusively defined.
- 2) This is increasing density in an area of the county that is already over-populated; The increase in traffic is not addressed.
- 3) There is little to no resolution of how the parking problems, environmental impacts including water and sewage and impact on the school enrollments would be resolved or addressed.
- 4) This is a drastic change in zoning on 82% of the county and thus should be voted on in a general election,
- 5) This proposal does not address how it will impact home values and taxes. The letter from the State of Md is unsatisfactory in its answer.
- 6) This appears, based on other areas of the country where this has been instituted, to mainly benefit builders not residents.
- 7) There is enormous resistance to this proposal as far as I can tell. In our neighborhood, based on a survey we conducted, over 80% of the residents are not in favor of this proposal.

969

Aida Hudson - Chevy Chase, 20815

If AHSI is passed, no middle class families will be able to afford the newly developed units in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area, since they will be sold at market price. Calling the initiative "attainable housing" is a disgraceful attempt to justify the money-grab by developers and their cronies. The irresponsible development of the B-CC area including my neighborhood of 52 years, Brookdale, will not help minorities or middle-income families to move into the area. They will not be able to afford it. Not under this plan.

Furthermore, the impact on existing communities has not been assessed or taken into consideration. The headlong rush to increase housing density in MoCo at all costs will bring us even more unpassable streets due to reduced parking requirements; overcrowding of schools; dangerous traffic conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and children; loss of green spaces and tree cover; demands on aging infrastructure and increased taxes.

In Brookdale, what was once a safe middle-class community with good schools, diverse neighbors and efficient public services is in danger of becoming gentrified, overcrowded and unaffordable to all but the wealthiest individuals. This is not what we want.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to reconsider the very serious implications of AHSI and not allow it to pass. In its present form, AHSI fails to help the so-called "missing middle" and at the same time does irreparable harm to our existing communities. This is not the way forward. We must do better.

970 **Francis Rienzo - Kensington, 20895**
We have serious concerns about what this proposed rezoning policy would do to the traffic, safety and other infrastructure issues in our neighborhoods. We strongly oppose.

971 **Anne Sullivan - Kensington, 20895**
This is a terrible idea for our part of the county where traffic is already at gridlock. Our schools are already over crowded. Our neighborhood streets are already congested with parked cars and with no sidewalks in our neighborhood walking is treacherous without adding more density.

972 **Tushar Kansal - Takoma Park, 20912**
My name is Tushar Kansal and I live in Takoma Park. I support Montgomery County's attainable housing strategy because it's critical for creating a more inclusive, environmentally sustainable, and welcoming county.
I moved to Takoma Park from DC just over a year ago because my wife and I wanted high quality neighborhood schools in a diverse, down to earth community. Other families on our street are teachers, feds, and nonprofit employees. However, all of the recent home sales on nearby streets, including my own house, have all been \$800,000 to 1 million dollars. To be clear, we are two miles away from the expensive Takoma Park historic district. Our neighborhood is already inaccessible to middle-class, middle-income families if nothing changes. In fact, nearby in Takoma Park, starter homes like these are already being replaced by new homes like these that have sold for 1.3 or 1.4 million dollars.
Sometimes opponents of attainable housing raise concerns about neighborhood character, and I can sympathize. While I love the buildings and streetscape in my neighborhood, I especially love the people, my neighbors. If we insist on keeping the buildings the same, the neighborhood will change – in terms of the folks who can afford to live there. Montgomery County's attainable housing strategy can thread the needle. A couple of blocks from me there is a very rare patch of R-40 zoning (which is only 0.6% of the county!) and there is a lovely

duplex – which my wife didn't even realize was a duplex until I pointed it out to her. Despite concerns about developer profiteering, smaller homes on smaller plots of land are inherently more affordable.

In my day job, I work on housing policy at the Pew Charitable Trusts. Pew's research shows what can be achieved. By allowing attainable housing, new "missing middle" homes in Houston have a median assessed value of \$340,000 and affordable to families earning 105% of area median income, \$200,000 less than the median value of other new single-family homes. Houston has also increased its population of both Black and Hispanic residents, who tend to have lower incomes and wealth, while growing rapidly.

I urge you to support widespread transit-oriented attainable housing options that increase opportunities for people to live in an affordable, sustainable Montgomery County. Thank you.

973

Cindy Amrine - Bethesda, 20816

I am writing to request that you do not put any more development in the River Road corridor up to the Beltway. There is an enormous amount of traffic not to mention pedestrian accidents and near misses. They are developing the Westbard Giant shopping center and putting in more residences. This will increase the number of pedestrians in our area as well as automobiles. No one has addressed whether there will be an increase in the frequency of Metro bus route T2 or Rideon routes 23 and 29. If you don't increase the frequency of busses you will have more cars on the road. Furthermore there have been accidents (River Road and Ogden Rd) - we were informed that the County would close the median there but not told when. More development would be a detriment to the area. Affordable housing is best near the metro (use the area near Friendship Heights - Lord and Taylor building or upcounty close to public transportation that runs frequently and is reliable.

974

J S - Bethesda, 20816

I am against this proposition for the following reasons:

1. **Maintaining Neighborhood Character:** Single-family home neighborhoods like Woodacres are designed with a specific suburban atmosphere in mind, characterized by space, privacy, and certain architectural styles. The introduction of high-density housing will fundamentally alter this character, affecting the lifestyle that residents sought when they moved to the area.
2. **Infrastructure Concerns:** Woodacres suburban areas are designed with infrastructure intended for a certain density, including roads, schools, public utilities, and services. High-density affordable housing will put significantly more pressure on these resources, leading to overcrowding in schools, traffic congestion, and overburdened utilities. This can reduce the quality of life for current residents that paid a premium to move into Woodacres.
3. **Impact on Property Values:** Property values in Woodacres/MoCo are often tied to the low-density nature of the neighborhood and its desirability. The introduction of affordable housing complexes could change market perceptions, potentially lowering home values, which are a significant source of wealth for homeowners.
4. **Zoning Regulations:** Many suburban neighborhoods like that of Woodacres are zoned for single-family homes for a reason, to create specific community settings with predictable development patterns. Altering these zoning laws to allow for affordable housing may lead to unpredictable changes in the neighborhood, creating an environment where property owners no longer feel secure in the long-term nature of their investments.

975 **Melody Soopper - Chevy, 20815**

No subdivision in Rollingwood.

Keep single family neighborhoods.
Keep traffic levels safe for children.

Thank you

976 **Vicki Porter - Bethesda, 20816**

I live just off River Rd and Massachusetts Ave in Bethesda, Md. Our schools (already have portables added for rooms) and roads are already over crowded! Taking away space for our single family homes and making them into multi living units will just add to that problem — Not solve it!!

Plus this mixed use housing close together will Drop our property values.

Two situations that will cause Many more problems then they will solve in our area !

977 **carol roman - Kensington, 20895**

I was able to attend a zoom information session about the attainable Housing Strategies and how it will relate to my neighborhood. I live within the 1 mile from the Beltway area that will be affected. I was greatly alarmed to see that there was not data collected about the environmental impact and the parking impact that this will have in my community. We live in a neighborhood that is greatly affected by the impacts of increasing rain. My house has flooded already 3 times and I have sent a lot of money to make sure that it is now safe. A very large new house was built next door to me and the requirements from the county to absorb the lose of permeable space due the this new house were nothing but pitiful. This new house , which flooded two times itself and cost the new owners and myself an additional 18K just to put in a retaining wall. In addition the new owners had to spend additional money to adjust their property to fix their situation. As a county resident I would urge you to reconsider this new plan for Attainable Housing, and do some real studies on its impacts. I would also like to further say that any housing but in this neighborhood will only benefit the builder. Two or three new units on one of the lots here will not be affordable to the community that you are trying to help as it will be extremely expensive regardless of what is built. I am asking you not to go ahead with this plan as it will only cause more damage to our neighborhood. And I would ask you to take up new legislation on requirements for the new very large homes that are being built here. There needs to be more permeable land per each lot then you present regulations allow before further damage is done to our community.

978

Amy Waychoff - Bethesda, 20814

This market-rate housing is not going to be “attainable” to most residents, let alone affordable.

The plan is predicated on the need to address a severe housing shortage, yet the data supporting this claim is at a minimum inconclusive. Elrich, for example, recently stated that “our master plans have enough zoned capacity to house more people than are projected to come here through 2050” (Weekly Update Message, 4 October 2024).

There are no solid provisions in the AHSI for providing the infrastructure — roads, utilities, schools, and transportation — required to implement the plan, other than a reference to impact taxes. At a recent meeting (October 7th Parkwood Residents Association), a planning board member acknowledged that no traffic studies had been done. The planners also do not seem to be concerned about stormwater management and potential loss of tree canopy. In Arlington, which passed similar legislation in 2023, a judge recently struck down its up zoning law in part because it failed to undertake a study of the impact the zoning changes would have on stormwater and tree canopy: <https://patch.com/virginia/arlington-va/arlington-missing-middle-ordinance-struck-down-judge-reports>.

According to the AHSI, parking requirements would be dramatically curtailed, especially in the Priority Housing District (PHD). This type of restriction assumes people will walk and bike more, while driving less. In my neighborhood, which lies mostly within the PHD, walking to work and stores is nearly impossible.

The listening sessions revealed an overwhelming opposition to the plan by the county’s citizens. A show of hands at the BCC listening session suggested that the percentage of citizens opposed to the plan was at least 80 percent.

979

Susan Murray - Chevy Chase, 20815

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

First, thank you for your service. As a life-long resident, I have contributed decades worth of taxes to the county and I am grateful for the local services my family and community has received in return. I am especially appreciative of the libraries and parks that we use routinely. I understand the painstaking planning that goes into sowing the seeds for a thriving, welcoming community for current and future residents and can affirm that thoughtful planning that includes impacted residents will yield the best outcomes. Just ask our local municipal council and county historic commission who devotes time and effort to approving even minor maintenance permits to ensure that they are in keeping with the unique neighborhood character.

This letter is my first correspondence to the Council. Why? Because it is the first time I have felt compelled to contact you about an issue that will dramatically affect the beloved community that we have called home for decades.

I am asking for you to reject the sweeping zoning change proposed by the “Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI)” that is anything but attainable for anyone but the most affluent. The AHSI is a developer’s dream for the following reasons:

Market-based, Million Dollar+ Prices: Instead of building a large single family dwelling in place of affordable, modest homes, developers will make even more profit developing multi-family, multi-million dollar homes.

Taxpayer Subsidies to Developers: Developers are not paying for the immense expense of the infrastructure - water, sewer, streets, schools - required to serve more residents in the same small space that was designed for single-family households over a century ago.

Unsafe, Crowded Streets: Already crowded streets with little parking, less tree canopy, less permeable surface and fewer safe sidewalks, will be more dangerous for all pedestrians. Our narrow streets are already at parking capacity given the lack of driveways, households with multiple cars and caregiving and house maintenance staff competing for limited street parking.

I whole heartedly support creating walkable, more livable and affordable communities and this plan achieves none of these objectives for my community. In fact, AHSI will thwart our efforts by systematically replacing older, more modest homes with new unaffordable multi-family homes. Please see the attached economic analysis that includes suggestions for economically viable solutions.

Please listen to me and the many other constituents who will pay the price for a costly wholesale zoning change. Follow the County Master Plan process and conduct the thorough analysis that will actually result in affordable housing and livable neighborhoods for all residents who work in the county.

I look forward to more active public engagement in this critical initiative that impacts us so profoundly and I look forward to hearing your feedback to my concerns and suggestions.

Sincerely,
Susan Murray

980

Kevin Marvel - Bethesda, 20816

October 18, 2024

SUBJECT: Community feedback on the Planning Board’s Attainable Housing Strategies Recommendations

FROM: Sumner Citizens’ Association, Kevin B. Marvel, President

TO: County Council

Dear Council Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Sumner Citizens' Association located in the 20816 and 20815 zip codes. More than 540 single family homes make up our neighborhood, representing more than 1,000 Montgomery County residents of voting age.

We are concerned about the rapid push to act on the planning board's attainable housing strategies recommendations. Many of our residents are unaware of the substantial changes being proposed nor fully understand the impact the proposed changes might have on our neighborhood.

Although some in our neighborhood did attend one or more of the listening sessions that were held, it was clear when two members of our Board reported on what they had found concerning the recommendations at our annual meeting in early October that almost no one is aware of the recommendations or their impact on our county.

We are also concerned that no substantial effort has been made to inform and consult with the citizens in our neighborhood or across the county regarding these recommendations and outreach effort to date has been unsuccessful.

We ask that the process of consideration of this highly impactful policy change be slowed, thus ensuring that citizens across the county are fully aware of the planning board's recommendations. This will allow the Council to move forward on the recommendations in a manner informed by their voters.

Our neighborhood is diverse, and many opinions may exist regarding the planning board recommendations, but without effective communication from the Council of the expected impacts with time for residents to consider the impact of the recommendations, citizens cannot weigh in appropriately.

Sincerely,

Kevin B. Marvel, Sumner Citizens Association President.

Margot Brooks - Bethesda, 20816

981

I am strongly opposed to the AHSI for the following reasons:

1. As the proposed multiplexes are to be market priced, it is unclear how they would be attainable to teachers, firemen, grocery store employees—in short many of those who work here. Townhouses under construction near here are priced near \$1 million and up. There are no announced guardrails that would keep units from being priced high.
2. Inducements including property tax rebates for those who convert their single family homes as well as reduced impact fees levied upon developers lead to the obvious question: who will pay for the additional burden on schools, storm water drainage, roads.... The rest of those still in single family homes? Or will nothing be done to bring about needed adjustments?
3. I dread the effect on parking. On 24-foot wide streets in our neighborhood, when there are cars parked on both sides, only one car can drive through. On curved streets can be impossible to see that another car is approaching from the opposite direction.
4. Many local streets have no sidewalks. With parking on both sides, pedestrians are forced into the path of traffic.
5. As far as I know, no studies have been done to determine environmental impact.

In short, this sounds like a recipe for a degraded yet expensive quality of life for all.
And a large gift to developers.

982

Anne Vogel - BETHESDA, 20817

I am very concerned about this proposal, which does not seem supported by research and data. Rezoning an entire county in one fell swoop in the manner proposed is a drastic action to take without actual evidence supporting its effectiveness in increasing "attainably priced" or affordable housing. Even in cities where this has been tried I do not see any studies available that it works and the policies are only a few years old. Why not try a more limited program or pilot program to build your evidence before going further?

In addition it is completely irresponsible for the local government to propose drastic changes to increase density in established communities without studying and attempting to put together some detail about the effects it is likely to have on the local infrastructure, services, and environment. How many more students will it bring in over time, how many schools will need to be built, how much more traffic will be on local roads, will new roads be needed, will the local water system, electric and communications infrastructure need to be upgraded and who will pay for that and how?! (This is an especially important question considering that County plans to lower development taxes to encourage new development/density.)

Finally, this proposal, as well as the Planning Board Report, has the air of a policy (or mix of policies in the case of the report) the details of which were not actually vetted within the community before being committed to, are not well understood by your constituents, and which are not obviously supported by them. Even the section in the Planning Board Report that summarized outreach to traditionally underserved communities about the Thrive 2050 Plan made the point that it seemed out of touch with their real lives and concerns. I think that is true for many more residents that you realize. There are many different aspects of this diverse county that draw people to live here; you could be inadvertently destroying a number of them (such as natural environment, affordability, lack of crowding) with increased density. Your county is made up of vast swaths of single family home communities of many income levels that are beautifully diverse. Please take the

time to engage with and understand them and their concerns before committing to a rezoning or development strategy. And please make an effort to be sure all the county's communities actually knowledgeable of and consulted about the details before moving forward. I believe that this will achieve the best outcomes for all residents. Thank you.

983 **Barbara Kornmeier - Chevy Chase, 20815**

My husband and I have lived in our house on Williams Lane in Chevy Chase Section 5 for more than 40 years. We love our community and neighbors. We live right off Connecticut Avenue where there is a lot of traffic with very limited parking in the neighborhood. We do not want our community to become any denser.

Please vote against the zoning proposal that would bring more density to this area. The proposal would not produce more affordable housing, but rather would likely yield expensive townhouses and condominiums. It would only bring more people and cars into this area. It would also be a strain on our water and sewage infrastructure as well as adding more children to our crowded schools.

My husband and I vote in every election and will be certain to oppose any council members who support the proposed zoning change.

Thank you for taking the time to read this!

984 **Christopher Waychoff - Bethesda, 20814**

There are no solid provisions in the AHSI for providing the infrastructure — roads, utilities, schools, and transportation — required to implement the plan, other than a reference to impact taxes. At a recent meeting (October 7th Parkwood Residents Association), a planning board member acknowledged that no traffic studies had been done.

The planners also do not seem to be concerned about stormwater management and potential loss of tree canopy. In Arlington, which passed similar legislation in 2023, a judge recently struck down its up zoning law in part because it failed to undertake a study of the impact the zoning changes would have on stormwater and tree canopy: <https://patch.com/virginia/arlington-va/arlington-missing-middle-ordinance-struck-down-judge-reports>.

According to the AHSI, parking requirements would be dramatically curtailed, especially in the Priority Housing District (PHD). This type of restriction assumes people will walk and bike more, while driving less. In my neighborhood, which lies mostly within the PHD, walking to work and stores is nearly impossible.

The listening sessions revealed an overwhelming opposition to the plan by the county's citizens. A show of hands at the BCC listening session suggested that the percentage of citizens opposed to the plan was at least 80 percent.

We have lived in Montgomery County for 37 years, first as renters, then as homeowners. We scrimped and saved for many years before being able to afford to buy our modest home. The current dearth of affordable homes should not be laid on the shoulders of those who worked so hard to live in a single-family-home neighborhood. This plan will destroy the character and charm of our neighborhoods. In the long run, the county government will lose property tax revenue due to the steady decline in home values. Perhaps that was your plan all along?

985

Noah Phillips - Chevy Chase, 20815

I'm a resident of Section 5, Chevy Chase. The only way to keep the rising cost of housing in some kind of check is to boost supply. This is economics 101. For that reason, I support the plan.

986

kevin montano - CHEVY CHASE, 20815

I welcome your efforts to address the important issue of affordable housing but I am deeply concerned that the AHSI, as I understand it, does not really address the immediate needs of the county and seems to be a windfall for developers to enhance density without addressing the affordability issue.

I urge the Council to step back from the AHSI and rethink the rezoning effort and instead focus on subsidizing affordable housing in the county.

We are a progressive county with greater wealth than most counties and I am sure that the residents of this county would be willing to consider tax increases that go to affordable housing rather than simply allowing developers to replace single family homes with multi family homes.

The former approach addresses the real issue; the latter approach seems to benefit developers with the hope that it trickles down to affordable housing. Thank you.

987

Clifton Foster - Chevy Chase, 208915

I oppose the AHSI. The AHSI is a discriminatory effort against existing single family home zoning. There is more than adequate unused land areas in MoCo for many years to come where new housing can be built. Zoning changes can be implanted for large underutilized areas such as at Saks Fifth Ave, GEICO, Tower Oaks, various MoCo Parks. Surface parking at malls can have various multi-unit construction built with structured parking - for example at Westfield Wheaton Mall and Westfield Montgomery Mall.

988

Joseph Martin - Bethesda, 20816

My wife and I are vehemently opposed to changing rules that have been in place for numerous generations. We purchased our home with the simple premise of raising our kids in a single family neighborhood where they didn't need to worry about ton of traffic (and there will significant more traffic if lots are zoned for more than 1 home, more cars parked on the street, overcrowded schools, etc. While I applaud

the Council's initiative for finding attainable housing, this is an ill-conceived idea. We have very good friends that live in downtown Portland, Oregon who passed something similar and the results are a disaster. You have 4 family units with each couple having a car so essentially you have 8 cars for what used to be a single family house. And with more people is more traffic, more speeding and more pedestrians/bicyclists in harms way.

989

Dean D'Angrlo - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear County Council,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. After attending two --and listening to a third-- of your Listening Sessions, it is clear to me proper studies on infrastructure impacts have not been conducted and that the biggest beneficiaries of the AHSI are developers.

My reasons for disagreement with the AHSI are so wide-ranging they are impossible to contain in this short letter. So, I will limit myself to a few of the most egregious qualities of this scheme. First, infrastructure. These concerns went completely unanswered in the listening sessions, but cannot be ignored. From roads, to schools, to water supply, to sewage, to green space, to tree canopy, to aging power grid, single-family neighborhoods in Montgomery County are unprepared for the effects resulting from the dramatically increased density that AHSI would permit. Please don't move AHSI further along without some serious study and planning for how the county would ameliorate the impacts of increased density on infrastructure.

Secondly, AHSI is a sledgehammer approach when a scalpel would be more appropriate. Rezoning 82% of the county without a lot of further study and the support of the communities that you are impacting is irresponsible. Why not try it out in some sample areas that are ripe for development, like White Flint? With newer development, you would be able to manage adequate infrastructure for planned density.

Furthermore, in the listening sessions that I observed, most of the residents who spoke in support of AHSI were conflating it with Affordable Housing. That's not surprising because, while the planning board did technically distinguish between the two concepts during the listening sessions, much of their slide show and discussion focused on affordability. It feels like the planning board and County Council are being misleading in their efforts to sell this scheme to county residents and have yet to make a convincing argument about how AHSI fits into a larger plan for more affordable housing in the county. All you have said at the listening sessions is this is "tool in the toolkit" to address housing issues in Montgomery County. What does this even mean? Residents of Montgomery County need many more answers, and I think a vote, before the zoning in our neighborhoods is changed by fiat. I moved to Montgomery County when I was six years old. Now I am 56 and, except for one

five year blip, I have stayed in Montgomery County. I choose (and sacrifice) to live here because of qualities that differentiate it from DC—a little more breathing room, trees, outdoor space. If AHSI is enacted, I may have to rethink that. But, while I am here, I will be paying very close attention to how my Council Representatives handle this matter and vote accordingly.

Sincerely,
Dean D'Angelo

Chevy Chase, MD 30815

990

Nick Inzeo - Kensington, 20895

The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative fails in a number of respects. First, it does not identify a need that is consistent with expected growth. There is no analysis to show a need that will not be met. Second, the initiative does not discuss the impact on roads, traffic or schools. Third, the initiative would change neighborhoods with no discernible plan. Owners or developers could build multi-family units nearly anywhere in the County, drastically changing neighborhoods. Fourth, the initiative would not necessarily create more affordable housing. Properties in sought-after neighborhoods could build multi-family units, each to be sold at prices close to the value of the existing single-family home.

991

Anne Fox - North Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Montgomery County Council,

October 17, 2024

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.

In general, this county-wide zoning strategy is not a solution to the housing crisis and will greatly impact public-school population and quality of education; pedestrian/cyclist safety; traffic; storm water management; canopy and green spaces; and parking.

In our Village of North Chevy Chase, the numbers of cars parking on our streets as new owners occupy the planned duplexes and multiplexes would greatly impede walking and driving. Cars would still be necessary as our Village is not that close to affordable groceries, pharmacies, hardware stores, gas stations, restaurants, and medical facilities. Many of our streets do not have sidewalks so walking or strolling through our neighborhood would become dangerous and have a deleterious effect on our quality of life.

Please do not approve the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. It is not a solution to the housing crisis.

Sincerely,

Anne Carbery Fox

[REDACTED]
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
[REDACTED]

Member of Village of North Chevy Chase since 1972

992

Jess Bavinger - Bethesda, 20816

Building multiple dwellings and adding more people in an already congested area makes no sense. Build the Infrastructure first. Traffic, schools, hospitals, power are already an issue in these designated areas. Ask police, firemen and rescue squads if they have enough people and support to care for more with this increased demand and congestion! You are putting the cart before the horse!! This is a terrible idea.

993

Gary Jacobs - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing in strong opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI). I would like to make the following points: 1) the AHSI being misunderstood, without any real effort at clarification by the Council, as an affordable housing initiative, which it clearly is not; and 2) the initiative seems designed to - or at least will have the effect of - primarily benefiting developers by allowing multi-unit structures to replace existing single-family houses without any visible consideration of the resulting impact on county services and infrastructure, e.g. roads, utilities, etc.

In conclusion, the AHSI has developed greed written all over it. There is no social need being addressed, there is no county infrastructure in place to support the initiative, and there is no discernible benefit to the residents of Montgomery County. I urge the council to reject this initiative.

994

Edward Froelich - Chevy Chase, 20815

We have been long time residents of Chevy Chase, Section 5. We raised our children here. So many fond memories of this charming and quiet place. One of the reasons we moved is the idyllic single-family home character of the neighborhood. We strongly oppose changing the zoning laws to allow for any construction other than single family homes. If you need additional housing, there is plenty of high-rise housing in Bethesda and more can be built along the Pike. You don't seem to understand that when you have a diamond in your crown you don't switch it out for a larger quartz. You end up losing the sparkle to your crown and having an ugly heavy weight on your head.

995

Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers - Chevy Chase, 20815

October 17, 2024

ALSO SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
Montgomery County Council

c/o Council President Andrew Friedson
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

RE: Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative Recommendations

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

We are the elected Board of Managers representing the residents of Chevy Chase Village, a community consisting of 720 homes zoned R-60, including a local Historic District consisting of 326 properties. Our community is located along two Growth Corridors identified in the County's current General Plan, Thrive Montgomery 2050: we are bisected by Connecticut Avenue, with Wisconsin Avenue running along our western border. Further, more than 90% of our community is located within one mile of the Friendship Heights Metro Station. The Montgomery Planning Board's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) recommendations would affect every single property within our community.

We have serious procedural and substantive concerns with the Planning Board's AHSI recommendations. We understand that to date no legislation to implement these recommendations has been introduced before the Council, and we acknowledge that the details of any eventual legislation may vary significantly from what the Planning Board has proposed. That being said, we feel we must express certain concerns about the Planning Board's recommendations as early as possible, so that our voices as elected officials might influence legislation at the drafting stage and avert the serious weaknesses we see in the Planning Board's approach. We reserve the right to amend these comments, based on how the AHSI recommendations are, or are not, implemented by the Council.

I. Procedural Concerns

1. Timeline & Opportunity for Input. Although County Council President Andrew Friedson has confirmed that no AHSI-related legislation has been proposed to date, there is continuing public concern that the County Council seeks to act on the Planning Board's recommendations in short order. And while we applaud the Council President's efforts to hear the community's concerns on the issue through a series of listening sessions, those listening sessions are not a substitute for hearings that would allow residents and their elected officials to comment on whatever legislation is eventually proposed by the Council.

To allay these concerns, we ask that you commit to and publish a timeline that describes the process by which AHSI-related legislation would be considered, and that such a timeline ensure a minimum of 60 days between the introduction of AHSI-related legislation and public hearings thereon, with ample opportunity for public comment once hearings commence.

2. Outstanding Questions from Listening Sessions. As evidenced by the comments and questions posed at the listening sessions, zoning is a highly complicated topic that requires detailed explanations of terms and concepts with which many residents are unfamiliar. Valuable as they have been, the six listening sessions, spread over four weeks and averaging two hours each, have not provided a sufficient opportunity for impacted residents to learn about and respond to the AHSI recommendations. Additionally, though each session began with an overview of the recommendations, numerous questions were posed by attendees that were not answered during the sessions. Both Council President Friedson and Planning Director Jason Sartori indicated that answers to these questions would be provided, but it remains unclear when the Council and/or Planning staff intends to provide these responses.

Please identify how and when the outstanding questions raised by the public during the listening sessions will be answered. We urge you to respond to these questions in writing, at least 30 days in advance of the introduction of possible legislation.

3. Future Outreach. As Village elected officials, we are attempting to address our residents' confusion through ongoing, fact-based communications regarding the Planning Board recommendations. We hosted the Planning staff at our Village Board meeting in July, and we greatly appreciated their presentation and availability for Q&A. We have also shared the Planning Board's summaries, the schedules of the listening sessions, and links to the recorded videos of the sessions. Nonetheless, many in our community remain unaware of the details of the proposed recommendations and uncertain of how their homes might be affected.

Considering the lack of awareness and attendant uncertainty regarding the Planning Board recommendations and how the Council will act on those recommendations, we feel strongly that when legislation is introduced, the Council must undertake a campaign to ensure public awareness of what is proposed and the process by which the proposal would be enacted.

In particular, we ask that notice of any proposed legislation be mailed to all households located within the impacted zones—R-40, R-60, R-90, R-200—and to all communities abutting the Growth Corridors identified in Thrive Montgomery 2050.

II. Substantive Concerns

It is important that our residents have explanations for the following issues if they are to understand the rationale for, and the effects of, the proposed changes:

1. There are serious disconnects between projected overall housing demand, the County's need for affordable housing, and the Planning Board's inexplicable focus instead on market rate housing. In September 2019, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) projected that our region needed to "increase the number of planned housing units by over 75,000 additional homes" by 2030. They also stated that "[e]xisting comprehensive plans can accommodate this additional capacity", emphasis added. If this

is the case, what need is being addressed by the Planning Board's AHSI proposal? What need justifies a rezoning of 82% of the county's residential properties?

At the same time, MWCOG identified a lack of affordable housing as the most pressing housing issue confronting the County. The Planning Board and staff, however, have confirmed that the AHSI recommendations will not create affordable housing, but rather only market rate housing. Why has the Planning Board focused on market rate housing, rather than affordable housing? As many speakers at the listening sessions described, the market rate housing encouraged by AHSI will actually raise housing costs, displace existing affordable housing, and discourage new or naturally occurring affordable housing.

We suggest the Council, the Planning Board, and Planning staff focus on the affordability issue rather than on a large-scale upzoning to create housing for which there is no clear need and that displaces affordable housing for which the need is most acute.

2. One-size-fits-all approach violates the commitments made by the County and by the County Council in Thrive 2050 to preserve and respect the existing Zoning Ordinance, and such an approach ignores already high-density levels in some areas. Under the county's current Zoning Ordinance, zoning changes are adopted through Master Plans, Sector Plans, Map Amendments and Zoning Text Amendments. The means used to address AHSI should not alter or seek to circumvent standard zoning change reviews, and should not ignore that certain neighborhoods already exist in combination with high-density communities.

As described above, Chevy Chase Village is bisected by Connecticut Ave. north of Western Ave., and bordered to the west by Wisconsin Ave. and Friendship Heights. Friendship Heights already has numerous high-rise apartment buildings with a density that creates serious traffic, cut-through, parking, and school capacity issues affecting the Village, with 1400 additional units currently approved and expected for delivery in the next 3 years within 4 blocks of the Friendship Heights Metro stop on either side of Western Ave. Consequently, we are already confronting the addition within the 1-mile radius of two times more residential units than exist in Chevy Chase Village today.

That is not all, however. We expect that several other parcels will be approved for high-rise and/or mixed-used development in the next few years, such as the Saks Fifth Avenue parking lot on Wisconsin Ave., and the GEICO parcel between Western and Willard Avenues, with an approved development plan for 500 units and 810,000 square feet of office space.

We also anticipate a major redevelopment of the Chevy Chase Circle business district on Connecticut Ave., with the possibility of several low-rise apartment buildings along this corridor. In the area defined by the one-mile radius around the Friendship Heights Metro and the Growth Corridors of Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues, it would appear we already have higher residential density in our area than most other parts of the County, excepting downtown Bethesda, Rockville, Silver Spring and Takoma Park. A one-size-fits-all approach, as proposed by the Planning Board, makes no allowance for the density that exists in our immediate vicinity today, much less the density anticipated in the next 3-5 years.

To recognize the density existing in some communities even before any AHSI-related legislation, we encourage the Council to respect the community-specific planning processes reiterated in Thrive 2050, and simultaneously to provide appropriate guardrails on the overall density levels beyond which additional by-right multi-family development will not be permitted.

3. Adequate study of the effect of increased density on infrastructure. The listening sessions highlighted the various infrastructure issues faced by different communities, including transportation and parking, utilities, storm drain infrastructure, environmental concerns, and schools' capacity and boundaries. And yet the Planning Board recommends a uniform zoning approach that ignores these different needs.

Parking and crowded narrow streets are a concern in every older community in the County, and Chevy Chase Village is no exception.

Especially pressing for our residents, Chevy Chase Village has storm drain infrastructure that only covers roughly 1/3 of the community. It is wholly inadequate for current drainage needs, and we are constantly grappling with stormwater runoff issues exacerbated by today's pace of development.

When it comes to schools, parents in our geographically compact community have in recent years seen their children assigned to a changing mix of four different, geographically dispersed elementary schools due to school capacity issues, resulting in an increasingly fragmented community.

These issues are fundamental to the day-to-day livability of any community, which no zoning proposal should ignore. Established zoning processes were designed in part to address these types of community needs, while a countywide, one-size-fits-all approach most assuredly cannot.

Consequently, we ask that the Council, in advance of passing any AHSI-related legislation, ensure that studies are done to assess the impact of such legislation on the infrastructure in affected communities, and ensure that the identified infrastructure needs will be addressed.

4. Impact on Limited Land Use Authority by Municipalities. As has been acknowledged by the Council President, most of the municipalities in the county, including Chevy Chase Village, do not have full zoning authority under state law, and any changes to the county's Zoning Ordinance will apply within our communities. We are granted limited land use authority in single-family zones pursuant to Maryland Code Land Use Art. §20-509 of the Regional District Act. This authority may be voided by the rezoning of our communities, such that we would be unable to regulate any construction activity within our communities, including fences, signage, parking, etc. This will greatly handicap our local governing authority. We are seeking an amendment to §20-509 to clarify that our current, limited, authority to regulate residential buildings within our municipalities is not affected by and continues to apply regardless of the housing type or the number of families housed within each building.

We urge the County Council to support a technical amendment to §20-509 during the State Legislature’s 2025 legislative session to ensure municipalities preserve their limited land use authority in anticipation of local zoning law amendments that may authorize a wider variety of housing types.

5. Impact on Municipal Service Delivery. Our small municipality provides local government services including refuse and recycling collection, bulk trash collection, public safety services through our 24-hour police department and communications center, street and right-of-way maintenance including snow removal, repaving and leaf collection, and we provide local community events and parks. We provide these services separately and independent of the County.

If fully implemented, the AHSI recommendations could drastically increase our population, leaving the Village government—not the County—with the burden of either increasing staffing and resources to support the current service delivery for a larger population or reducing services to ensure basic services are adequately delivered to all municipal residents.

It is not fair or reasonable for the County to implement wholesale changes to increase the population density in our community without considering the impact on municipal service delivery. Please describe how the County will help municipalities address these needs.

6. Preservation of Designated Historic Districts. Within local Historic Districts, specific properties are designated as outstanding or contributing resources that are not eligible for full demolition, and the Planning Board recommendations would not affect those protections. However, there are many homes within these historic districts that would be eligible for demolition and, as recommended under the AHSI could be converted into multi-family dwellings that would fundamentally change the character as well as the historic and environmental setting of the district itself. The County-adopted Master Plan for Historic Preservation: Chevy Chase Village Historic District-Expansion states that:

“Designation of historic sites and districts serves to highlight the values that are important in maintaining the individual character of the County and its communities...the accompanying challenge is to weave protection of this heritage into the County’s planning program so as to maximize community support for preservation and minimize infringement on private property rights.”

Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A limits the Historic Preservation Commission’s oversight to homes’ exterior features and the environmental setting (property) on which the house is located. The Historic Preservation Commission’s oversight would not limit internal conversions and, in many instances, also does not limit the ability to add onto even outstanding and contributing designated properties, so long as the additions are respectful of the historic character of the neighborhood.

In Chevy Chase Village, there are 128 properties within 500 feet of Connecticut Avenue, all of which are within the Village’s Historic District. Twenty-six of these properties would be eligible for medium-scale development as recommended in the AHSI, which could result in 19-unit structures. Such development would drastically alter the overall environmental setting and character of the Village’s Historic District, in direct conflict with the goals of the Master Plan. Conversion of these historically single-family homes to duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes and

“small” apartment buildings would significantly undermine the historic environment of the district and its reason for being included in the Master Plan.

All properties within local Historic Districts, whether contributing or not, should be exempt from any change in zoning for the sake of protecting the historic character of these important Master Plan districts and sites across the county.

7. Compliance with Homeowners’ Association (“HOA”) and Other Property Covenants. In considering homeowners’ associations’ property covenants that might restrict a property to a single-family dwelling, the AHSI recommendations indicate that the Planning Board “would like to explore options to relieve the restrictive covenants and wants to explore legal mechanisms to remove” them. This sets the groundwork for upending the legally established contractual agreements between property owners that existed at the time they purchased their home. This type of covenant, regulating setbacks and allowable types of buildings and uses, are referenced in the application for the Chevy Chase Historic District as one of the reasons the historic core has remained generally intact.

The suggestion that the Planning Board would seek to insert itself into these contractual agreements is alarming and sets a dangerous precedent for the County. Efforts to override HOAs and remove property covenants interfere with private property rights that are otherwise legal and enforceable and will lead to challenges by and between property owners and possibly with the County directly.

We urge the Council not to pursue any zoning or other actions to invalidate property covenants or the role of homeowners’ associations.

The procedural concerns we have described go to the heart of the Council’s commitment to gathering—and addressing—residents’ concerns on zoning and planning issues affecting their neighborhoods, a commitment made explicitly in the Thrive Montgomery 2050 General Plan and reiterated frequently by the Council and Planning Board during the Thrive Montgomery 2050 review and adoption process.

The substantive concerns we have raised are not minor, and they do not suggest a revision here and there to the Planning Board recommendations. Rather, these are serious questions as to whether the Planning Board has addressed the right problem—affordability—and whether the recommendations, if implemented, might not in fact raise housing costs and worsen the County’s shortage of affordable housing, at the same time disrupting communities and creating a lengthy list of infrastructure and livability issues.

Given the magnitude of our concerns, we oppose the Planning Board recommendations and ask the Council and the Planning Board to revisit their overall approach.

Sincerely,

Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers

996

Shannon Rovak - Chevy Chase, 20815

As it stands right now, I do not support the existing plan for attainable housing with zoning changes to our SFH neighborhood of Somerset. As a resident and a Town of Somerset Councilmember, I have seen first hand the implications of developers overbuilding to the maxes on existing lots in order to maximize their profits.

We simply do not have the stormwater infrastructure to manage these continued unprecedented storms. Every time a builder takes away permeable spaces and trees to create these giant homes, the water problem becomes worse.

We have spent a lot of time on the town council putting into place measures where homeowners and developers need to take care of their stormwater runoff when obtaining a building permit.

Montgomery County does not do enough in their building permitting for stormwater management so we have to do it at our municipality level.

What is the plan for stormwater management for these zoning changes?

While I understand the challenge and need to provide more affordable housing in these areas, I don't think this plan accomplishes that. Most of the missing middle that is trying to be solved for, will not be able to afford these multi-unit properties in Somerset.

To me, the people that will benefit from this plan will be the developers, who have no backend accountability to make these properties "attainable".

Sincerely,
Shannon Rovak


Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Town of Somerset Councilmember

997

Will Peppo - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to OPPOSE the Attainable Housing Strategies Plan.

I wonder how thoroughly anyone on the unelected Moco Planning Board has thought through their proposal to virtually end single-family zoning in our county. Are they aware that individuals coming from other places, looking to buy a home and settle their family somewhere, are not going to choose a county that allows almost any homeowner/developer to tear down their house and put up a quad at any time? Do you think anyone would invest their savings and their future retirement on a neighborhood whose population could double, triple or quadruple in just a few years as houses are torn down? How do you think MCPS, which already has embarrassingly low proficiency in math and other subjects, will handle the constant changes and growth in student body size?

This proposal will push residents OUT of Moco into neighboring counties and states and deter new people from settling here, not to mention destroying the quality of life for our current tax-paying residents who have invested in their homes under the assumption that their neighborhood would not become a cash cow for greedy developers.

Who do you represent? Developers or Montgomery County residents? I think we all know the answer to that and will vote accordingly at the next council election.

If I knew this was even a consideration I never would have moved to Montgomery County.

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Frances Preer - Silver Spring, 20904

I do not want the zoning laws changed. I have been a county resident for 30 years and have witnessed the steady decline of my neighborhood, increase in crime, decline in public schools, and a significant increase in traffic congestion...all in the name of equity. It's not fair to people who purchased homes in the county for a certain neighborhood character, and now the county is deciding to change it for others who don't even live here.

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Yonce Shelton - Chevy Chase, 20815

This is a rushed process that is not answering key questions from community members, does not provide data and sound rationales for plans, and will not address affordable housing needs. And, it will have many negative impacts on the environment and traffic flows that are not being given serious consideration. Further, it seems not to be aware of community covenants and the like. I support the letter of opposition submitted by Chevy Chase Village.

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Paul Leonard - Chevy Chase, 20815

I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing proposal in its current form. It greatly underestimates the impact on population, traffic, parking and the public school system. The proposal as currently written truly is a gift to developers who would not be required to provide adequate off-street parking for triplexes or quadplexes. The plan would not provide additional affordable housing. It would simply allow developers to build expensive townhomes, triplexes and quadplexes on current single family properties virtually anywhere inside the Beltway in Montgomery County. Any legislation to implement an attainable housing plan should dramatically limit the construction of triplexes and quadplexes. I strongly oppose the current plan. Voters should oppose any officeholder who supports it.

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Richard CASS - CHEVY CHASE, 20815

We have procedural and substantive concerns about the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. We live in Chevy Chase Village and read the letter submitted to you by the Village's Board of Managers this week regarding the Initiative. We fully support and endorse the Village Board's procedural and substantive concerns with the Initiative and the Village Board's requests of the County Council. Heather and Dick Cass

100 2	<p>Laveta Duke - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Please stop trying to ruin our neighborhoods. If people want to live in other homes that are not single family, there are options throughout the county. Please put your efforts to making our county safe for it's people.</p>
100 3	<p>Marina Taylor - Bethesda, 20816</p> <p>Dear Councilmembers,</p> <p>I am not in support of the attainable housing initiative which on face value appears to benefit developers and NO ONE else. They will purchase homes, demolish and rebuild and sell at obscene profits to themselves while not providing and more affordable housing or investing in the community. This will undercut the value of SFH in neighborhoods where many of us have spent a lifetime investing in their homes, for only the developers to profit.</p> <p>I urge you to reconsider this proposal and instead consider 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.</p>
100 4	<p>Todd Wincup - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>The AHSI is a very mis-guided, rushed, value-destroying, and neighborhood-killing policy. It is totally unfair and costly to current residents who live in these neighborhoods and who bought homes in these neighborhoods with a certain understanding of the rules and norms in these areas. Please stop. Thank you.</p>
100 5	<p>Bruce Klores - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>We are long standing residents of Kenwood in Chevy Chase. We have reviewed the proposal and oppose it. Multi unit housing will burden the already poor public transportation. It will also overcrowd our neighborhood and greatly detract from its long standing character. We have lived here for almost 30 years and it is a special place.</p>
100 6	<p>Susan Inzeo - Kensington, 20895</p> <p>The proposed initiative is far too broad in its potential reach and would upend long standing zoning rules without serious consideration of the impact on established communities. A more precise, focused approach to addressing the need for expanded attainable housing is needed to achieve success on that goal without threatening the character of so many neighborhoods and making Montgomery County a less desirable place to call home.</p>

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Ashley Wiltshire - Chevy Chase, 20815

I do not feel the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative is consistent with the character of Chevy Chase Village and I am opposed to its implementation. I have been a resident of Chevy chase Village for 16 years. I am also a Real Estate Developer but I do not feel this initiative is appropriate in this neighborhood. Generally, I am a huge proponent of density but in the appropriate settings and Chevy Chase Village is not the appropriate setting for multi unit dwellings and small scale apartment buildings. It is inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood.

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Irene Klores - Chevy chase, 20815

You have entire new development across the street at Westbard. This is the logical place for this type of housing! Not an old established neighborhood that has been around since the 1930's with million dollar homes. Unbelievable.

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Peter Flanagan - Chevy Chase, 20815

My wife and I attended the BCC listening session with an open mind, and we were absolutely unconvinced by the Planning Department's potential strategy on "attainable housing." The initiative is ill-considered, and fails to take account of the related impacts on traffic, roads and schools from the drive toward higher density. The plan's targeted corridors for more aggressive action will disproportionately impact residential neighborhoods that are relatively close to roads that are already overcrowded. In addition, based on the examples to date in the downtown Bethesda area, the units that are likely to result from this initiative will be high-priced and not attainable for the target population. The objective may be worthy of additional study, but the plan under consideration should not progress further. We are firmly opposed.

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Alan Simon - Kensington, 20895

While we need to look at ways to add more attainable housing across the county, the AHS recommendations have many shortcomings and blind spots. I've noted some of my concerns below:

1. Infrastructure in existing neighborhoods: Turning single-family homes (SFH) into multi-family will result in insufficient infrastructure (roads, parking water/sewage/stormwater, school capacity) in places like Kensington. This would be a burden and financial impact that localities would have to deal with. The infrastructure needs should be part of a holistic set of recommendations, but was not looked at in the report.
2. Fees for property owners that convert: Related to the infrastructure impacts noted above, could the be some type of a development fee/tax assessed to a property owner that converts a SFH into multi-family to defray the cost of infrastructure improvements that would be needed? Perhaps this could be part of the permitting process/fee or incorporated into the property tax rates. The fee or tax rate could be graduated based on going from SFH to duplex, triplex, quadplex, or more. Something would need to be done to address infrastructure needs/costs rather than just leaving it up to the locality to figure it out.

3. I'm concerned about the reduction in tree canopy as a result of conversions to multi-family properties.

4. The proposed parking reduction percentages are poorly conceived. If a property is converted from SFH to multi-family and the parking requirements were left unchanged, this would still reduce the parking ratios. Increasing the number of family units AND reducing the parking requirements would exacerbate parking problems exponentially.

5. Proximity to a MARC station should not cause Kensington (or Garrett Park) to be included in the same category as proximity to a Metro Station. Average ridership at Metro stops like Grosvenor/Strathmore and Forest Glen are in the several thousands of riders per day. Daily ridership at the Kensington and Garrett Park MARC stations are under 100 riders per day on average. All transit stops are not equal and they shouldn't be treated that way.

6. I'm puzzled why the AHS recommendations largely exclude Potomac. The explanation given at the Kensington listening session was that it was because Potomac didn't have the infrastructure to support additional density. However, this explanation is inconsistent with other statements made that infrastructure needs were not taken into account. If this is intended to be a county-wide program, it should apply equally and include all of Potomac. Otherwise, it appears that Potomac is being excluded based on the relative wealth and influence of the population that lives there.

Martha Teitelbaum - Kensington, 20895

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From what I've read, there is no guarantee that this plan which builds "attainable" housing will produce *affordable" housing. I guess the hope is that just building more housing will somehow trickle down and create affordable housing. Even if it does that, it would take quite a while.

In addition, there doesn't seem to be any realistic planning regarding parking (the new purchasers will want cars no matter what the planners say) or renovating infrastructure to support denser housing.

Finally, I've read in two separate places that the planners allow for apartment buildings up to 19 units and that's just a number they picked out of the air -- which is clearly a lie since the reason is if the building were 20 units or more, it would have to include affordable units. Since affordable housing is what we want, the fact that they've protected developers from actually having to do that is very telling.

I am in favor of loosening zoning and allowing multiple-unit buildings in order to increase affordable housing, but this plan seems like a boon to developers, may not actually increase affordable housing, and doesn't seem to have taken into account realities in our communities. It's ill conceived.

We need a better and more well-thought out plan that definitely increases affordable housing.

Rick Spencer - Kensington, 20895

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I have lived in Montgomery County all my life (for 64 years). I am against the attainable housing strategies initiative for the county for multiple reasons.

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Olga Vybornaya - Bethesda, 20816

The strategy fails to properly and systematically assess environmental impacts and effects on infrastructure: roads, schools, parking. It also doesn't take into account the most recent developments in the market: e.g. Westbard and White Flint multiunit proposals have been scaled down from the approved density by the developer companies, indicating dampened market demand.

Assumption of affordability of new housing to be built has not been sufficiently studied and justified, in fact, Urban Institute studies have shown the opposite. To put it plainly, how is this housing going to be attainable?

Given the land cost in the close to DC areas (e.g. Chevy Chase, Bethesda), any units built as duplexes, triplexes or quadruplexes will not be affordable for the missing middle, simply due to the premium cost of land and desirability of location.

The county is also not considering the type of higher income residents that have moved away, creating an undesirable trend - a detailed analysis can be done based on local tax records, and if it turns out that it's not teachers or firefighters typically moving to VA, then than needs to be taken into the account as well.

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Judith McGuire - Chevy Chase, 20815

The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative is poorly thought out and will result in environmental damage, excessive traffic on already over-capacity roads, and overcrowded schools. One thing that will NOT result is reasonably priced housing. Even though exclusionary zoning got us here, that doesn't mean changing the zoning laws will remedy the problem. Changing zoning laws alone, even with some gratuitous requirements for less expensive housing (and only under certain conditions) will not create economically diverse neighborhoods. We can see evidence already of what the developers want to do. First of all, they are the ones that brought us mansionization. Second, the conversions we've seen, like the modest house converted to 3 \$3.5 Million townhouses at the Bethesda Chevy Chase border, are just a taste of what is to come. In Chevy Chase Lake there is a net loss of reasonably priced housing as developers have torn down garden apartments and older townhouses where people on fixed incomes used to live, and are replacing them with upscale housing. Aside from the Lindley, the housing going up is multi-million dollar condos. Who is monitoring net gain in affordable/attainable/reasonably priced housing?

If the County cares about getting more modestly priced homes, it should cap home size and cap selling price of new homes; it should invest real money in building reasonably priced homes. It should not allow developers to cut down trees, reduce water retention, and build buildings that are inconsistent with what is already in the community. You talk about "missing middle" housing but the developers aren't going to build it.

This "initiative" is just a gift to real estate developers.

It is based on false assumptions. It is divisive, and inflammatory to label everyone who is against this AHSI as racists. Please listen to your constituents.

Kelly Waychoff - Bethesda, 20814

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My understanding is that this initiative is wildly unpopular with residents. How can the County Council push through something like this without the support of the electorate?

And even if the idea behind this initiative is seemingly founded on a kernel of good intentions, there doesn't seem to be any evidence that this will help anybody. All it will accomplish is making the residents of Montgomery County feel entirely powerless in their local government.

Kathy Strom - Chevy Chase, 20815

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Dear County Council,

We urge you to pause the consideration of the attainable housing strategy. This proposal does not address the many valid concerns raised at the County listening sessions, including the failure to first address affordable housing for working families earning under \$75,000 per year which is the greater need in our county, the failure to consider impacts to infrastructure and schools which should be identified and paid for by developers, and the lack of demonstrated need for this dramatic county wide zoning change which would disrupt neighborhoods and benefit real estate developers primarily. Please put residents first and hit pause on this ill conceived plan.

Kathy and David Strom

Jordan Muller - Chevy Chase, 20815

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have read the planning material on the AHSI and attended one of the listening sessions provided by the planning board. I have already read the analysis prepared by County Executive Ehrlich, as well as various summaries of concern prepared by individuals and municipalities. I agree with the concerns they raise.

I am against the AHSI as proposed.

Based on the material provided by the council and planning board, it is not demonstrated to me that the most current project housing needs of the county couldn't be met by the approved-but-not-yet-built housing project within the county.

It has also not been demonstrated to me why larger undeveloped parcels without existing homes (e.g. White Flint, 4-H center in Chevy Chase, to name two) would not present a more efficient, faster and less disruptive option for denser housing. Additionally, infrastructure

upgrade costs in large parcels could be borne by those development projects, rather than zero infrastructure cost contributions from developers of multi-plex units on former single family home lots.

More granular consideration of specific neighborhood infrastructure would be accomplished through the existing master plan process. That process exists for a reason, and there has been no justification provided to abandon it for a reckless broad-brush zoning change that lacks comprehensive plans and budgets for upgraded infrastructure.

My recommendation is to use the master planning process to guide future housing development and abandon the AHSI.

Gail Feldman - Chevy Chase, 20815

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RE: Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative Recommendation

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


We are longtime residents of Montgomery County and would like to express our strong objections to the proposed Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. We strongly urge the County Council to vote against proceeding with this proposal.

We object both to (a) the process by which this initiative is being pursued and (b) the substance of the initiative itself. (a) We object to the speed of the proposed process and the absence of any planned input from County residents whose homes and lives would be directly affected.

(b) We object to the substance of the proposed initiative in that the initiative itself would harm the well-being of current residents with no evidence whatsoever that this approach to supposedly increasing affordable housing in Montgomery County is the optimum way to attain that goal.

We urge you to reject the Montgomery Planning Board's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative recommendations.

Gail and Roger Feldman


Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Cyril Draffin - Bethesda, 20817-1304

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Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) should not be adopted at this time. There is substantial amount of missing information, and an array of questions and concerns expressed by community that have not been answered or addressed.

Several critical issues need to be considered before the Council seriously considers enacting the Planning Board ASHI plan:

1. Better define the need for new housing units, and why approved units (over 35 thousand) in the pipeline are not currently being built. The reasons need to be understood and explained to the citizens before the Council considers embarking on another plan (the AHSI) that seems to be supported by real estate developers, and opposed by many homeowners.
2. Consider fiscal effects of increasing housing density creating increased demands and increased infrastructure costs (including school overcrowding, increased traffic, parking congestion). The AHSI does not address the financial implications, and this is a serious oversight. A revised plan should be transparent in addressing the financial implications and ancillary costs of the AHSI— and not pretending they do not exist or the County is incapable of characterizing them in detail
3. Affordable housing. The Planning Board has stated that the Attainable Housing Initiative is not designed to achieve additional affordable housing. It seems the County has been so ineffective in increasing affordable housing, the County Council is trying to distract residents by focusing on increasing high-cost market-rate housing in AHSI plan, and not addressing affordable housing.

Instead of upzoning ~82% of the County’s single-family housing, and destroying the residential character of many neighborhoods, the County should consider other options:

1. Partnering with developers to facilitate the conversion of underutilized commercial buildings and lots, including appropriate office buildings, to multi-family housing.
2. Reviewing and revising the County’s residential building code and permitting processes to reduce construction timelines, thereby reducing production costs.
3. Imposing development fees to protect rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods.

The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative does not meet the needs of citizens in our county for affordable, sustainable equitable growth. The AHSI should be revised by the Planning Board to address the many flaws identified by Montgomery County citizens, and a more viable plan with adequate funding mechanisms for infrastructure and metrics for analysis should be presented to the citizens. Rushing the AHSI process without above analysis would indicate flawed County Council leadership.

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Judith Ratner - Chevy Chase, 20815

This initiative is unrealistic in lower Montgomery County, which has limited space for new housing developments. It is unfair to older established communities where there have always been ONLY single family homes. Public transit in many parts of the county is not accessible, which makes it even more unrealistic to put large housing units (even if same footprint) in areas that will make auto congestion even more of a problem.

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Christine Berg - Bethesda, 20817

The Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) should not be adopted at this time. It may be well-intentioned; however, the Council listening sessions on the initiative have highlighted multiple serious concerns of the community about the current plan. After the Council has reviewed the many comments, they should send the AHSI back to the Planning Board for substantial revision—because many key issues associated with the AHSI, including financial effects, have not been adequately addressed

Several critical issues for the Council and Planning Board to consider include the following.

1. Better define the need for new housing units. Approved units are not currently being built. The reasons for this should be studied before new housing development is pushed.

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/>)

2. Address job issues. 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. Lack of well-paying jobs is probably a more important factor in middle-income people leaving the county than housing issues, yet AHSI contains no recognition of this dynamic.

3. Address affordable housing including recent trends. The Planning Board's analysis shows a rise in lower income residents, and Council of Government's finding that 75% of new residents will need housing assistance, is not addressed as AHSI's focus is on "attainable" as opposed to "affordable" housing (<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Income-Shifts-Research-Brief-Final.pdf>).

4. Consider fiscal effects of increasing housing density creating increased demands and increased infrastructure costs. The AHSI does not address the financial implications, and this is a serious oversight. A revised plan should model these effects, be transparent in addressing the financial implications and ancillary costs of the AHSI, and provide recommendations for impact fees paid by developers and how the increased infrastructure costs would affect the tax burden on residents. Specifically, the following concerns MUST be addressed:

- a. More school overcrowding.
- b. Dangerous traffic overloads on narrow suburban streets with hundreds of additional cars, service vans and delivery trucks
- c. Marked decrease in pedestrian safety
- d. Neighborhood parking congestion particularly as the requirement for off-street parking is reduced. It is unrealistic to assume that new residents will forgo automobiles.
- e. More transportation gridlock on the down-county arteries.
- f. Extensive flooding and storm-water damage in the communities where the old infrastructure is already overwhelmed every time it rains and there is decreased open land as multi-unit properties replace single family homes.
- g. Widespread environmental damage: significant loss of the tree canopy, permeable surfaces, yards, gardens, and green space

5. Define metrics and time periods for review and adjustment. Any revised plan that the Council proposes must have these metrics and reviews to ensure accountability, and that stated objectives are being met, or the plan should be further revised. The current AHSI does not include metrics.

Instead of upzoning ~82% of the County's single-family housing, the County should consider the following options:

1. Partnering with developers to facilitate the conversion of underutilized commercial buildings, including office buildings with appropriate floorplates, to multi-family housing. While larger office buildings are typically difficult to convert to multi-family housing, those with smaller floorplates are not. NAIOP reports that office conversions since 2010 in projects of 50+ units have created 35,667 multi-family units across the U.S. <https://www.naiop.org/globalassets/research-and-publications/report/new-uses-for-office-buildings-life-science-medical-and-multifamily-conversions/researchreportnew-uses-for-office-buildings-report.pdf>
2. Working with developers to facilitate the construction of starter housing and affordable housing on existing redevelopment sites, such as White Flint. Tax exemptions or fee reductions are two potential incentives that could be employed. The County is already required to evaluate all Capital Improvement Program projects for the inclusion of affordable housing. Montgomery County Budget (via bridge loans, grants) can be dedicated to facilitate identified affordable housing projects.
3. Reviewing and revising the County's residential building code and permitting processes to reduce construction timelines, thereby reducing production costs. If needed, additional budget can be committed to this effort.
4. Reviewing and revising the County's residential building code and permitting process to comply with the new Maryland law permitting the construction of manufactured and modular housing in all single-family zones.
5. Reducing the maximum floor-area ratio (FAR) for single-family construction to discourage the production of McMansions. Similarly, set-back requirements could be increased and/or lot coverage ratios reduced. Middleburg, VA recently enacted such an ordinance. https://www.loudounnow.com/news/middleburg-adopts-far-standard-to-limit-house-sizes/article_2d6b28fc-8067-11ef-8d6b-b752e94d3a59.html
6. Imposing development fees to protect rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods and discourage tear-downs. Chicago has enacted a demolition surcharge to discourage tear-downs in selected gentrifying neighborhoods. The surcharge has been extended twice and has proved effective in preserving existing housing and more affordable rental units. <https://therealdeal.com/chicago/2024/09/19/chicagos-anti-gentrification-ordinance-penalizes-tear-downs/>

In conclusion, the AHSI does not meet the needs of current and future citizens in our county for affordable, sustainable equitable growth. The AHSI should be revised by the Planning Board to address the many flaws identified by Montgomery County citizens, and a viable plan with adequate funding mechanisms for infrastructure and metrics for analysis should be brought forward. This new process, with financial implications, must be shared with the County's residents with adequate time for analysis and input before it is adopted.

Emily Dupree - Bethesda, 20816

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We already have horrible traffic congestion, crowded schools and shopping centers in my area (with no open land to build on and provide more resources) so we do not need to add to the density to make it worse.

Mark Draycott - Chevy Chase, 20815

As a Chevy Chase resident, but more pertinently, as a Montgomery County resident, I view the rezoning proposed by the Attainable Housing Initiative as ill-advised as it applies to Chevy Chase, Maryland. To be clear, I am not suggesting that the rezoning would not benefit other areas of Montgomery County or would not achieve the ostensible and sensible goal of expanding residential housing stock county-wide, rather I am suggesting that properties abutting Connecticut Avenue, from Chevy Chase Circle north to Dunlop Street (two blocks above East-West Hwy, should not be included in the rezoning initiative – for the following three principal reasons.

First, local infrastructure will not support higher population density in Chevy Chase. County infrastructure, which is already over-burdened, includes schools, parking, road-width, and drainage. There are not practical ways to expand capacity for any of these items. For example, the high school is already over capacity and there is no practical location for another high school that would be reasonably accessible and convenient for Chevy Chase students and their families. Street parking is already over capacity. Traffic already gets jammed in the narrow streets intersecting Connecticut Ave, as well as on Connecticut Avenue itself. Street parking for residents is at capacity. The prevalence of nonpermeable surfaces also means flooding occurs in many yards (including mine) during heavy rain. Increasing the size and footprints of buildings and the non-permeable surfaces around the structures to accommodate higher density will make the situation worse.

Second, the proposed rezoning would not increase the level of attainable housing in Montgomery County. The nearby residential development at Chevy Chase Lake on Connecticut Ave is a case in point. That recently developed project features expensive luxury apartments. There is no reason to expect that future development with multi-unit buildings located a mile or less south of Chevy Chase Lake would offer residences that would be any less expensive than those at Chevy Chase Lake. In short, any new denser development in Chevy Chase would not be affordable – and thereby “attainable” to any one who can’t already afford – or attain - housing in Chevy Chase. Denser luxury condominiums or town homes will not provide attainable housing to people in Montgomery County whose incomes are not sufficient to obtain homes within the current housing stock.

Third, the development that would be allowed under the proposed rezoning would degrade the appearance of a historic section of Montgomery County. Chevy Chase is a special gateway from DC into Montgomery County. At present, Connecticut Avenue is lined with mature trees, and hundred-year-old homes. Travel over the mile and half stretch between Chevy Chase Circle and East-West Highway offers a pleasant scenic respite from the denser urban environment south of Chevy Chase Circle and north of East-West Hwy. Exclusion of that stretch of Connecticut Avenue from the proposed rezoning would have a de minimis impact on the overall rezoning proposal. Moreover, new building under the rezoning in other areas of the county has the potential to revitalize and benefit other sections of the County where residents may welcome, for example, mixed use development that enables more convenient access to stores and services. There is no desire, or need, for that type of development in Chevy Chase. To the contrary, increased density and development will degrade this very small and historic section of the County.

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Marilyn Greenberg - Garrett Park, 20896

My single family house sits on a narrow lot with houses on either side, like many of the other houses in the Garrett Park neighbourhood. I have lived in this community for the past thirty years. My street, like all of the streets in the neighbourhood, have two-way traffic with parked cars on each side of the road. In addition many streets do not have sidewalks, leaving pedestrians, adults and children walking, riding bikes or pushing baby strollers on the roads in Garrett Park, more vulnerable to passing cars and work vehicles.

We already have been coping with the increased traffic on Strathmore Avenue, one of the few East-West state roads running through our part of Montgomery County, during the morning and evening rush hours. In addition, the current approved plan and ongoing construction for the new large scale housing development near the Holy Cross School, which also borders Strathmore Avenue, and will be used for entering and leaving the development, is sure to increase the congestion on Strathmore Avenue and anticipated to become a serious problem. Thoughts should first be given for mitigating that problem, before allowing for additional crowding and vehicle traffic in Garrett Park proper, which the county seems to ignore with it's proposal to lift the current law to only allowing single family houses to be built in the county.

In addition, with every additional house built, especially with the multifamily housing allowance that is being proposed by the county officials, more cars will be added to the roads, increasing an already impossible traffic situation. Even a more potentially serious problem, with this proposal, is the removal of trees needed to build larger units, that have not only provided shade in the summer heat but play a significant role in reducing pollution and preserving the climate.

Also, the Grovesnor Metro development plan, near the Garrett Park community, has completed building an additional two large apartment complexes with underground parking for its many residents. Hopefully, residents will take advantage of the metro and avoid driving through Garrett Park on Strathmore Ave, getting to where they need/want to go.

If attracting new county residents who want to live in areas where it is easy to get to work, please explore improved bus service, rather than considering placing the responsibility on existing communities. The current county proposal would inevitably allow more developers to buy up houses and build multi family dwellings for a greater profit without concern for traffic congestion and pollution. Finally, why jeopardise the reputation Montgomery County has built and lived by for being the best place to raise a family and grow old in the DC metro area.

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Patricia Johnson - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Councilmembers: For the past two months there have been "listening sessions" hosted by Council President Friedson and Planning Director Sartori. I have attended two of them. One in Silver Spring and one at the Bethesda Chevy Chase Highschool. I have also participated in zoom calls with both Councilmember Friedson and County Executive Elrich. It is clear that the Attainable Housing Policy has grown out of Thrive 2050 and the general theme that has become a nationwide fad for "more housing". It is not for what is really needed: affordable housing. That is the fatal flaw in this plan which looks and acts like the latest unrealistic fad to create housing that people can

afford. There is nothing affordable about this housing plan. It is a developers dream. I am beginning to think the our elected officials are in the pockets of developers and the only way this issue will be resolved will be at the voting booth. The Attainable Housing Initiative is a sham. Here are the facts:

1. The Planning Department's own pipeline records state that as of September 2024 there are 35,240 unbuilt units. The Residential Capacity Analysis in 2020 found that the county had zoned capacity for 65,000 units. The recent finding that the county did not accurately report the number of housing units in issued permits 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 households, the income analysis is flawed.
 2. The Planning Department's analysis showed a rise in lower income residents, and COG's finding that 75% of new residents will need housing assistance. This analysis does not make sense with AHSI's focus on "attainable" as opposed to "affordable" housing. This illustrates a misguided need for city planners to follow a housing fad that is not warranted when looking at the economic facts.
 3. AHSI fails to consider the fact of the real need for jobs for young professionals, both in starting positions and opportunities to advance. Housing doesn't produce jobs.
 4. White Flint, with large acreage and near Metro, has failed to attract housing development because there are not enough jobs in the area.
 5. We have been told that there has been a flight of over 21000 middle-income people leaving the area within the last year. The factor here is the lack of jobs and there is opportunity elsewhere. No one from the Planning Staff has mentioned that fact which is a key point here.
 6. COG has downgraded the population growth of the county several times but the Planning Staff turns a blind eye to that and the jobs crises and uses its' own false higher projections to press their case for "AHSI". This is beginning to sound like a personal project for key Planners as if to prove that they have expertise and acumen in a specific area rather than really thoughtfully solve a problem. This AHSI sounds like a self-serving plan to those with these government jobs. When the biggest employer in the county is the county, you have a serious problem. We need an infusion of jobs with diverse opportunity.
 7. Transportation is a huge problem. We do not have a robust, reliable, consistent affordable mass transit system. This plan is reliant on a much more developed transit system.
 8. Expectations that people will give up cars is not supported by research or age groups. The traffic monitoring report from Planning relies on data from 2022 when commuting was still reduced due to the pandemic. An update is needed. That report also showed a decline in bicycle travel. The pandemic has subsided due to widespread immunization. People are returning to the office and more and more cars are back on the road.
 9. AHSI is unfair to those current residents in single family homes. Why is the county rezoning 82%? What about the other 18%. The rationale is biased. What about Potomac where there is plenty of land to build multiplexes and apartment buildings? Why does the growth corridor of River Road stop at the Beltway? Has that elimination of up-zoning in that specific area have some correlation as to where certain councilmembers reside? Is there a great conflict of interest here that should be examined?
 10. Why should older communities be the ones burdened with additional housing that the market is not providing. There is a bias at play here.
 11. The proposed waivers and incentives to developers will increase the tax burden on existing residents.
 12. Who will pay for the needed infrastructure to support the extra density?
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13. How will AHSI affect existing Master Plans? Will the public trust be undermined by developers' will and arms-length landlords.
14. We have been told that this need for housing is large scale and must be dealt with immediately. The when questioned about how the infrastructure will be able to handle such an influx we are told that the changes will only be incremental or minimal. This doesn't ring true or make sense. Why are the Planners and the County Council doing this of the changes will only be minimal?
15. These plans will undermine and remove already established naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH). The first homes to go will be the smaller homes on smaller lots nearer to rapid transit. It will displace minorities that already live there. It will gentrify areas that are already affordable and occupied. It is a racist policy.
16. Battery Lane in Bethesda is such an example. All those housing units are being torn down to build high rises that amount to a net loss of 60 affordable units.
17. Planning's claim that development will provide funding for needed infrastructure is totally untrue especially as Planning proposes reductions and waivers in taxes and fees to the same developers. The added density to single family communities does not analyze with any specifics what will happen to schools (already over crowded), tree canopy, storm water (already flooding with environmental change), electric grid (already stretched), garbage collection (already spotty at best), parking (already untenable).
18. Where is the public input in this process if building is "by right" and by "pattern books"? It seems as though the democratic process is absent. We are being told how to live and what we deserve.

The County Council needs to carefully investigate the accuracy of all of the projections made by the Planning Staff. At these listening sessions no questions from the public were actually answered. We had to hear the "party line". The Planning Staff did a terrible job and their lack of acumen was on display. The numbers are not accurate and the truths are not truths. There were misleading "facts" stated as truth. Developers were the winners here. We, the voting public deserve better. The County Council should not be in lock step with a shoddy, unprofessional effort proposed by the Planning Board and Planning Staff. There are good solutions out there for really affordable housing. There should be target areas and citizen advisory committees should be formed to bring ideas and solutions. Who is more familiar with the areas under scrutiny than the actual residents that live there? We, voting citizens of Montgomery County, deserve better from our government employees and elected officials . Sincerely, Patricia Depuy Johnson ([REDACTED] Chevy Chase, Maryland. Member of KCA and CCCFH)

Krishna K - Kensington, 20895

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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.

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David Johnson - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Councilmembers—

Marc Elrich stated that there were 10000 homes/projects already permitted. Developers are not building because the job market is not growing in this county—and the population is decreasing. They aren't building high rises (where the county makes money) because "the rents aren't high enough". This is a deeper problem than a housing market where the houses end in a bidding war. To rezone 82% of the county and destroy single family zoning is a misguided and destructive—aside from being a profoundly unpopular— solution (and the voting public will take note). We have to look at master plans and think about affordable housing, not market priced housing. Lisa Govoni said, when asked about infrastructure impact, that "impact would be minimal" because "many of these types of housing will not be built". Then why is this strategy a plan that makes sense? The first and easiest thing developers will do is knock down the affordable housing to build what is market price. They are doing this in Bethesda right now. Battery Lane is a good example of this.

I agree with many of the concerns raised by attendees of the "listening sessions" about infrastructure, parking, one-size-fits-all zoning, deficient notification and public input, environment, etc. I believe the Planning Department and the Planning Board have lost credibility with their failure to provide the public adequate data to support AHSI—and that the evidence available from their own studies, in fact, undermines the proposal, however their good intentions might be. I ask you to 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.
- 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>).

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- 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.
- 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.
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- 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.

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.
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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.


There is a perceived conflict of interest.

- The list of political donors to the campaign chests of members of the Council include developers, who would be the primary beneficiaries from passage of the AHSI.
- The County desperately needs affordable housing—few if any teachers, firefighters or service workers would be able to afford “market rate housing” which the AHSI is to produce. The AHSI seems to primarily benefit developers—for example, the “small apartment buildings” are to provide only 19 units. Is this so developers are saved from building 20 or more units, which would trigger less profitable (for the developer) affordable units to be required? That is a major “tell.”
- Why is only 82% of the County targeted for further increased density (in areas that have mature, well established communities, some with limited public transportation, narrow streets and many without sidewalks), and others (for instance beyond the Beltway in the River Road Growth Corridor), where density is less and with more room for the proposed multiplexes are being left alone? Who is being protected? Is this where the Council's political donors live, or the Council's families or friends? Doesn't pass the smell test.

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.

Sincerely,

David C. Johnson, MD, FAAOS


Chevy Chase, MD 20815

[REDACTED]
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Thomas Holohan - ROCKVILLE, 20853

I believe there has been little "planning" by the Planning Board in developing this initiative. Wholesale rezoning will not increase affordable housing; it will instead provide a windfall for developers. Does any sentient person believe that newly built multifamily dwellings in Chevy Chase, Potomac, Bethesda, or much of Rockville will be priced to be affordable to lower middle income families? Moreover, in most of the older communities in Montgomery County, parking is at a premium; increasing the population density will aggravate the problem. Difficulties due to water and power supply, runoff, and sewage are too obvious to comment here. Single family homeowners in much of the County are unlikely to tolerate multifamily urbanization; they will be incentivized to relocate, damaging the already precarious tax base. Finally, you should learn from Arlington County, which has seen its similar plan struck down by the Circuit Court, in large part due to inadequate consideration of the predictably negative effects. One must wonder if the true intent was simply to provide profit for the developers, who have rarely, if ever, prioritized the best interests of low income families.

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Cindy Anderson - Chevy Chase, 20815-3401

As a long-time resident of Montgomery County (42 years), I have serious concerns about the Attainable Housing Strategy Initiative proposed by the County's Planning Board regarding both the process and the consequences.

As our elected representatives, every member of the County Council is responsible to the citizens of the County more than any obligation to developers or other commercial entities.

I strongly object to the proposal as outlined at the Listening Sessions by the Planning Department staff.

First, in terms of process:
For a matter as consequential as the rezoning of property held by private citizens, in many cases for many years, the process should be at least as well-defined as that developed for Sector Plan revision, which was outlined in a recent presentation by Planning Board staff about updating the Friendship Heights Sector Plan.
Instead, there's been a shortened timeline with a procedure that cannot be considered transparent.
Many aspects of what should be routine planning have not been included in this process, e.g., parking and transportation needs, effects on local schools, and the added burden on community services.

This problem can be corrected by a new beginning, involving all the stakeholders early in the process in the same fashion as that adopted for Sector Plan consideration.

Second, regarding consequences:

Long-established neighborhoods will be unnecessarily diminished, losing the welcoming environment - both physical and otherwise - if multi-unit housing is allowed on lots now zoned for single-family use. This will, of course, reduce property values, possibly very quickly as developers move in as they did in Friendship Heights after the 1998 Sector Plan was adopted.

As the County Executive has forcefully explained, there are plenty of properties already permitted in other areas of the County that could serve the important goal of providing affordable - not "attainable" - housing.

Finally, I understand that the area now covered by the Saks parking lot is zoned for single-family use (R-60). That large area could be used for several different types of affordable multi-family dwellings, likely accommodating many workers and others who require access to public transportation. Of course, parking for these residents should also be part of the planning here.

I appreciate your taking these and many other comments into consideration as you make decisions that will affect the future of Montgomery County residents for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Cindy Anderson

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Ann Humphrey - Bethesda, 20816

I am strongly opposed to the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative as it is currently proposed. We need impact studies about roads, infrastructure, and schools. If multi-family units are to be built in existing neighborhoods, there should be stringent rules about making sure they look appropriate for the existing neighborhoods so that the character of the neighborhood is not destroyed. Also, as this is market-based housing, it does nothing to address the issue of affordable housing. This initiative needs much more study, and I strongly urge the council to get that work done before moving forward.

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Margaret Fogarty - Chevy Chase, 20815

Kill this bill or you will lose my vote

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Maxi Leachman - Chevy Chase, 20815

Kill this bill or lose my vote. It's reckless to build without proper infrastructure and approvals in place.

Rohit Khanna - Chevy Chase, 20815

I oppose the Planning Board's recommendation to re-zone more than 80% of single-family zoned areas of Montgomery County because it is ill-conceived.

Having spent 30 years at the United Nations and the World Bank advising developing countries on their national strategies and sector plans, I'm embarrassed that my own county is considering a policy that has no empirical basis, and whose potential costs and impacts have not been adequately assessed.

It is unfortunate that the Planning Department sees itself as a single-issue advocacy group for housing, and has somehow been captured by the vested interests of developers. I agree with the County Executive that the Planning Department is misleading the public, its recommended changes are unnecessary, and the consequences could reduce the supply of affordable housing. And it is a travesty that policy changes so fundamental to the lives and assets of so many county residents should be the subject of just six listening sessions spread over four weeks and averaging about two hours each.

It is now incumbent on the Council to demonstrate the principles of good government, by conducting its due diligence and examining the trade-offs rigorously and transparently. After all, the provision of housing is not the only responsibility of the county government. It must find the right balance between housing growth, adequacy of public services and facilities, and the fiscal health of the county. And it must provide meaningful opportunities for public participation, so that solutions are scaled to the local context of each community.

I have three areas of concern.

First, the Planning Department's recommendations should be data-driven, but seem to be at odds with the data.

- Based on COG 9.2 estimates, the county needed to add another 10,000 homes (in addition to the 31,000 projected build out) between 2020 and 2030
- This estimate for 2030 was subsequently reduced by COG 10.0 by 6,000 households -- i.e., the county needed $31,000 + 4,000 = 35,000$ new homes by 2030
- According to SDAT data, the county had built 12,847 new units between 2020 and 2023 -- i.e., an average of 3,212 houses per year -- leaving a balance of 22,153 units required by 2030.
- At the current rate of building ($3,212 \times 7 \text{ years} = 22,484$), the county would meet its target by 2030
- The current pipeline of 30,000+ housing units in the county's development "pipeline" (approved but not built) could meet the target, even allowing for 25% of pipeline units not materializing.

According to the County's Residential Development Capacity Analysis, zoned capacity in the county is sufficient to meet the forecasted number of households and its housing targets. That said, according to the County's Housing Needs Assessment, the gap in housing units has

worsened for households earning up to 65% of the Area Median Income (AMI) – and the cost burden has worsened near transit -- while there is an increased surplus at income bands of 80% of AMI and above.

This suggests the need for an entirely different policy response, focused more on affordability and unblocking the existing pipeline of development.

Second, the Planning Department did not adequately assess the possible economic and social equity impacts of upzoning. The initial experience of Minneapolis suggests that the adverse impacts of a poorly crafted policy can be very real:

- Upzoning was a “free for all for developers”
- Private homebuyers could not compete in bidding against outside financed developers
- Valuations skyrocketed ...went up 80% in poorer areas resulting in gentrification
- Taxes increased 20%+ in poorer areas, fixed-income residents forced to sell, poorer areas impacted the most
- Rental companies were aggressive bidders to build rental multiplexes
- 20% of houses were sold to investment companies
- Corporate owners were out-of-state absentee landlords, interested primarily in cash flow, not neighborhoods
- A single-family home would be torn down and replaced with a multiplex; each unit smaller but would rent for the same amount as the small home
- Only 57% of the Plan 2040 developments met minimum state environmental standards for green space
- Infrastructure did not have infinite capacity- it was already strained – required significant, expensive upgrading

There are several fundamental flaws in the economics of AHSI.

Converting a percentage of single family detached houses on sale each year to multifamily dwellings means that the supply of single family detached homes in the county will decline. Unless demand for such homes declines proportionately, it would lead to higher prices for such homes. There is no reason to believe that demand would decline proportionately, so supplying “attainable” multi-family housing would increase prices in another segment of the housing market.

This situation will be made worse by the fact that many individual homebuyers will not be able to compete with developers and investors, the only market player with sufficiently deep pockets to build multifamily dwellings.

The only way in which this reduction in supply could be offset is to build more single family detached homes even further from transit and activity centers, undermining the environmental sustainability arguments of AHSI.

Furthermore, since capital, labor and material are finite, they will flow to the more profitable market-rate “attainable” housing segment at the expense of below-market rate affordable housing, thereby worsening the supply of affordable housing — which is precisely where the greatest shortage lies.

Third, taxpayers deserve a real fiscal impact analysis. Replacing 1% of single-family homes annually with quadplexes could increase an area's population by about 20% in five years. The Planning Department claims, with no data, that the impacts on infrastructure and schools are likely to be minimal, and these will be addressed through existing impact tax payments.

There is no economic basis to assume that only a small number of multiplexes would be built. In fact, developers' profit motive would drive them to bid for nearly every older home on the market and convert them to multiplexes.

Furthermore, Impact Taxes paid by developers rarely cover the additional costs of infrastructure and schools. Not surprisingly, the county is already constrained in fully funding schools and transportation improvements. It is also irresponsible not to have a climate risk assessment and cost-estimates of needed infrastructure upgrades, given the likelihood of more extreme weather events.

As noted by Glenn Orlin in his testimony to the Council on the 2024-2028 Growth & Infrastructure Policy and Bill 16-24, Impact Taxes – Revisions, which is also relevant to AHSI:

“Over the past two decades there has been a steady diminution of this concept [of adequate public facilities]. The standards for adequacy have been significantly loosened, or in some cases even eliminated, often allowing developments to buy their way out of meeting the standards. The Growth and Infrastructure Policy is also rife with exemptions ... with what is the misguided hope that by eliminating the adequacy requirements, desirable growth will be attracted. The currently proposed G&I Policy would expand the number of exemptions and discounts.

Within the transportation sphere, the desire to put even modest limits on traffic congestion is mostly gone Within the public schools sphere, since 2020 there are no longer any limits on overcrowding. Development is allowed to proceed by paying an impact tax surcharge—Utilization Payments—which together are far from enough to fund a new school or addition that would provide adequate capacity.”

I believe that the discussion on rezoning has put the cart before the horse. Re-zoning should follow from the master plan process. However, AHSI undoes most of the master plans around the county, and yet it is the master plan process that affords an opportunity for residents to weigh in and for careful review of impacts on neighborhoods and infrastructure.

In the spirit of finding a constructive way forward, I would suggest the following course of action by the Council:

1. Request the Planning Department to prepare a report on the actual projected gap in supply of “middle housing” – i.e., how many such units (including townhomes and small apartment blocks) are being built through existing master plans relative to COG's 2030 projections of job growth at the relevant income levels – and an assessment of the barriers to supply in the current pipeline.
 2. The Council should prioritize policies to increase the supply of townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes and small apartment blocks in redevelopments and greenfield sites, through the master planning process. A particular area of attention should be White Flint, given its size, central location and access to Metro.
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3. The Council could launch a two-year pilot program of duplexes in existing neighborhoods to test the hypotheses of the AHSI. It should have measurable performance indicators for the Council to assess success. The monitoring program should include assessments of economic, environmental, and social impacts.
4. This pilot program should have a county-wide cap, as well as caps at the block and neighborhood levels, publicly consulted and through area-specific master plans, considering existing infrastructure and density constraints.
5. The scope of up-zoning should be restricted to half a mile from Metro, which is the true walkable distance from mass transit.
6. The Pattern Book, which is central to AHSI, should be made available for public consultation in draft before the pilot program is launched.
7. The council should examine options – through the master planning process -- for limiting the size of new single-family homes, for example through a maximum floor-area ratio, height limits, setback increases, and lot coverage restrictions. Middleburg VA recently enacted such rules.
8. The council should adopt a Growth and Infrastructure Policy and Impact Taxes that strengthen the concept of adequate public facilities in development.

In summary, the County Council should adopt an approach that is consistent with good government – where public policy is driven by data; where environmental, social, economic and fiscal impacts are transparently assessed; and, where community engagement allows policy to fit the local context.

Thank you.

Rohit Khanna
Chevy Chase, MD
October 17, 2024

Porter Wheeler - CHEVY CHASE, 20815-4231

103
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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
Montgomery County Council
c/o Council President Andrew Friedson

The AHSI is not a coherent plan. It does not address the most pressing issue for the County, which is "affordable housing." MOCO's own planning data appear to show over 30,000 approved, hence "attainable," but not yet developed units of currently allowed types.

Further, a coherent plan would recognize infrastructure needs such as water and sewer, roads, schools, and parking.

Looking up and down my street (Oxford) in Chevy Chase Village, I see plenty of single-family homes and virtually no vacant lots. Some or most of these existing homes would be disrupted by a major zoning change such as proposed by the ASHI. Yet, purchase and destruction of

existing homes is not going to lead to affordable replacements. Instead new market-priced homes would invariable be the result and might well erode property values for the existing residents because of infrastructure needs.

Also I note that the Historic District and Historic Property designations would lose their character and would not be consistent with wholesale rezoning as envisioned by the AHSI.

In the Village, the community-based planning process would be undermined, and many Village-based services would be overwhelmed by the variation in housing types. Please do not adopt or approve this AHSI. Thank you.

103
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Debra Sheldon - Bethesda, 20816

I am strongly opposed to changing zoning for the alleged purpose of attainable housing. Rather, this is a developer land grab. I understand that the county council and other elected officials are heavily dependent on developer contributions; everyone in the county knows this. But as elected officials, please do what's right for citizens who elected you, not for special interests. You all didn't listen to ALL of the community associations' opposition to Little Falls Parkway obliteration; every community association opposed that. Please listen now.

103
6

Eliot Hubbell - Chevy Chase, 20815

End this bill or you will lose my vote and your successors will never have a chance. Your lack of APF review is irresponsible and RECKLESS. When there is more supply than demand on the market you lose. You lose revenue, income, job growth, and economic stability. No one wants to live next to or across vacant buildings or units. This will cost you your political career in Montgomery County.

103
7

Barbara Rose - Chevy Chase, 20815

I have reviewed the information available, attended forums at the Lawton Center and BCC High School and read up on similar "attainable housing" efforts. The County Council's "strategy" is ill conceived, incomplete and will result in no additional attainable housing. The beneficiaries of implementing this plan will be the developers. Case in point—the project at the corner of 45th Ave and Walsh St. A small house on a corner lot was bought (\$1M) and torn down. Three town houses were build taking up the entire lot—no yard, no trees--each with an estimated value of \$3.6M. The only people who will be attaining these houses are the very rich. This can be expected throughout the communities targeted by this plan. And for those who choose to stay in their homes, they will face higher taxes, increased traffic, loss of tree canopy, flooding from runoff, overcrowded schools ...the list goes on. But the Council members already know this. As our representatives it is difficult to understand how you are representing the thousands of homeowners who will be affected. But then, the developers will be your new friends and funders as you run for reelection or election to higher offices. This strategy will be the ruination of lower Montgomery County. Shame on those who have jump-started this without doing their homework, listening to their constituents, undertaking the research to understand the full consequences of this action and who are rushing to jam this down our throats. Shame on you.

103 8	<p>Kaitlin Brancaccio - Martin's Additions, 20815</p> <p>Kill this bill</p>
103 9	<p>Burt Braverman - Chevy, 20815</p> <p>We reside in Chevy Chase Village, Md (CCV). We support the comments submitted by CCV regarding the Planning Board's proposals for the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative, and incorporate them by reference. In brief: CCV is an historic village to which we moved 32 years ago. We, like others, have invested in our historic homes to preserve the character of those homes and our neighborhood, hopefully for decades to come. Development too often has destroyed the character and charm that distinguishes neighborhoods such as ours. It is in the interest not only of the residents of CCV, but of Montgomery County and the State, to preserve historic neighborhoods such as ours for the benefit of generations to come.</p> <p>Further, with the development already occurring north of CCV at Chevy Chase Lake, west of CCV at Friendship Heights, and farther north in Kensington and beyond, our community is already struggling with the burdens of increased traffic and inadequate infrastructure. Other development already underway, e.g., at the old 4H site, and planned, e.g., the additional development slated for the blocks just south of CC Circle, will only worsen the congestion surrounding and running through our village. Connecticut Avenue, which as a practical matter cannot be widened, simply cannot handle ever-increasing traffic, which the AHSI proposal would further exacerbate. We ask that you consider these concerns and that you ensure that they are addressed in any legislation that is forthcoming on the AHSI.</p> <p>Burt Braverman and Kathleen Meredith.</p>
104 0	<p>Joan Barron - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Members of the Montgomery County Council,</p> <p>We are writing to state our opposition to the Planning Board's current recommendation for Attainable Housing. We represent the community of Chevy Chase West, a neighborhood of 453 single-family homes with an eastern edge that runs along Wisconsin Avenue, between Bradley Boulevard and Friendship Heights. The neighborhood was established in the early 1900's. We have narrow streets and an expansive tree canopy. Simply put, it is not an appropriate setting for multi-plex development on its existing single-family lots. The AHSI's proposed zoning changes will impact our neighborhood significantly as we fall well within the Priority Housing zone. In addition, our location off of Wisconsin Avenue/355 leaves us sitting right in the middle of the effects of the removal of the density cap in the Bethesda Downtown Plan, and the additional residential units coming to Friendship Heights. The increased density in our corridor will make Wisconsin Avenue , our only exit point out of Chevy Chase West, so overly burdened with traffic that it will be extremely difficult to enter and exit our neighborhood, especially during rush hour. As an unincorporated community, we will be especially attractive to developers if</p>

municipalities and homeowners associations are exempted from meeting any additional housing requirements or are protected against specific zoning changes.

CCWNA is alarmed about numerous issues around this housing Initiative. While we will not address the questionable effectiveness of this proposal, and whether or not it will ultimately even address the real housing crisis that mainly centers on affordability, the proposal as it currently stands is incomplete and fails to address these valid additional concerns:

AHSI disregards and dismisses the impact of parking and safety. To allow multifamily units by right without requiring adequate parking provided is irresponsible, inconsiderate of existing residents, and harmful to existing communities. Our neighborhood is already hampered by an abundant use of street parking. To add two to three households to one single-family lot, and inevitably a minimum of three additional cars with it, is unfair and dismissive of the importance of safe, reasonably used residential streets. The majority of our street are without sidewalks. People walk to downtown Bethesda, Norwood Park, Somerset Elementary school and Friendship Heights in the street. Furthermore, the expectation that people will give up cars is faulty and not supported in research.

The one-size-fits-all "by right" approach with an undeveloped Pattern Book is ill-advised. Each qualifying neighborhood has unique characteristics that indicate how appropriate the building of plexes may or may not be. There is a real need for a Master Plan approach. The blanket policy of a "BY RIGHT" fails to take into account the huge variations within R60 neighborhoods. There needs to be a tailored plan for approval of development.

AHSI is unfair to individuals as it offers incentives for home sellers to sell to builders/developers over private citizens. Undoubtedly there will be a profit incentive for individual owners to sell to developers. This is unfair to independent, private buyers/your constituents. Baked into this proposal is a huge disadvantage to private individuals and families to be able to competitively bid on a property and secure a deposit against a developer or private equity firm. AHSI handicaps individual home buyers. The playing field is not level and favoring developers over private citizens is wrong for the county. In addition, the proposed developer incentives and waivers will increase the tax burden on existing residents to pay for the infrastructure necessary to increase capacity for additional residents.

Burdens to existing infrastructure are not adequately addressed. The Planning Department has not released any impact studies on the effect of the proposed changes on transportation, school capacity, and the utility structure (gas, water, sewage especially.) 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. Also, AHSI provides no method of recourse for detrimental effects of multiplex housing. AHSI does not adequately address how neighbors can raise concerns about development that is problematic to infrastructure, (drainage issues, parking, etc.)

We would guess you agree that some of the most compelling testimony on this subject has come from constituents who are immigrants, single parents, and first-time home buyers, who worked SO hard for SO long to invest in a single-family home and buy in a Montgomery

County R60 neighborhood, and now you want to give builders the unconditional right to build a mulit-plex next door with all the cars, density, noise and garbage that come with it.
The council has heard tremendous opposition to this plan as it currently stands and with good reason. We implore you to take the time to consider alternatives, modify the approach to housing to better take into account the unique characteristics of the many neighborhoods in the county, and do your job to carefully consider where real impact can be made to address the shortage of affordable housing.

Sincerely,

Shelley Yeutter &
Joan Barron

Co-presidents Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association

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1

Nancy Griscom - Chevy chade, 20815

I strongly support the Chevy Chase Village Board's opposition to greater development of our village.

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2

Christina Brancaccio - Chevy Chase, 20816

Kill this bill or you will lose my vote!!!! There is a lack of APF review and it's extremely irresponsible and reckless to build without the proper infrastructure in place

104
3

Jill Himmer - Chevy Chase, 20815

DO NOT APPROVE the AHSA! It provides for more market-rate housing than the County is projected to need, does not solve the County's real housing problems, will change the character of single-family-home neighborhoods unnecessarily, and has not been adequately studied (environmental, infrastructure, traffic, etc.). This measure would benefit developers at the expense of current residents. I will vote to unseat any Council member who approves the AHSI or legislation flowing from it! Do any Council members have ties to developers?

104
4

Diana Simon - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear County Council:

PLEASE STOP ASHI. I support affordable housing, but easing zoning restrictions is the wrong tool to get there. ASHI creates a developer free-for-all, slashing arbitrary distance-based lines through neighborhoods with no consideration for logic, local needs, or the impact on those neighborhoods, except for the wealthiest neighborhoods, which are conveniently exempted. Developer's own studies have shown that additional units created would neither be affordable nor attainable in targeted neighborhoods like Chevy Chase. PLEASE STOP ASHI.

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Noreen Phelan - Chevy Chase, 20815

I strongly oppose this initiative. What is being proposed will not achieve the stated objective and will, instead, only benefit developers.

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6

Pete Levitas - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Council Members -- please reconsider your support for the AHSI. It is wildly unpopular with significant majorities of the community you represent, is not necessary to attain your stated goals, is poorly designed, and would impose heavy costs on current residents. As currently constructed, it appears designed primarily to help developers at the expense of residents. It is arbitrary and capricious and seems liable to legal attack. Housing is an important issue and would best be resolved with a more sensible plan that could gain broad support among residents. This is not that plan.

I'm sure that you have heard from many of our fellow residents about their concerns regarding this plan. There are thousands of permits already granted for housing near Metro locations, which has gone unbuilt because of mortgage rates and other economic factors. We don't need to provide a sweetheart deal to developers to incent them to build -- they will build when the demand is there.

And it is not going to create housing stock that is materially more affordable. Instead of houses for \$1.5 or \$2 million, there will be a whole bunch of townhouses and smaller houses for \$1.2 or \$1.5 million. I'm not suggesting that less expensive housing is bad, but if you are worried about the "missing middle" I don't think this is going to achieve your goal.

Further, it is completely senseless to fundamentally change the experience of living in neighborhoods such as mine, CCW, for housing that could just as easily be built elsewhere. And the plan does not take account of any of those changes. It would allow developers to build housing without increasing the ability of the neighborhood to tolerate it. Water, sewer, fire, schools, parking -- none of that is accounted for properly. Have you driven down one of the streets in our neighborhood? These are not palatial estates with massive driveways and broad streets. These are old neighborhoods, with relatively narrow streets, often with small or no driveways. These plans would allow literally four times as much housing in the neighborhood but do nothing to accommodate the massive influx of people and cars that the AHSI would allow.

I've heard the response that any change would be minor and take a long time. That is nonsense. If you allow developers to build a quadplex, that is what they will build. If you allow them to build a 19-unit building, that is what they will build. I've heard the response that we don't need to make parking available because these neighborhoods are near the Metro and most people won't have cars. Again, nonsense. How many adults do you know who do not have cars? Do you all have a car? I'm guessing you do, and I'm guessing that you often use your car and skip Metro. People with kids will move in to these buildings to have access to the schools, and people with kids have cars. Older people who cannot get around as well have cars. And we are all aware of the ongoing decline of Metro and the decrease in ridership. The number of cars and traffic will quickly multiply. Ignoring the impact on these neighborhoods is a dereliction of duty. Jammed streets, too many people, not enough services. How would an ambulance get down these streets if they had four times as many residents? It would be impossible. Under this plan these neighborhoods will quickly become very different, and very difficult to navigate.

Some of this seems to be driven by what I can only describe as disdain for people who live in this type of neighborhood -- single-family housing, mostly families and retired people. But why? I have 2 young children. I want to live in a quiet neighborhood where it's easy to get around and get them to school and get to sleep at night. I used to live in DC, and when I was younger I loved it. I didn't care about parking

or having a yard or quiet at night. But not every neighborhood should be the same. There are people who want to live in a place that is more crowded and more active and more noisy, and people who don't. Often those are the same people, just at different stages of their lives. Brookland is a great place; so is Takoma Park; so is CCW; so is Rockville. I don't understand why you feel the need to try to forcibly convert neighborhoods like CCW into something they are not, and something they are not physically designed to be -- especially when it just isn't necessary to meet your stated goal.

I have not met one person who lives here who thinks this is a good idea. I have not met one person who thinks this plan is workable. I am wondering if you would be willing to impose similar changes in the neighborhood you live in? I'm guessing not.

Please reconsider this plan. The Council could gain significant support for a plan that was well thought-out and takes into account the legitimate concerns of current residents, instead of trying to push through a demonstrably flawed plan that almost seems to purposely ignore the costs and burdens this plan would impose on residents.

James Duncan - Chevy Chase, 20815

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7

I URGE YOU TO VOTE NO ON THE ATTAINABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE.

I own a single-family home in the Rollingwood section of Montgomery County.

If the initiative is passed, I nearly all of the tearing down of homes and rebuilding will be done by developers and they will be the main beneficiary of the initiative. In my experience, developers buy the least expensive houses with large lots and then build new houses that are sold for a price that is higher than that of the most expensive existing house in the immediate neighborhood. This is the way that they maximize their profit. The initiative will accelerate the removal the lower priced houses, create higher price units and increase the range of prices of existing houses that are suitable for this redevelopment.

In addition, the initiative would have the undesirable effects of changing the character of single-family-home neighborhoods, increasing traffic density and the numbers of cars parked on our already crowded residential streets, and likely increasing homeowners' property taxes while lowering their quality of life. I question whether there is a need for as much new density as this measure would potentially produce, as there is already a great deal of new development in progress and/or approved, particularly of new high-rise apartment complexes, in the County. If it is necessary, the increased density should come in areas specially designated for it rather than in existing single-family-home neighborhoods.

Finally, the initiative doesn't address the very important environmental issues (tree removal, water runoff, ...), additional infrastructure needs (Electricity, water, gas, parking) and schools requirements.

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8

Andrew Lien - Chevy Chase, 20815

The Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative falls short of its stated goals, paradoxically exacerbating the very problem it seeks to address, and lacks substantive, hard data to support its conclusions. There better ways to tackle some of the problems identified in AHSI such as through amendments to existing, community-specific master plans, instead of allowing for ad-hoc, piecemeal case-by-case housing development wherever profits for developers can be maximized at the expense of cohesive neighborhoods.

The Planning Commission's use of the term of art "Attainable Housing" to suggest greater affordability is particularly egregious and deceptive. This is market rate housing being proposed and prices will be determined by such accordingly. High cost neighborhoods in the county will continue to be high cost no matter what type of housing is built and the price per square foot of any type of housing will continue to rise to the point where any perceived "attainability" will quickly vanish if parts of the county continue to see double digit increases in housing prices as they have for years. More simply put, so long as there continues to be more well-heeled buyers able and willing to buy homes in certain areas than homes themselves, there will be continuing upward pricing pressures. Bethesda is a case study in this phenomenon. Taken to an extreme, existing neighborhoods could become become "Manhattanized" or at the very least experience what Boston, San Francisco, and Washington, DC continue to undergo.

The Planning Commission states that "[a]ll zoning categories, once established, are applied across the county in a uniform way." This is misleading. Zoning categories are not applicable to all parts of the county and for good reason. AR zoning for agricultural land use outside of Poolesville is entirely inappropriate for the communities around Silver Spring, for obvious reasons. Similarly, trying to shoe-horn a quadplex into an existing neighborhood with already inadequate on-street parking makes little sense.

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Yasmina Mudarres - Chevy Chase, 20815

The Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative falls short of its stated goals, paradoxically exacerbating the very problem it seeks to address, and lacks substantive, hard data to support its conclusions. There better ways to tackle some of the problems identified in AHSI such as through amendments to existing, community-specific master plans, instead of allowing for ad-hoc, piecemeal case-by-case housing development wherever profits for developers can be maximized at the expense of cohesive neighborhoods.

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increases in housing prices as they have for years. More simply put, so long as there continues to be more well-heeled buyers able and willing to buy homes in certain areas than homes themselves, there will be continuing upward pricing pressures. Bethesda is a case study in this phenomenon. Taken to an extreme, existing neighborhoods could become "Manhattanized" or at the very least experience what Boston, San Francisco, and Washington, DC continue to undergo.

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Olga Joos - Chevy Chase, 20815

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Dear Montgomery County Council,

My name is Olga Joos and I'm a public health expert, former pediatric critical care nurse, mom to two school-aged children, and engaged community member as the treasurer in my municipality, the Village of North Chevy Chase, and board member at the Chevy Chase Historical Society.

The Village of North Chevy Chase is home to 226 households and 682 residents located within the proposed Attainable Housing Strategy Priority Housing District Boundary with R-40 R-60 R-90 zoning blocks. Montgomery County faces a housing shortage that requires well-designed solutions to address this challenge. HOWEVER, the proposed Attainable Housing Strategy fails to address the housing shortage and will irrevocably transform the community I cherish. I am voicing my strong opposition to the AHS for the following reasons:

AHS 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 hard-working 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 in the Village of North Chevy Chase), 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 5 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? Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School spent \$41 million less than 5 years ago and is already nearing its max capacity of 2,900 students with its currently enrolled 2,400 students. Have you modeled population growth in collaboration with MCPS to assess the feasibility of increasing school populations? Does MCPS have the budget to support growth given the 31 million budget cut it faced this fiscal year?

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.

As a resident of the Village of North Chevy Chase, I strongly oppose the proposed Attainable Housing Strategy as it fails to address the housing shortage, is not based on evidence, and will impact the environment, pedestrian safety, and congestion negatively. Vote NO!

Sincerely,
olga

Nancy Geller - Chevy Chase, 20815

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Dear Members of Council,

I am strongly opposed to the attainable housing proposal under consideration by the Montgomery County Council. There is an abundance of housing near the Friendship Heights metro station along Wisconsin Ave. and much as well in the District near the bus depot.

The proposal to allow replacement of single family houses with multiple unit dwellings will make parking and traffic impossible. The Village will look like Bradley Blvd. (between Arlington and Wisconsin Aves.) The difference is that the streets in the village are so narrow that traffic on most Village streets will be reduced to a single lane because of parking on both sides of the street. It will be nearly impossible to get through the village! There will inevitably be a parking shortage in the village because despite proximity to the metro and bus stops, the residents will still own cars since all of their travel will not be local. If parking were restricted to one side of the street, the parking shortage would necessarily increase.

Why do I think that many residents will still own a car? It will be developers who will buy up the single family houses to replace them with multiple unit dwellings. Developers will outbid families that wish to purchase a single family home. Those selling their houses will capitulate to the developers because they will get a higher sales price for their house. The result will be multifamily housing with high rents, because the developers would be buying up property solely for profit. It is also likely that the units will not be well built. Developers do not care about quality buildings because their motive is profit.

This development proposal ignores the fact that many houses in the village are historic, having been built in the first third of the twentieth century. Up to recently historic preservation has been upheld quite strictly by the Village administration, with requests to tear down a house and replace it with another single family house refused. The proposal for attainable housing will be destroying an historical neighborhood. Does no one care about historical preservation?

There are many reasons others have given to oppose this proposal and I have tried not to be redundant. I strongly urge you to vote against this proposal.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy L. Geller

(Chevy Chase Village)

Gary Fitch - Bethesda, 20816

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2

We are against attainable housing. For all the reasons discussed at the public listening sessions in Chevy Chase

David Barnes - Bethesda, 20814

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3

October 18, 2024

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

Dear Council President Friedson and Members of the County Council:

I am the President of the Edgemoor Citizens Association (ECA), representing over 500 households in the residential neighborhood bordering the west side of Downtown Bethesda. This letter presents our concerns about the Attainable Housing Strategies (AHS) report approved by the Planning Board and submitted to the County Council.

The ECA asks that the County Council pause consideration of AHS and its recommendations in their current form. We need a plan that will address housing needs in a manner that prioritizes the greatest need, housing affordable to those of low to moderate income, and that does not disrupt and damage established neighborhoods within the County.

The ECA recognizes that there are housing needs in our County that must be addressed. Those housing needs are concentrated among County residents of low to moderate income who cannot afford market rate housing. Under the Housing Targets established by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), targets accepted by the County Council, at least 75% of the new units produced to 2030 need to be affordable to households of low to moderate income.

AHS does not address the housing needs of Montgomery County. Its proposals would not produce and are not intended to produce affordable housing. AHS is designed to produce market rate housing, which in many areas would be more expensive to buyers than existing properties available in the market. (See, for example, the three new townhouses on the market at 6960, 6970, and 6980 West Avenue in Chevy Chase. They were recently built on a property at the corner of Walsh Street and West Avenue that was purchased for \$1.6M with a single-family home that was torn down. The townhouses at 6960 and 6970 are offered for sale at \$3,299,000 each, and that at 6980 is offered at \$3,475,000.)

The AHS recommendations are complex and far-reaching. AHS is a sweeping proposal to upzone approximately 82% of Montgomery County's residential land for greater density, affecting substantially all County land within the Beltway and much outside. However, Planning has not provided the data or analysis to support the asserted need for rezoning. The County Executive has stated publicly that there is sufficient land with residential zoning and a pipeline of residential real estate approvals capable of meeting all projected housing needs, without upzoning. The broad upzoning contemplated by AHS is neither necessary or advisable. AHS is poorly conceived, misdirected, and is likely to result in unintended harm to many of the residential areas of the County.

There are significant questions about the reliability of the data that has been provided from time to time on housing needs, targets for new housing, and populations to be served, as well as how much housing has been built in recent years. There are also significant questions about the availability of land currently zoned for new housing and about units in the pipeline that have not moved forward. These discrepancies and questions about the data must be resolved before solutions can be found. Before moving forward to propose any changes, the Council should direct that Planning, at a minimum, provide to the Council and to the public data and analyses quantifying (i) the extent, if any, of a shortage of housing in the County (including at market prices); (ii) how much land in the County is available for residential development under current zoning; and (iii) if there is a shortage of housing at market price points, why that shortage cannot be met by residential construction on land now zoned for it.

The rezoning in AHS would likely result in negative consequences to many of the County's neighborhoods. Where rezoning is proposed, the Council must develop and deliver analyses and tools to limit negative consequences such as loss of mature tree canopy; increases in impermeable surfaces and stormwater runoff; waivers and/or relaxation of stormwater management rules; increases in traffic congestion; loss of naturally occurring affordable housing; and potential increases in investor-owned housing. The Council must also address

neighborhood issues such as narrow streets which may hamper or even block emergency vehicle access, as well as aging utilities infrastructure and the like, especially in older neighborhoods like ours. Among other things, Montgomery County's Growth and Infrastructure Policy has not been sufficiently effective at identifying school and other growth-related infrastructure needs, and a growing number of County exemptions and state budget deficits have put the financing of infrastructure associated with growth at continuing risk. The Council needs also to provide a fiscal impact analysis of any proposal, including the costs of infrastructure, school construction, streetscaping, parking, road construction and maintenance, sidewalks, stormwater drainage and other costs resulting from any proposed zoning revisions, as well as how the costs would be financed.

AHS as presented by the Planning Board does not consider other planning efforts that will affect our neighborhood and others. Planning is separately proposing to recommend removing the density cap on development in Downtown Bethesda through a Minor Master Plan Amendment to the Bethesda Downtown Plan. In addition, we understand that a new Master Plan is expected for Friendship Heights. The cumulative effects of AHS and these other contemplated changes have not been considered, and must be considered before any zoning changes to nearby neighborhoods like ours are proposed.

The Planning Board has proposed implementing AHS as a county-wide Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) outside the Master Plan process, minimizing residents' participation and opportunity to be heard. The County Council and Planning Board need to follow the Master Plan processes for all zoning changes of the type presented in AHS, and to maximize community review and feedback. Council and Planning need to ensure that every affected homeowner in Montgomery County is timely notified of public hearings on any proposal to change the legal classification of his or her property, the specifics of the proposed rezoning, and the specifics of any additional related rezonings. Any future residential zoning changes should be implemented through the Master plan process after meaningful engagement and consultation with residents.

The ECA asks the County Council to direct the Planning Board and other appropriate departments, working together, to refocus efforts on a comprehensive plan to identify and address the County's unmet housing needs, populations needing County assistance to obtain affordable housing, a study with conclusions on the market and why the large number of approved units in the pipeline are not moving forward, and to consider a comprehensive range of approaches to increase the supply of housing to low and moderate income residents.

As noted above, Montgomery County needs a plan that will address housing needs in a manner that prioritizes the greatest need, housing affordable to those of low and moderate income, and that does not disrupt and damage established neighborhoods within the County. AHS is not that plan.

Sincerely,
David Barnes
ECA President

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4

Joyce Gwadz - Bethesda, 20814

October 18, 2024

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

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The ECA asks that the County Council pause consideration of AHS and its recommendations in their current form. We need a plan that will address housing needs in a manner that prioritizes the greatest need, housing affordable to those of low to moderate income, and that does not disrupt and damage established neighborhoods within the County.

The ECA recognizes that there are housing needs in our County that must be addressed. Those housing needs are concentrated among County residents of low to moderate income who cannot afford market rate housing. Under the Housing Targets established by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), targets accepted by the County Council, at least 75% of the new units produced to 2030 need to be affordable to households of low to moderate income.

AHS does not address the housing needs of Montgomery County. Its proposals would not produce and are not intended to produce affordable housing. AHS is designed to produce market rate housing, which in many areas would be more expensive to buyers than existing properties available in the market. (See, for example, the three new townhouses on the market at 6960, 6970, and 6980 West Avenue in Chevy Chase. They were recently built on a property at the corner of Walsh Street and West Avenue that was purchased for \$1.6M with a single-family home that was torn down. The townhouses at 6960 and 6970 are offered for sale at \$3,299,000 each, and that at 6980 is offered at \$3,475,000.)

The AHS recommendations are complex and far-reaching. AHS is a sweeping proposal to upzone approximately 82% of Montgomery County's residential land for greater density, affecting substantially all County land within the Beltway and much outside. However, Planning has not provided the data or analysis to support the asserted need for rezoning. The County Executive has stated publicly that there is sufficient land with residential zoning and a pipeline of residential real estate approvals capable of meeting all projected housing needs, without upzoning. The broad upzoning contemplated by AHS is neither necessary or advisable. AHS is

poorly conceived, misdirected, and is likely to result in unintended harm to many of the residential areas of the County.

There are significant questions about the reliability of the data that has been provided from time to time on housing needs, targets for new housing, and populations to be served, as well as how much housing has been built in recent years. There are also significant questions about the availability of land currently zoned for new housing and about units in the pipeline that have not moved forward. These discrepancies and questions about the data must be resolved before solutions can be found. Before moving forward to propose any changes, the Council should direct that Planning, at a minimum, provide to the Council and to the public data and analyses quantifying (i) the extent, if any, of a shortage of housing in the County (including at market prices); (ii) how much land in the County is available for residential development under current zoning; and (iii) if there is a shortage of housing at market price points, why that shortage cannot be met by residential construction on land now zoned for it.

The rezoning in AHS would likely result in negative consequences to many of the County's neighborhoods. Where rezoning is proposed, the Council must develop and deliver analyses and tools to limit negative consequences such as loss of mature tree canopy; increases in impermeable surfaces and stormwater runoff; waivers and/or relaxation of stormwater management rules; increases in traffic congestion; loss of naturally occurring affordable housing; and potential increases in investor-owned housing. The Council must also address neighborhood issues such as narrow streets which may hamper or even block emergency vehicle access, as well as aging utilities infrastructure and the like, especially in older neighborhoods like ours. Among other things, Montgomery County's Growth and Infrastructure Policy has not been sufficiently effective at identifying school and other growth-related infrastructure needs, and a growing number of County exemptions and state budget deficits have put the financing of infrastructure associated with growth at continuing risk. The Council needs also to provide a fiscal impact analysis of any proposal, including the costs of infrastructure, school construction, streetscaping, parking, road construction and maintenance, sidewalks, stormwater drainage and other costs resulting from any proposed zoning revisions, as well as how the costs would be financed.

AHS as presented by the Planning Board does not consider other planning efforts that will affect our neighborhood and others. Planning is separately proposing to recommend removing the density cap on development in Downtown Bethesda through a Minor Master Plan Amendment to the Bethesda Downtown Plan. In addition, we understand that a new Master Plan is expected for Friendship Heights. The cumulative effects of AHS and these other contemplated changes have not been considered, and must be considered before any zoning changes to nearby neighborhoods like ours are proposed.

The Planning Board has proposed implementing AHS as a county-wide Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) outside the Master Plan process, minimizing residents' participation and opportunity to be heard. The County Council and Planning Board need to follow the Master Plan processes for all zoning changes of the type presented in AHS, and to maximize community review and feedback. Council and Planning need to ensure that every affected homeowner in Montgomery County is timely notified of public hearings on any proposal to change the legal classification of his or her property, the specifics of the proposed rezoning, and the specifics of any additional related rezonings. Any future residential zoning changes should be implemented through the Master plan process after meaningful engagement and consultation with residents.

The ECA asks the County Council to direct the Planning Board and other appropriate departments, working together, to refocus efforts on a comprehensive plan to identify and address the County's unmet housing needs, populations needing County assistance to obtain affordable housing, a study with conclusions on the market and why the large number of approved units in the pipeline are not moving forward, and to consider a comprehensive range of approaches to increase the supply of housing to low and moderate income residents.

As noted above, Montgomery County needs a plan that will address housing needs in a manner that prioritizes the greatest need, housing affordable to those of low and moderate income, and that does not disrupt and damage established neighborhoods within the County. AHS is not that plan.

Sincerely,
David Barnes
ECA President

Submitted on behalf of David Barnes, ECA President,
by Joyce Gwadz, ECA Board Member

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Eleanor Shepard - Bethesda, 20816

This is not the correct solution and will not bring attainable housing to house who need it.

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Seth Mosier - Kensington, 20895

I'm mostly on board with the strategy though would like a little more consideration for green space and tree canopy issues that could arise as a side effect of denser and taller housing.

There are other efforts to improve our canopy to reduce heating, let's not make those more challenging and expensive.

Similarly, if there is going to be more roof line and fewer trees at these elevations, a requirement/ incentive to use the roof space for solar could help reduce the negative outcomes of this plan.

consider using the taxes and other revenues from this to address the extra vehicular traffic and parking issues by improving public transit and bikeways.

I'm on board with more density in the places that have been part of the long term plan. But some effort to reduce some of the obvious side effects needed.

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Janet Goldman - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am strongly opposed to this initiative. The plan benefits only developers, does not in fact benefit lower income people as the housing proposed will still be way too expensive--it is not going to be "affordable.". We already have parking and traffic overload, this will make it unsafe for pedestrians and miserable for drivers. No plan to offset the impact on our environment, trees, increased flood potential and other aspects of our already challenged systems has been presented. This is purely a developer-driven money-maker, and in no way is it actually good for those who cannot afford housing OR for the current homeowners who have lived in this area for years.

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Lorie Zucco-Mitchell - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Councilmembers,

My husband and I are deeply concerned about the attainable housing proposal and the overall process that has been followed.


I've actively participated in one listening session and have closely followed several others online. From what I've gathered, it seems the planning commission was tasked by the County Council to address the missing middle housing shortage but was not given requisite criteria to consider environmental impact, parking, education constraints, infrastructure limitations, and quality of life. As a result, the planning board has put forth a plan at tremendous tax dollar expense that fails to address even the most basic issues and has unnecessarily caused division.

What's even more disheartening is that despite numerous resident concerns voiced during the listening sessions, the planning board staff repeatedly emphasized that their unanimous vote was final. Additionally, it was concerning to witness the presence of several residents who supposedly supported the plan and who appeared repeatedly at different sessions. At one session, a resident requested that everyone who worked for the county stand up, and half the room rose. To me, that's political theater of the worst kind.

It's essential that our voices are heard, and that the planning process takes into account the genuine concerns of the community. I hope that moving forward, there will be more transparency and opportunities for meaningful community input in the decision-making process.

Sincerely,

Lorie and John Mitchell


Chevy Chase, MD 20815

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Jane Houlihan - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I am familiar with projections of housing needs for middle- and low-income families in our County, but I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (ASHI) that has been proposed as a solution.

It would not provide homes that our County's middle- and low-income families can afford. Hard-working County residents like bus operators, police officers, and public school teachers, with starting salaries of \$50,000 to \$70,000, would not be able to afford these "attainable" homes with County-estimated values of half a million dollars or more. The proposal would benefit developers, not families struggling to find homes within their means.

The initiative would also irreparably damage our existing communities. It would strain school capacity, destroy canopy and green space, endanger pedestrians and cyclists, increase air pollution, overload stormwater management systems, worsen rush-hour gridlock, and overload parking capacity.

In my neighborhood ASHI would allow for duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes to be built on our lots. We already face challenges with overloaded storm water management systems, parking, and traffic - especially on Jones Bridge Road, Connecticut Avenue, and our primary Village entry point, Kensington Parkway. We have already lost significant green space and canopy along these same roads - from recent road expansions, the State's salt barn and storage complex, the Chevy Chase Lake development, and more. Scientific studies tell us that these changes worsen health and well-being as air pollution increases and the livability of our community declines. The proposed initiative would cause even more strain to our health and to infrastructure that is already over capacity.

ASHI would certainly benefit developers and private equity firms with aims to invest in rental properties. But the plan would harm existing communities and would not help middle- and low-income families.

ASHI is not the right answer to our housing shortage. Please do not approve this initiative.

Thank you,
Jane Houlihan
North Chevy Chase

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b landon - chevy chase, 20815

The proposed "attainable housing initiative" is not well thought out with poor research. It would not only NOT solve its proposed intentions, it would cause numerous problems that have no solution or at best are costly. I am opposed to this idea!

<p>106 1</p>	<p>Sophia Hu - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>AHS is not well planned. While some people want to live in multi-family buildings, other people prefer to live in a single family home. You increase one type of housing but reduce another type of housing. You will drive people that want single family homes out of MoCo. Developers are the winners in the end! They will have so much power and be able to maximize their profit without any restrains. Our schools and roads are already crowded. Our infrastructures are old-dated and barely provide adequate basic needs to current housing situation. Please stop and do more studies and listen to what people want!!!</p>
<p>106 2</p>	<p>Madaline Donnelly - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I cannot support this initiative or the elected officials who approve this. In my 8 years as a homeowner in Montgomery County I have never seen my neighbors so upset and angry. It seems the initiative has not been adequately thought through— as it is neither actually doing anything to advance affordable housing nor accounting for the additional infrastructure that would be needed to support such egregious changes to decades of precedent. It displays lack of judgment and lack of understanding of the citizens you serve, and has united pretty much everyone I know—regardless of political persuasion—in opposition. I encourage the council to rethink this.</p>
<p>106 3</p>	<p>Doug Pagliaro - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>My wife and I have lived in and brought up our children in Chase Village over the last 12 years. We moved here for a reason...single family homes with more property, tree-lined streets and a close community. The proposal to allow for any structures other than single family homes (e.g. duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, etc) is absurd. I pay enough taxes to have a voice. Don't destroy communities that have been around for over 100 years. Pick another area to destroy.</p>
<p>106 4</p>	<p>Catherine Triantis - Bethesda, 20817</p> <p>I am opposed to this initiative because the proposal is attempting to create more affordable/attainable housing, but by building, for example, multiple smaller units on a single family lot does not accomplish the goal/price range for those in need based on the market pricing in these most expensive neighborhoods. The proposal has not provided the price range for a single unit in these neighborhoods. It is a fact that the market pricing for these units will NOT be attainable to the price range/budget for those buyers targeted for these projects. These areas/neighborhoods are the most expensive real estate and there are other areas/neighborhoods where affordable/attainable housing would have improved success while not diminishing the values of the MOST historic and expensive neighborhoods.</p> <p>This proposal will also diminish the value of existing properties, because there are no specified building materials required to maintain a similar quality of construction in the neighborhood. In order to make these units affordable/attainable the lower quality of materials used to build a home and remain in the "attainable" price range would be far less thus REDUCE the value of the surrounding properties. I want to see specific interior as well as exterior building material specifications AND the estimated price range based on comps. Have</p>

	<p>professional/licensed appraisers been involved in this pricing? Has a builder provided his total costs with exact materials specifications for interior and exterior and their pricing per unit with comps?</p>
106 5	<p>Raymond DuFour - Chevy Chase, 20815-6618</p> <p>This is a terrible plan that strips the rights and value of individual property owners, causes overcrowding, and tab the limited resources of the county.</p> <p>The answer is no to this.</p>
106 6	<p>Gillian Hunter - Garrett Park, 20896</p> <p>I am opposed to any proposals that would change existing single family housing rules in Montgomery County. I am also opposed to any rule changes that would override local zoning rules within Montgomery county. The roads and schools are already overcrowded. The quality of life for existing residents is diminished with every new project. Negative impacts include conjection, not enough parking, reduced vegetation including tree canopy, neighborhood aesthetics, drainage and storm water, and changing rules after we bought our property.</p> <p>That said perhaps some thought could be put into analyzing what could be done for the future as Amazon delivery clogs our roads and puts local stores out of business.</p>
106 7	<p>Karen Cys - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I agree that housing affordability is a major concern. But I agree with Marc Elrich that this plan does not address housing affordability. I also agree with all of Elrich's concerns, especially that there is has been no study of the environmental and infrastructure impacts of such a proposal. Increased housing density could be harmful to our water, air, eco system, etc. This attainable housing initiative has no evaluation of what we need in terms of infrastructure and what it will cost.</p>
106 8	<p>Frank Hirst - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>Somehow the political leaders in Montgomery County now view single family zoning as "opportunity hoarding." The AHSI is an affront to the way of life and character of the neighborhoods in which we chose to live. There are many other ways to build more housing. Destroying the character of single family home neighborhoods should not be one of them. Far from the misguided notion that it is "exclusionary," single family home zoning helps allow the American Dream. I have no confidence that this is a "modest" step. Just as single family zoning is now regarded by elites as "opportunity hoarding," whatever limits might be stood up today will be seen in the future as impediments to progress. Just look at what has already happened around the erosion of accessory dwelling unit rules.</p>

Of one thing be sure . . . We will long remember what you do here. Also know that the people you are harming with this initiative are highly mobile and will vote with the feet.

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Gerilee Bennett - Garrett Park, 20896

I am opposed to the Planning Board recommendations because they do not address significant issues such as lack of infrastructure to support denser housing in existing, older single family neighborhoods, they do not protect the historic characteristics of older neighborhoods, and they would produce a windfall for developers who will price individual families out of Mont County's single family housing market as they grab up all available properties that can be redeveloped as multi-plex housing.

More specifically:

Historic Neighborhoods:

The Planning Board Report includes zero mention of Montgomery County's historic districts and properties and includes no measure to protect the character of the County's historic resources. No mention of any measures to ensure the character of historic neighborhoods aren't damaged.

My home is a contributing property the the Garrett Park District - as such we are required to apply for a HAWP but if a multi plex building were built next door, the Developer would not be required to file a HAWP or take any special measures to protect the historic nature of its surroundings because my home and two other properties in town are individually listed rather than within the boundaries of the historic district. I have no confidence that the current process would protect the historic nature within historic district neighborhoods either, given all the Report language giving the owner "by right" ability to build quad-plexes in priority areas with reduced off street parking requirements and county setback and height requirements. Our historic neighborhood would lose its historical character over a short decade.

Cars and Parking:

On a typical day in mine and surrounding neighborhoods, the streets are narrow and already full of cars. Once lots are allowed to house up to four units, where will the cars go? Because the buyers will come with their two cars each. It is a fallacy to imply otherwise. It is a 25 minute walk to Grosvenor Metro, the buses run infrequently during rush hour, and people who work outside the District generally drive because their workplace is not close enough to easily accessible transit. They use cars for shopping and entertainment. Also, MARC is not used for any purpose other than commuting into the District, so why are Priority districts based on MARC stations?

I shudder to think where 8 extra cars will go to support the lot next door to mine if it were to become a quad-plex. Our streets are simply not capable of absorbing the additional numbers of cars that multi-plex housing would bring. The plan does not differentiate for locations

with narrow streets that don't have the carrying capacity. Worse, it gives generic exceptions to reduce off street parking requirements based on proximity to transit.

Open Space and tree canopy preservation:

This plan sacrifices open space and tree canopy. Just because our neighborhood has a MARC station, we shouldn't lose our tree canopy and open space and gain mistreats jam-packed with cars and asphalt yards. Reduced setbacks for multi-plex properties and more off street parking will result in less open space and more runoff into the Rock Creek Park watershed.

In addition to its historic district, the other pride of Garrett Park is its street tree arboretum. The additional curb cuts multi-plex housing may require will reduce the planting ROW for Garrett Park's Arboretum street trees that provide shade and reduce the detrimental impacts of extreme heat and pollution.

In the face of evident climate change, the County has not considered the damaging effects of denser development reducing open space and tree canopy. It will reduce our protection against extreme heat and other climate change impacts.

Finally, I oppose these recommendations because they are obviously designed by Developers for developers. The Developers will be the Winners if you as the County Council approve this proposal.

This plan will reduce the stock of single family homes in Montgomery County that are already in short supply. Greedy developers will be the winners because the well-capitalized developer planning to build a multi-plex who offers to pay cash for a single family home will beat out every family bidding to buy a single family home with a little green space for gardening and play space for the kids. This proposal is not a solution for families - it is a windfall for developers.

Please take this proposal back to the drawing boards and design a proposal that honestly expands affordable housing without sacrificing our already shrinking green space and tree canopy, the character of our historic neighborhoods, and the ability of our community streets to support the residents of our neighborhoods.

Roman Martinez - Chevy Chase MD, 20815

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I am writing to ask that you please abandon -- or at minimum pause -the Council's proposed rezoning plans. After reading relevant materials and attending the September 25, 2024, I feel confident that this proposal is NOT in the best interest of Montgomery County and its residents.

Like many in our county, I support both attainable and affordable housing. But I see no data or evidence that the current proposal achieves neither of those means. Moreover, it is shocking to me that a proposal of this scope would be proffered without a thoughtful impact study on schools, safety, traffic, trees, parking, utilities, or the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Finally, the proposed rezoning eviscerates process commitments that were made to MoCo County constituents as part of Thrive 2050. Please take time to collect the data, and to give MoCo residents due process in being heard.

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Gillian Ward - Chevy Chase, 20815

I strongly disagree with the County Councils Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. The following reasons explain why I do not want this initiative passed.

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

- 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.

- 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/

OLORreport2024-10.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.

- COG has changed the population projections downward several times but Planning continues to use the original, higher projections.

Transportation assumptions are unrealistic.

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- 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.
 - 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.
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- 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-MarketStudy_03-04-2021_Staff-Report.pdf, see page 12.)
 - Despite the OLO report (<https://www.scribd.com/document/558161463/OLO-RESJ-Review-ofThrive-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.
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- 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.

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/attainablehousing-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.

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Anne Stukes - Chevy Chase, 20815

I write to oppose the current recommendations on Attainable Housing Strategies that would allow multi-story apartment buildings along Connecticut Avenue in Chevy Chase, and also permit townhouses and quad plexes within the Town of Chevy Chase. It appears to me that there is an abundance of dense housing already in existence in downtown Bethesda or being built in Chevy Chase Lake. Has the county actually examined whether more dense housing is needed when so many apartment buildings and townhouses already exist in the close-in suburbs? The consequences of dense development have been terrible for traffic (gridlock every afternoon on Connecticut and Wisconsin Ave) and school resources (my child's school has 27-32 students per teacher and the teachers constantly remind us how their budget is tight). In the one instance where a townhouse development was built on Walsh Street in Chevy Chase, the developer tore down a modestly priced house and built townhouse units that are priced at \$3.65 million apiece. On the former 4-H property on Connecticut Avenue, Corso developers are planning a retirement rental community that they describe as "Four Seasons" style luxury housing. In Chevy Chase Lake they are tearing down actual modestly priced townhomes and building new units. Newly built townhomes and condos in Chevy Chase Lake are advertised for well over \$1 million. These examples seem the most likely outcome if the county permits widespread dense housing in Chevy Chase: the developers will maximize profits and build "luxury" high priced housing because property values are so high in Chevy Chase. That won't serve the purposes of attainable housing. It will just make for denser, expensive (unattainable) housing. This will be a boon for developers' profits and make Chevy Chase a harder place for existing residents to live, and not a place where modest housing is attainable.

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Andy Leon Harney - Chevy Chase, 20815

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

October 18, 2024

Re: Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative

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

Section 3 of the Village of Chevy Chase thanks the County Council for this opportunity to provide feedback on the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI). There is a clear need for affordable and attainable housing in Montgomery County. Section 3 strongly supports workable, data-driven solutions to address this shortage. Unfortunately, the AHSI recommendations currently before the County Council will not realistically address attainable housing and will not address affordable housing at all – a frankly shameful omission. Moreover, the AHSI's one-size-fits-all approach has the real potential to harm communities, including Section 3.

We strongly encourage the County Council to direct the Planning Board to revisit a number of the AHSI's proposals and develop practical, evidence-based solutions that will enhance communities, protect the environment, and promote Montgomery County's economic growth. Montgomery County can—and must—do better than the current AHSI recommendations.

Market-rate housing is not “attainable.” Housing currently available in many parts of the County at market-rates is not attainable for lower- and middle-income buyers. The AHSI will not change that. A flawed premise at the core of the AHSI recommendations is that the new market-rate housing generated from these zoning changes will cost materially less than a single-family home at the same location. That is dubious at best. We are aware of no evidence that supports the Planning Board's assumption that new housing units in the County will cost less than existing units, particularly in already-expensive parts of the County. Under the AHSI, a developer replacing a \$1+ million property with multiple units on the same lot has no opportunity or incentive to create genuinely attainable or affordable housing. Simply building multiple units without financial support for potential homebuyers or incentives to developers to price it so middle-income buyers can afford the units will lead to more out-of-reach pricing. There is no data to show that in our area, prices would come down to levels commensurate with moderate income buyers.

This is not conjecture. In 2022, a developer purchased a single-family home at 6960 West Avenue, just outside the boundary of the Town of Chevy Chase, for \$1.6 million. The developer demolished the original bungalow, and in its stead, there are now three, side-by-side 3,650 sq. ft. townhouses, two priced at \$3.299 million and the other at \$3.475 million – collectively more than six times the price of the original home and far more expensive than most homes in the adjacent Town of Chevy Chase. These townhouses are selling for “market” rates – or at least market rates for elevator-equipped, luxury housing. Nothing in the AHSI prevents developers from maximizing profit in a similar manner. It is not just predictable that, as currently drafted, the AHSI will create a glut of extremely expensive new housing in the down-County area; it is all but guaranteed. This does nothing to address the need for attainable and affordable housing in Montgomery County.

A one-mile transit walkshed is unrealistic. The AHSI would do-away with single family residential housing in all “priority housing” districts within a certain distance of transit stations. Using a one-mile walkshed to determine “priority housing” districts does not align with locally or nationally recognized standards for transit walksheds. Both the U.S. Department of Transportation's and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's standard is about 10 minutes of walking, which translates to a ¼ to ½ mile radius from transit stations. It is simply not correct that large numbers of residents will regularly walk a mile to take public transportation, and designing a zoning system on such a flawed premise seems arbitrary and is bound to fail.

As to Section 3 in particular, the Planning Board's own Pedestrian Level of Comfort Map designates the 1-mile walk from Section 3 to the future Purple Line station as primarily “undesirable” – or even “uncomfortable” – and would require improvements for people to feel safe walking that corridor. People will not walk, even a reasonable distance, if it is not considered pedestrian-friendly.

The AHSI reduces parking requirements in priority housing districts without taking the realities of our neighborhoods into account. Certainly, AHSI does not reflect the reality of parking needs in Section 3. Section 3 is one of the most densely populated municipalities in Maryland. Our municipality is 1/10 of a square mile, has 282 single family homes, and narrow 16' wide streets, with on-street parking on

only one side of the street. There are 586 cars currently registered to Section 3 residents. While our residents value the walkability of our neighborhood – including neighborhood institutions like Brookville Market, and Brookville Pharmacy, as well as newer amenities like a weekly farmer’s market – a realistic mix of transportation options is important to our residents. This is especially true for families with young children – who make up the vast majority of those moving into Section 3 in any given year – and for our many senior, long-time residents. There is no on-street parking on Connecticut Avenue, and adding multifamily housing without adequate parking will strain the already limited parking options in Section 3.

Section 3 strongly urges the County Council to redraw the priority housing district lines based on a ½ mile walkshed. It is a common-sense, data-driven measure that more accurately reflects actual behavior, and was the standard supported by Council President Andrew Friedson and At-Large Member Gabe Albornoz during the ADU ZTA committee discussions.

Current infrastructure cannot handle the proposed upzoning. Stormwater runoff is a serious, ongoing issue within Section 3. Stormwater is best managed by a combination of storm drains and careful protection of trees and open space. Section 3 is woefully deficient in storm drains. In Section 3, there are no storm drains on Connecticut Ave. This is where the AHSI envisions a priority housing district with higher densities—up to 19-unit apartment buildings. The lot coverage percentages quoted throughout the AHSI’s final report fail to note that the impervious driveways and parking areas are not included in that figure, adding to the stormwater management problems with which we are already forced to deal.

Montgomery County manages Section 3’s current, rudimentary storm drain system and our efforts to improve stormwater management have been stymied for years. Recognizing that the County has insufficient funding to build new storm drains, Section 3 has embarked on a plan to design and build a storm drain on several streets where residents are experiencing flooding in their yards. However, WSSC has recently denied our request to build new storm drains because it maintains that any construction in the street would endanger the existing 1918 sewer line and 1921 waterlines. How is this antique system expected to handle the increased numbers of residents envisioned by the AHSI? We are not the only community with insufficient infrastructure to meet higher densities. This again points to the need to use the County master plan process to identify appropriate areas for increased density instead of a the one-size-fits-all approach of the AHSI.

Consider alternative approaches to increase genuinely-attainable housing. Before changing zoning laws for 82% of county residents, the County Council should look to alternatives:

- Set aside attainable and affordable housing in developments on County land. The Council should direct the Planning Board to examine all County-owned land and, where feasible, mandate that a percentage of any new development be devoted to affordable and mid-market/attainable housing.
 - Evaluate the feasibility of converting vacant schools into housing. County-owned schools vacant for a number of years could be evaluated to be converted into housing.
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• Create incentives to convert office buildings into residential housing. Just as the County has low interest loan programs for owners of naturally occurring affordable housing to renovate and maintain their existing units, the County could create incentives to convert office buildings and hotels, particularly low-rise buildings, into housing. This trend of office conversions to housing is already happening in DC and in the Virginia suburbs.

• Survey the owners of the 363 licensed ADUs to see if they are addressing the needs of seniors and middle-income families. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) were one of the County's first attempt at increasing density in single family neighborhoods county-wide. It was promoted as a way seniors could continue to live in their communities and down-size or make money by renting out the ADU to middle-income residents in need of housing. Although it has been 5 years since the Council authorized ADUs throughout the County, relatively few ADUs have been registered. We are aware of no evidence that ADUs have materially improved the variety of housing stock available in the County, much less given seniors, teachers, first-responders, and others better housing options. Many of the stated goals of the AHSI are similar to those promoted for legalizing and encouraging ADUs. AHSI is a far more sweeping plan. Before leaping to a much more ambitious initiative, why not learn from your own efforts?

• Establish deed-restricted affordable housing units. In order to provide affordable housing for local workers, Vail, Colorado developed a deed-restricted housing program that limited resale price or rental rates for certain properties to ensure they remain affordable, categorized properties into different affordability levels to serve a range of local workers, and offered developers incentives to include deed-restricted units in their projects. Montgomery County could explore this and other alternatives for providing more housing for teachers, firemen, policemen, and other first responders employed by the County. A program that truly focuses on the needs of its employees might even make Montgomery County more competitive in attracting officers to our woefully understaffed police department.

Thank you for hearing our concerns about the AHSI recommendations and considering other pathways to increase genuinely affordable and attainable housing in the County. We welcome the opportunity to work together with the County Council to find solutions that will achieve these important goals.

Sincerely yours,

The Village Council, Section 3 of the Village of Chevy Chase

Edward Motsinger - Chevy Chase, 20815

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Completely opposed to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative.

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Elizabeth Tanzi - Chevy chase, 20815

Council Members,

As residents of the Kenwood Community in Chevy Chase for 15 years, we believe the recommendations written as is would permanently change the dynamic of our neighborhood and those surrounding it. Although an increase in affordable housing is not only a laudable, but much needed goal, giving free reign to developers to radically change the character of our neighborhoods to soulless box housing is not the way to do it. Why destroy what makes these neighborhoods in Montgomery county great (beautiful, tree lined neighborhoods with abundant places to walk and gather with friends)? There must be another way- more nuanced than the one put forth here.

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Carey Shuler - Chevy chase, 20815

Please kill this bell or you will lose my vote

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Doug Ryan - Bethesda, 20817-3206

Good morning,

As a resident of Montgomery County since 1997, and of Bethesda since 2003, I strongly support the Planning Department's proposed Attainable Housing Strategies proposal.

I am a longtime housing expert and advocate, working at the local and national levels, including 13 years at the Housing Opportunities Commission.

Like jurisdictions across the country, Montgomery County desperately needs new housing of all types, tenures, and price points. The proposal on its own, as Planning states, will not solve all our housing issues. But new, market-rate housing is needed to help families move into housing that meets their changing needs, which may reflect a larger or smaller family, care needs, or a new job.

The council should support the proposal, with amendments that aim to build more housing, not to reduce the proposal's impact.

Thank you,

107 8	Thomas Shuler Jr - Chevy Chase, 20815 Council Members, As you are aware, the Council's effort to eliminate single-family zoning in Montgomery County in order to provide "attainable housing" is based on knowingly wrong, incomplete and manipulated data. You, the Council has repeatedly and knowingly lied to its constituency for ideological reasons (to paraphrase Artie Harris, "Too many people have controlled too much land for too long.") Adopting this measure by Council vote is not a democratic process--you have with arrogance and condescension chosen to violate our vested historical property rights in order to advance your ideology and financial gain.
107 9	Alex Nephew - 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.
108 0	Kathryn Doyle - 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.
108 1	Katie Rosenthal - 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.

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Jessica White - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Councilmembers,

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 husband 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. My husband, a Navy veteran, and I are career federal servants, and we strangely find ourselves in the position where we now feel that that democratic process is failing us as our 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. Let's be clear--what you are proposing is not an affordable housing initiative.

Additionally, 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,
Jessica White

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Kathryn Hart - 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.

Stephen Majors - Bethesda, 20817

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The planning commission's recommendation attempts to address a valid problem in the county (a lack of affordable housing options -- though it's clear the county is not sure exactly how much housing it needs) but provides no justification or analysis to support converting single-family zoning into zoning that permits duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment buildings. For example, there is no analysis or policies to ensure that:

- homes converted into multi-family units will actually be 'affordable' and that the changes won't simply benefit developers -- this point has been made by County Executive Marc Elrich
- schools serving neighborhoods that were designed for single-family zoning won't become overcrowded
- utility infrastructure can support the increased load from additional residents
- parking won't become overcrowded and traffic won't become significantly worse
- existing homeowners with young families won't be surrounded by constant construction, noise, and disruption

In short, this policy takes a big gamble on the quality of life of taxpaying homeowners with no real justification that the change will accomplish the stated goal. Also, there is no indication that the planning commission has looked at other options to accomplish the same goal that would have significantly less impact on homeowners and residents, for example converting unused office space into residential buildings. Many homeowners like us recently chose to invest their families' futures in Montgomery County and now face the risk of local government retroactively changing the ground-rules.

Courtney Thornton - Kensington, 20895

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I honestly don't see that this proposal accomplishes anything. As currently drafted, the proposal appears likely to adversely impact the livability of existing communities (parking, transportation, density, infrastructure, etc.) without a guaranteed corresponding positive effect on those who may seek to "benefit" from these changes. I honestly can't see where anyone would benefit from this proposal except, possibly, developers. If changes would need to be made (at a cost) in existing infrastructure and transportation, why has Potomac been excluded from these proposals???

Joseph Dugan - Rockville, 20852

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The photos on your web site of duplexes, etc all appear to be nice homes. Several of them appear to be from neighborhoods in DC. However, all of them are from neighborhoods that very long ago were zoned for them. Our neighborhoods have always been zoned only for single family homes and have been established as such for years. We relied on the zoning regulations to protect our neighborhoods when

we invested years ago. Further, this will not create so called attainable housing and the title is misleading, as many believe it is synonymous with affordable. There are no limits on pricing, so it is not affordable housing. If a builder or investor buys a home for 1 million and puts up a duplex, he is going to try and make as much profit as possible. So now you have 2 units selling for 1.7 million each and 2 homes more expensive and less attainable than the one you tore down. Additionally, the duplex in all likelihood will look nothing like the home it replaced. To ATTAIN our home in Old Farm my wife and I married in 1972 and lived in an apartment in Adelphi, while I went to law school and worked part time. Kay worked as a teacher in Montgomery County. We sacrificed and saved our money. We drove old beat up cars ,etc. In 1976 when she was pregnant with our daughter we bought a very small old home in silver spring by assuming a mortgage and getting a loan for closing costs. We continued to save and sacrifice while I worked as an assistant states attorney. Kay stopped teaching and stayed home with eventually our 4 kids. In 1982 we bought the home we still live in today and where we raised our 4 kids. That is one way you can ATTAIN a home on very little money! Our 4 kids grew up spending hours building forts and tree houses under and in the trees in our backyard. We had a zip line and a swing set in our back yard and the little ones would sleigh ride down our small hill out front. They played tackle football in Dr Peterson's side yard . Today 3 of our 4 kids have moved back into our neighborhood of Old Farm with 11 of our 14 grandkids. They still play whiffle ball home run derby in our back yard. My daughter Ginny and son Brian both have trampolines in their backyards and a treehouse in Brian's. The little ones still gather at Ginny's to sleigh ride. They play tackle football and soccer in the Worch's yard. The neighborhood boys gather at Ginny's now for whiffle ball games, as they have built a small diamond in her backyard. They raised money for a backstop and pitcher's mound by selling lemonade in the neighborhood outside the Worch's house. You can't do this in a duplex or triplex as there are only postage stamp yards at best! This is the character of our neighborhood we love. What you seek to do to our neighborhood by in fact making housing more expensive and less attainable, is to completely change that character!! Two of our 3 kids actually lived with us, one for 2 years and one for over a year with their kids. They saved their money so they could buy or ATTAIN homes in a neighborhood you seek to completely change. This is how they sacrificed to ATTAIN their homes! Our schools are already overcrowded and our roads are choked with congestion, increasing pollution. We presently have no real parking problems except during school hours but we certainly would develop them! Walter Johnson is 30% overcrowded now and after an addition to Farmland elementary across the street from us, they have 3 portables back in place again. To this you want to add more housing and more people? This is extremely impractical and I don't see how it makes financial sense either? When they put in Montrose pkwy we were told the wooded section would never be built on. They have now bulldozed all the trees and are packing in townhouses on every inch of ground where a small forest existed. There is a huge development going in off Fernwood called Avlyn on the large WTOP field behind where my wife grew up. The homes are packed in there and they have big drainage boxes for front yards and almost no green space! It is extremely out of character with the neighborhood of single family homes you have to drive through to get into it and it has greatly increased the traffic. What's more they haven't even sold all the homes and aren't finished building. All you have to do is drive out 270 to find all sorts of new development and housing going up and it has been for years. These homes allow young people to start small like we did and then move to a single family home. You have allowed bike lanes to be put in on Democracy, Old Georgetown and now Rockville City taking away lanes of travel for cars, further adding to road congestion and pollution. However, there is almost never anyone using the bike lanes!! These established neighborhoods you seek to rezone are sought after because of the quality of living they have afforded to families for years, as we outlined above. You can't have this in a duplex and the roads, parking and schools can't handle anymore cars or people. Our County Executive has already stated there is plenty of available housing in Montgomery County! Additionally, Mr. Elrich has come out against this proposal setting out many of the problems and objections we have tried to bring to your attention. You have no right to take away our right to enjoy our property and quality of life!!

There is already a Judge In Arlington, Va. who has granted a injunction to stop this from happening there! You are supposed to first represent the taxpayers and residents who voted for you and not the builders and investors who are the only ones who will benefit from this proposal, were it to go forward. We really don't understand how this proposal makes any financial or political sense? We believe the vast majority of homeowners in our single family neighborhoods that would be affected by this Re zoning are very much against it but it has received little publicity. To allow this to happen, we believe would amount to an unconstitutional taking of our property rights similar to a condemnation case and we really don't see how the county can justify the overriding public interest that would call for such a radical change to our zoning laws! Thank you for taking the time to read and consider our comments and we hope they will have the desired effect of causing you to put this unprecedented plan to rest forever! We know we speak for the vast majority, if not all of our neighbors. Thank you, Joe and Kay Dugan [REDACTED] Rockville, Md 20852 ———-PS I , Joseph Dugan would very much appreciate the opportunity to clear a time to address both the planning board and the county council on this issue? [REDACTED] —also we don't know how to make a copy of these objections so could you please send us a copy? Thanks so much!

Kate Smith - Chevy Chase, 20815

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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. It fails to maintain historic districts. 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.

Kara Wheatley - Chevy Chase, 20815-5449

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I strongly oppose the Attainable Housing Plan (the "Plan"). The Plan does not include any data supporting how the Plan would bring down the cost of housing, and, indeed, is not targeted to deliver "affordable" housing. The Plan would rezone my home to allow a 19-unit building to be built on our lot. It is notable that if there were 20-unit building were built instead, a certain percentage of those units would need to meet affordable housing requirements. The strong inference is that the Plan was significantly influenced by developers who stand to financially profit from the zoning changes.

While I could financially benefit from the rezoning if I sold my home and a 19-unit building were erected in its place, I strongly oppose the zoning change because, among other things, (i) there is no data to support that the Plan would result in the delivery of affordable housing; (ii) there are a significant number of units to be built in Friendship Heights in the near term, which is not factored into the Plan; (iii) the Plan is a mass rezoning effort that does not include any assessment of the impact on public schools, stormwater drainage (which is a significant issue in the Town of Somerset), parking, traffic, the environment and county and municipal services.

In sum, this proposal, which would massively change our community, is not well thought out and is not supported by data. It should be rejected by the Council.

108 9	Linda Wolpert - Kensington, 20895-3615 We understand that there is a housing shortage, but we do not support the Attainable Housing Strategies project.
109 0	Lenora Lynham - Chevy Chase, 20815 Dear Council Members, My husband and I have been residents of Chevy Chase Village for over 25 years. We firmly oppose the Attainable Housing Strategy Initiative recommended by the Planning Board. We agree with all of the comprehensive and well stated points made in the letter sent by the Board of Managers in Chevy Chase Village. Mr. and Mrs. John M. Lynham, Jr.
109 1	William Voorhees - Chevy chase, 20825 I am against the attainable housing initiatives that are being proposed Our neighborhood is being surrounded by the west bard shopping and condo/apartment development on one side and Bethesda growth on the other side The Montgomery planning council appears to be a marketing arm of the development companies not the citizens that voted you into office Enough is enough Thank you
109 2	Margaret Jones - Bethesda, 20816 I'm AGAINST the AHSI as it currently stands. While I understand the need for more affordable housing in MoCo that is close to public transit, tearing down homes and building duplexes, triplexes, or townhomes will not solve that problem. These new multi-family homes will be very expensive, and therefore cost prohibitive to middle class families. They will only benefit the developers who can make more money than if they redeveloped an old house into a single home (in fact I think there should be more limits on tear downs that are becoming mansions, which are also putting upward pressure on home costs!). PLEASE DO NOT SUPPORT AHSI.
109 3	Richard Crow - Bethesda, 20816 This initiative cannot be approved with no pre-planning studies for the impact on roads, schools, utilities, emergency services, quality of existing environment. We strongly object to the poorly thought through proposal especially when there is no guarantee that the builders will actually build affordable housing but will, instead, just sell larger houses at maximum market value. The attainable housing requirement should be included as a requirement in the multiple major developments that seem to be going on in various major

apartment/condo developments not in unsuitable neighborhoods that cannot absorb the increased infrastructure burden. Our only recourse will be legal action to such a poorly planned approach.

Lewis Bremer - Chevy chase, 20815

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The plan to increase housing in Montgomery County is a straight land theft from current owners and a gift to unworthy developers. I the entire proposition should be rejected by owners, neighbors and any family with children going to school in already-over crowded schools and by those who have to use the already-inadequate public transportation services in the District and Montgomery County.

Maureen Shuler - Chevy Chase, 20815

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I am against this legislation, it will kill the neighborhoods

Lauren Cummings - Chevy Chase, 20815

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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.

Susie Gelman - Chevy Chase, 20815

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To the Members of the County Council:

My husband and I have lived in Chevy Chase Village since 1986. We raised our three children here, and we were both very involved in the effort to designate the Village as an historic district. As part of that effort, we became very familiar with the Master Plan for Montgomery County. Having lived here for nearly 40 years, we have learned to appreciate the unique character and beauty of the Village. We have also seen the many changes in the Friendship Heights area over the past few decades, and we know that more changes are taking place, including the development of hundreds of housing units in the area. Clearly, some of those units will be utilized to address affordable housing needs.

However, the current iteration of AHSI will not accomplish that goal, as it is intended to create a large volume of market rate housing as opposed to affordable housing. I completely endorse the letter that was sent to you by the Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers, which lays out in great detail the various objections to the plan as currently designed. Yes, affordable housing will continue to be a serious need in our community. This plan does not solve the problem it was intended to address. Please pause your efforts and create a real process for addressing community concerns before implementing such a dramatic and far-reaching initiative. Thank you.

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michael maccormack - bethesda, 20817

I urge the Council to reconsider the AHSI recommendations, which will result in unintended consequences including increased housing costs, disrupted community, and worsened infrastructure issues, without addressing the true need for affordable housing.

Moreover, it appears resident questions raised during community listening sessions remain unresolved and the low public awareness regarding the AHSI is disconcerting.

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Cynthia Weinberg - Garrett Park, 20896

Quad-plexes and other types of "Middle housing" should not be built by the right of the owner of property in Garrett Park, Maryland. This initiative will not benefit the community as the market rates will still be high. Using language from your website "It also tends to blend in with common single-family homes" is not acceptable as there will not be strong enough guidelines to enforce a structure that does not blend in.

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Darin Bartram - Kensington, 20895

Dear Members of the County Council,

I would like to offer the following comments on your consideration of the Attainable Housing Strategies document and the legislation that it may spur. I want to note at the outset that I have served as a member of the Town of Kensington Council for more than eleven years. I submit these comments in my individual capacity, because the Town of Kensington has not undertaken to form and adopt a position. But I would also note that I have been actively involved in the town government, including its involvement in the creation of the most recent Kensington Sector Plan, and my comments below reflect that experience.

1. The Attainable Housing Strategies would worsen one of its three stated goals, not further it

One of the three key specific goals for the AHS initiative is to "Create more opportunities for homeownership for more households in more parts of the county." Not a single aspect of the plan approved by the Planning Board would increase home ownership. In fact, it would only increase the potential for rentals. There is no requirement that any single-family site planned for multifamily housing be subdivided. There is not even an incentive to promote home ownership of any multiplex housing.

At a presentation by planning staff this week in the Town of Kensington, Planning staff dismissed the omission of the concept of promoting home ownership of these attainable housing units as a possible future undertaking but it was not part of the approved plan. Indeed, pages 39-41 of the AHS strategies report discuss the potential for future subdivision changes, but it is a complete abdication of the goal of increasing home ownership to not have this be part of the process from the very outset. And, it should not simply be an option for any developer undertaking to build multifamily housing with residential neighborhoods, but it should be strongly encouraged or even required.

If it is merely an option, the developer will elect whatever route provides the greatest profit. Because it is a crucial goal of AHS, promotion of more homeownership should not be left to a developer's whim and pocketbook.

Although I can understand that the County Council might move AHS along even though there are additional integral pieces to develop (such as the pattern book), the County Council simply should not move forward with AHS when there is a gaping hole with one of the three main goals of the underlying initiative.

2. The Attainable Housing Strategies initiative might further one of its other goals, but in a completely perverse and racially fraught manner.

A second goal of AHS is also in grave doubt. That goal is to: Unravel the exclusionary aspects of the county's single-family residential zones to diversify the county's communities by diversifying its housing stock. As noted in the previous discussion, whatever new housing that AHS, as forwarded by the Planning Board, spurs is almost certainly going to be rental units. Accordingly, although it is possible that by virtue of being less expensive rentals, there may be increased diversification of our communities, the Council will be instituting a housing initiative that creates two classes of residents: traditional home-owners will be welcoming new home-renters. Council approval of AHS will institutionalize the benefits of building home equity for the existing home-owners and exclude the benefits of the ability to participate in the intergenerational transfer of wealth from the new renters. The failure to promote or require that new multiplex units be owned units rather than rentals is a pervasive and fatal error of what the Planning Board sent you.

3. Application of AHS only to selected portions of Montgomery County is utterly unjustifiable and inequitable

The Planning Board's recommendation to make AHS applicable only in select portions of the County is without any foundation. There is no meaningful distinction between portions of Potomac which have no stormwater and sewer infrastructure versus the downcounty portions of Montgomery County, including Kensington, where there is such infrastructure but the current demand exceeds 100% of its capacity. Similarly, there is no meaningful distinction between portions of Potomac that have two-lane roads which are at capacity versus six-lane highways in Kensington which are at (or even above) capacity. Any belief that the County will enhance downcounty infrastructure can also be said about upcounty regions. And, both Potomac and Kensington are similarly situated in that both regions have 0% excess capacity in their infrastructure to absorb the increased density contemplated by AHS. The Planning Board's decision to base the scope of AHS on the location of existing infrastructure is completely arbitrary.

4. AHS is a betrayal of previous efforts by municipalities to provide diverse housing options

The Kensington Sector Plan was approved just a dozen years ago, and includes many undertakings to promote a diversity of housing options. Although it continues to recognize single-family homes, it promotes and incentivizes mixed-use development in the center-town region. This undertaking has already resulted in additional and diverse housing options. The Silver Creek project is 100% affordable senior units, which is one of the highest priorities for the County. The Flats of Kensington project is in the permitting phase after having been approved to provide rental units, including 25% affordable. The town government supported these projects.

But, to what end? At the Kensington community meeting with Planning Board member James Hedrick, he explained that it would simply be too hard and time-consuming to consider attainable housing on a sector-plan-by-sector-plan basis. What this does, I'm afraid, is to foster an environment of distrust between municipalities and the County. There would no longer be any reason to trust that hard-fought and intensely-negotiated local plans would be respected by future County Council members seeking to hastily approve future housing priorities on a generalized basis.

Conclusion

There is a saying that, once unsheathed, the Samurai's sword must taste blood. Although this saying is almost certainly apocryphal, the sentiment has more application in the administrative state. Once a concept is developed, there's an inertia that pushes it to conclusion and approval. In this case, the AHS initiative has departed and become untethered from its initial concept of enhancing home ownership opportunities within the single-family zone. To avoid exacerbating existing perceived inequities and disrupting neighborhoods without any resulting benefit, the County Council should return the AHS initiative for serious and searching revisions by the Planning Board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Darin Bartram
Town of Kensington

Daniel Rosenthal - Chevy Chase, 20815

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I strongly oppose this initiative. If the goal is to increase affordable housing, let's focus on affordable house. I think the data that the planning board has based it's recommendation on is flawed and I think the process has been confusing for residents and has not allowed for meaningful feedback from the community (especially when it comes to true notice and a chance to weigh in early). I am extremely concerned that issues of traffic safety, environmental impact and educational impact have not been fully considered. I am picturing my 3 young children playing in front of my house in a quiet street and thinking about what it will be like with multiple times more cars. I feel like this initiative is being driven by special interests, including developers and NOT the interests of the community. Instead, it prioritizes the interests of specific groups over the needs and desires of the broader population. I know you have said that no vote has been scheduled yet but it's clear that this process is far advanced. I strenuously urge you to halt the process, reconsider how we can best increase actual affordable housing and also factor in the major impact this will have on existing communities. If this initiative moves forward, I will not not only NOT support Friedson for County Council or County Executive, I will strongly advise others to do the same and will campaign and donate to a candidate that is listening to their community and not special interests.

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Denise Kearns - Geemantown, 20876

Dear Montgomery County Council,

I am sending this feedback to you because I am adamantly opposed to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. I live upcountry and there is already overcrowding with the current housing situation. Since there is no longer a limit on the number of people living in single family home/multiple last names and approval of relaxed accessory dwelling units/rentals, my neighborhood has changed in a less than positive way. What once was a pleasant, uncrowded neighborhood where I felt safe and relaxed, is now overrun with too many people and cars owned by these additional people parking on the streets, who drive too fast, have loud mufflers etc. If I wanted to live in a NYC burrough, I would move there. Montgomery County has a history of allowing legislation that erodes the serenity and diminished homeowner rights, as I have seen it in the 25 years that I have lived in the county. The AHS will only make these burning issues worse. How can you justify this for the residents who have been funding the county and your jobs? You have no problem raising my taxes and using them for services I don't use yet the public services I care about, like police, highway transportation, code enforcement are overwhelmed and seem to get lesser support and funding.

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Wicca Davidson - Chevy Chase, 20815

The plan to take long established neighborhoods with narrow winding streets and limited street parking to attain housing is seriously flawed.

Why not take the land that used to be White Flint Mall - and build a lower cost housing development there? A metro stop is right there, and you could build a lovely little neighborhood and cap the cost of the houses.

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Jennysue Dunner - Chevy Chase, 20815

To members of the County Council, I urge you to set up an Advisory Commission with a wide representation from residents of the County. This is an important issue and has not been developed in a democratic process. This is said with all due respect to all who have been involved with this issue from the beginning. All that has been successful at this time is an ongoing Coalition of neighborhoods that are joining together

From all over the County. Your job is to listen to the citizens and engage them in part of the problem. As always, ready to help. Jenny Sue

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Anne Clark - Chevy Chase, 20815

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

I am writing to strongly oppose the implementation of the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (AHSI) recommendations for a massive rezoning of 82% of Montgomery County's single-family residential properties.

The proposed rezoning would radically change the character of these neighborhoods and fundamentally change the entire county. The impact on livability under the proposed changes has not been adequately studied and carefully reviewed. The potential impacts on the infrastructure including transportation and parking, utilities, storm drain infrastructure, environmental concerns, and school capacity have not been carefully and thoroughly examined.

Furthermore, the proposal does not address or expand access to housing affordability which has been identified as the most pressing housing issue confronting Montgomery County. It does nothing to demonstrate that eliminating single-family housing would achieve that goal. Instead the recommendations focus on disrupting existing communities and creating a lengthy list of infrastructure and livability issues by creating large scale multiplex units sold at "market value".

I respectfully request that the Council and the Planning Board pause consideration of the AHSI and revisit their overall approach.

Sincerely,
Anne Clark

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Carissa Marino - Chevy Chase, 20815

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. The proposed changes will ruin the character of beautiful residential communities that have provided homes and community to families for many decades (and in some cases over a century). I am keenly aware of the current housing crisis, but I encourage the county to consider options (like altering unused commercial real estate) that don't threaten the quality of life of existing communities. This proposal fixes a relatively recent issue in a way that will destroy beloved and historic neighborhoods that have been treasured for generations. There has got to be a better way forward.

In addition, our home sits half a block away from a stretch of Connecticut Avenue that is already highly congested with extremely narrow and unsafe lanes. Any strategy that increases traffic on this stretch will also decrease safety and increase accidents even further. Increased traffic means our block will no longer be a safe place for our children to play outside. Even now during rush hour cars speed down our block seeking access to Connecticut Avenue. The proposed changes will only exacerbate this issue.

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Stephen Seidel - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Council Members,

I have long supported the County's efforts to achieve more growth near mass transit and to provide increased affordable housing for its residents. I also in principle support modifying SF residential zones if done in a way that is incremental and takes residents' concerns into account. For example, a proposal that allowed duplexes in SF zones consistent with the size of the large houses now being built in them would be acceptable.

The proposal before you goes far beyond such a reasonable step. In fact, the Planning Board went far further than even the professional planning staff recommended. It needs to be dramatically scaled back. In addition, the fact that that the Council has before it a plan so widely opposed by county residents suggests that there is something fundamentally flawed in the process used by the Planning Board to gather and consider public input. I hope you will address both the flaws in the current proposal and rectify the process being used by the Planning Board to arrive at their decisions.

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Stacey Band - Chevy Chase, 20815

SEND AHSI BACK TO PLANNING FOR SUBSTANTIVE REVISIONS

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.

- 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.
- 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.

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 IN ITS CURRENT FORM IS NOT READY FOR MOCO.

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Kathryn Ford - Silver Spring, 20902

NO. I oppose the AHS plan.

If the goal is to provide less expensive homes in the county then the large commercial lots that have sat vacant for years should be where you turn. If commercial property is owned but sits vacant for extensive years it is not serving the community.

The AHS plan would increase demand on utilities, roadways, and schools. Updating the infrastructure should be looked at as the housing situation stands now. Luring more people to areas where such fundamental and essential facilities and services are not in top condition for growth portends new problems for everyone living here.

Homeowners in Montgomery County worked hard to save and purchase their current homes. Just because home values have increased over the years doesn't not mean that current owners were/are wealthy and not diverse. We started with a small house in Viers Mill Village, saved, and in 1984 moved into our current home.

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Eric Heidenberger - Chevy Chase, 20815

We strongly oppose rezoning our neighborhood. We invested our life savings to buy our home given the current single home, low density layout. It would be a drastic change in a historic neighborhood. Increasing units/residents would oversaturate the neighborhood. We already have limited street parking with many houses not having driveways. We also fear that the change in zoning will attract outside investors and developers to flip properties for profit. This is a small close-knit neighborhood where residents spend 30-40 years in the same home. We feel that there are other areas in Montgomery County that are better suited for multi-unit development.

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William and Johanna Kramer - Chevy Chase, 20815-3904

We have been Montgomery County residents since 1974. Our two children also are Montgomery County residents and homeowners.

We consider the AHSI to be extremely ill-advised and misdirected, for the following reasons, among others:

Over time, it would destroy one of the county's most valuable assets – its beautiful single-family residential neighborhoods.

It would impose sweeping changes in zoning law without considering the circumstances of individual covered areas within the county.

It would not provide affordable housing, but instead would likely have the reverse effect.

It fails to take into account serious likely adverse consequences, including increased traffic congestion, and other infrastructure and environmental impacts.

It would implement a model designed for urban areas where undeveloped land is scarce or nonexistent, while Montgomery County has large expanses of undeveloped land, including land designated to be used for new housing construction.

For these and other reasons, we strongly oppose approving the AHSI.

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Susanna Montezemolo - Chevy Chase, 20815

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I fully support the initiative and think it is essential to getting more reasonably-priced housing options in my neighborhood in the Town of Chevy Chase. Thank you for your leadership on this matter.

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Stewart Mader - Kensington, 20895

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I write to express my strong support for the proposed Montgomery County Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. To help address the ongoing housing shortage and high prices in Montgomery County, giving property owners the flexibility to build middle housing types, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and small apartment buildings would give more people who want to live in Montgomery County the opportunity to purchase homes in their price range. In Kensington Parkwood, the neighborhood where I live, developers routinely purchase older housing stock and replace it with new-build, single-family homes that are much larger than the housing they replace. Similarly-sized new-build structures with middle housing such as duplexes or triplexes could easily be accommodated in this neighborhood and others like it. Increasing density in the areas of Montgomery County closest to Washington DC helps protect and preserve the open space and agricultural area areas in Upcounty, and reduces exurban sprawl that contributes to unwalkable, car-centric development patterns. Gentle increases in density in Downcounty and Midcounty would strengthen compact, walkable, transit-supporting development that has positive impacts for residents of all ages.

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libby kurry - Chevy Chase, 20815

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I am against the proposed rezoning, and share many of my neighbors views. I previously forwarded a letter from Marty Langelan, a resident of Martin's Addition to all the Councilmembers, as he was able to express my views. I believe in affordable housing, but this attainable housing proposal is for the benefit builders and developers.

111 5	<p>James Castanino - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>The lack of transparency, little to no focus on infrastructure, minimal neighborhood/community engagement and absurd breadth of this proposal should have all rendered it dead on arrival. Any council member who supports this has lost my vote and I will actively work with my community to prevent this legislation from implementation in its current form.</p>
111 6	<p>Conor Jeffers - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I am absolutely AGAINST this initiative. This does nothing to address "attainable housing" while simultaneously changing the entire landscape of the county and negatively impacting every day life for thousands of MoCo residents. I have yet to meet a single MoCo resident who supports this ridiculous initiative and most have voiced to me they will leave the area entirely if this were to become law. Just look 10 miles south to Virginia where a judge recently struck down this same initiative - it is unlawful and it is incredibly unpopular with the electorate.</p> <p>Why not focus first on the dying office parks around the county? These complexes are emptying out as companies shrink their physical footprint and relocate to more urban office environments such as Bethesda, Pike & Rose, etc. Those areas alone could support thousands of new housing units (townhomes, apartments, condos, etc.) and most have the surrounding infrastructure to support the density. Single family neighborhoods DO NOT have the infrastructure - has the county even considered the environmental impact of this such as storm water drainage? The neighborhoods you are focusing on are old and already undergoing dramatic pipe replacement projects just to be able to support the current density.</p> <p>I really cannot imagine a worse piece of legislation. I can assure you there will be a political price to pay for any council member who supports it.</p>
111 7	<p>Karen Mason - Cabin John, 20818</p> <p>The strategies will likely benefit no one but the developers. Adding apartments, duplexes, etc. will not be any more affordable to those unable to purchase a single-family home. Parking will become an issue. Surrounding homes may lose value, not increase it. The county will lose more of its already diminishing tree canopy. I see far more cons to this than pros.</p>
111 8	<p>Virginia Ceaser - Chevy Chase, 20815</p> <p>I have been a homeowner in this area for over 40 years and have lived with the consequences of unchecked, poorly-planned development in my community. How many of you have witnessed ambulances totally stuck in traffic while attempting to drive down Wisconsin or Connecticut Avenues in rush "hours" that last most of the day? Or deal with flooded basements for the first time in years? Or visiting your child's classroom where the numbers of children mandate a teacher's aide must be assigned but it doesn't happen! Or school buses must reassign stops because they are too bit to navigate the older, narrower streets where cars are parked! And you want MORE density? Try visiting our neighborhoods sometime. Try navigating our streets and avenues, Try visiting our children's classrooms. Listen to the voices I</p>

heard in the virtual session on zoom. They represented so many neighborhoods and the great majority expressed these same concerns: crowded roadways and classrooms, existing aging infrastructure and a deteriorating quality of life.

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Elizabeth Katz - Chevy Chase, 20815

I have lived in Somerset (1980-89) and Kenwood (1989-present) for more than four decades. I see that in areas just adjacent to our neighborhood there are many multiple family units. Some provide housing for people of modest incomes, others for the more affluent. Given the property values of Somerset, Kenwood and nearby developments I wonder why it makes sense to potentially lower the value of our homes by introducing housing that clearly does not mix with existing properties. My guess is that such a plan would result in less revenue from our taxes as our home value would decline.

Also, given the value of properties in this area what developer would bother to build low income housing? I think you would incentivize more high end condo development in a residential neighborhood whose beauty has endured for more than 100 years. There is a glut of apartments in downtown Bethesda and empty office buildings (the Marriott HQ being one that appears to have 20 empty floors!). If there is such an immediate crisis in housing why doesn't the county create incentives for developers and building owners to convert their existing empty space and provide housing in the urban center that not only promise jobs to inhabitants but easy access with metro and public transportation? I fear that the county is again catering to avaricious

Developers who promise to build affordable housing but really intend to find ways to build luxury units.

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Charles Collins-Chase - Chevy Chase, 20815

As a Montgomery County resident, I oppose the AHSI for several reasons. At a high level, the proposed zoning changes would have irreversible and enormous impacts for residents, which would be felt very differently by residents in different parts of the county. The intended benefits of the plan, which are speculative at best, would come at the expense of guaranteed negative impacts that would fall disproportionately on a subset of county residents. Those negatives have not been adequately identified, discussed, or quantified, much less mitigated in the current plan. This is precisely the kind of equitable issue that the County Council is charged with avoiding. In short, the sweeping changes the plan proposes have not been sufficiently shown to have benefits that would outweigh the certainty of negative consequences for current residents. Even if the plan worked precisely as intended, the benefits are purely aspirational, but the negatives are guaranteed and could not be undone. Such a plan is per se inadequate and should be rejected.

First, the rezoning recommendations reflect woefully insufficient analysis of the likely impacts on county residents, including on quality of life, parking, schools, and traffic, among others. The AHSI fails even to quantify these risks to residents, much less propose solutions. No plan should be approved if it fails to address these issues to the satisfaction of the residents who would have to endure both the foreseen and unforeseen consequences of the changes.

Second, the AHSI fails to provide any evidence that the zoning recommendations would in any way lead to more attainable housing. On the contrary, the zoning changes would be a boondoggle for developers and real estate prospectors, allowing them to take unattainable, single-

family homes and turn them into a greater number of similarly unattainable properties and make an enormous profit in the process. The AHSI contains no safeguards whatsoever to prevent this kind of profiteering. Instead, it removes local restrictions that currently serve to protect neighborhoods from development by moneyed interests and developers who have no intention to live in the areas they are profiting from.

Third, the AHSI divests towns in the county of any meaningful control of how their neighborhoods function. The noble goal of creating more attainable housing should not be achieved by destroying all local control and allowing profit-minded, non-resident developers to benefit from more lax restrictions than the town residents have long followed for their own homes.

Fourth, the AHSI fails to address the impact of the zoning changes in a variety of environmental areas, including tree canopy, stormwater management and runoff, and car use. The failure to address these issues of course means that no solutions have been proposed.

Fifth, the AHSI is more aggressive than even the earlier discussions and recommendations of County Councilmembers. For example, without explanation or justification, the proposal extends walkshed further than had been discussed in the leadup to the AHSI. This would have enormous impacts on residents and is merely another example of how the plan reflects inadequate analysis of how goals must be balanced against impacts and negative externalities.

Finally, I oppose the AHSI because the large amount of public opposition to (and confusion about) the zoning changes reflect an acute need to pause this process and address residents' questions and concerns. No plan should be passed when residents have expressed such substantial concerns. The goal of a representative democracy is to advance policies that the majority believes will improve their lives. Although no plan will ever have universal support, it is clear that this plan has such substantial opposition that the Council must conduct further analysis to remedy the now-identified shortcomings and resident concerns.

John Kester - Silver Spring, 20901

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Not a workable idea especially with Homeowners Associations with fixed Declarations and lot to owner Assessments. Also, we already have problems with some parking hogs taking up many more than the developer designed common parking areas.

Liz Sims - Chevy Chase, 20815

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I have been a resident of Chevy Chase Village for 1 month. My husband, two kids and I moved here from a short distance of three miles away. We moved here because of the proximity to Blessed Sacrament School as well as the incredible beauty of this (one of the last in my opinion) historically preserved and historically cared for neighborhoods in the United States. Our home is two blocks from Chevy Chase circle and 1 block off Conn ave. I was shocked to hear that the quaint avenue that is two blocks from our house was going to be completely rebuilt into multi family multi million dollar homes. I viewed the sample homes and these are expensive homes crammed together and wrapped in the facade that they are at a price point, that provides financially "attainable" options to new residents. This is just an overcrowded development proposal which turns the surrounding historical churches into a tacky under- thought about and overpopulated,

Tyson's corner. My biggest concern is the lack of research that has been done on the impact of the added population to the surrounding community's infrastructure.

- The safety of our schools and churches will be impacted (infrastructure/garbage removal/parking)

-Pedestrian Safety - the biggest charm of this area is walk-ability. Conn ave is not surrounded by empty fields and open land. It's surrounded by FAMILIES and HOMES. These families walk to everything. Most importantly we walk to church and school. As it is, crossing the streets nearest to school is difficult- and adding thousands of new residents and CARS to Chevy Chase circle presents a huge safety risk. We don't have blinking cross walks, we don't have speed bumps. You need to research the traffic patterns especially during rush hour times to determine if the stop signs and methods currently in place to manage traffic and pedestrian safety is sufficient for the increased population.

My front door is on Brookville road and there is no stop sign currently. When traffic is backed up on Conn ave often cars cut in and Brookville road backs up for the length of the road. Have you evaluated the impact of speeding cars cutting through our neighborhood? As it currently is, the cars coming from Conn ave roll through stop signs, take dangerous fast right turns and zip through streets without looking. They are mostly cutting over to East West High Way. Adding thousands of cars to this area without evaluating the support systems in place will put our kids at risk.

This is not a rant. This is a request to ask that you take MORE TIME to evaluate whether you have the infrastructure in place to properly support the proposed added populations.

Lastly, one of the reasons we appreciate Chevy Chase Village is the fact that the community is involved in approving changes that we all see. WE are a community and we care about the environment and about ensuring that change is thoughtfully navigated with diligent research and careful adjustment. We believe in change but we believe in respecting the neighborhoods and families who have chosen to build their lives here.

I am asking you to take more time before dropping an entire new neighborhood on top of one that already exists without caring about how it may impact the children and families who have chosen to build their life here.

Thank you.

Ian Friedman - Chevy Chase, 20815

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I strongly object to the AHSI and will vote against councilmembers who approve it. I worked hard for many years to buy my small house on a small lot. I love being surrounded by similar small scale buildings and greenery and my investment and settled expectations merit protection. The AHSI will not increase affordable housing but will allow developers to profit from creating expensive new market rate units. The AHSI also is based on unreasonable assumptions and a lack of study. For example, new residents will have cars and need parking even if they live within a mile of Metro. Even if they take mass transit to work, they will need cars for everything else. Please stop this ill conceived project being promoted by developers, those influenced by developers, and the currently fashionable community of urban planners.

112 4	Margaret Goldsborough - Garrett Park, 20896 I attended the BCC "Listening" event and had a detailed report from neighbors who attended the Gaithersburg event. One important take-away from Gaithersburg was that the county has done a very poor job of monitoring the ADU program already in place. How about getting that right before you consider other measures profoundly affecting the citizenry and the nature of the county's distinct neighborhoods? I strenuously oppose the Attainable Housing Plan that would undermine the character of my town and the largest financial investment of my life. I will energetically oppose this ill-conceived plan and the individuals promoting it.
112 5	John Wallerstedt - Kensington, 20895 I am against the proposed AHS initiative in its current form.
112 6	Jerold Principato - Chevy Chase, 20815 I strongly oppose the County's attainable housing initiative for the Kenwood subdivision of Chevy Chase. As a resident of this single family home community for over 50 years, permitting anything other than single family homes with the current zoning and setback restrictions will crush the soul of this community that is already ravaged by the mess that has been made on Little Falls Parkway. We are besieged by cut through traffic at high rates of speed since motorists are so aggravated by the traffic jams at all times of the day that have turned Little Falls Parkway into a parking lot. We welcome tourists for weeks during the cherry blossom season with gladness. The character of this neighborhood will be changed completely with multifamily housing units. Further, it will devalue our properties enormously and likely cause residents to flee to other areas or other states. Nobody who lives here wants this change. People who purchase and maintain homes in Kenwood have a reasonable expectation that the neighborhood would always be a single family home neighborhood. Anything other than that will increase on-street parking, creating more traffic challenges on our streets that are already dangerous. Please do not destroy our neighborhood with this initiative. Thank you J
112 7	Matthew Gelfand - Chevy Chase, 20815 To the Montgomery County Council - This message is to express my STRONG opposition to the Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative for several reasons.

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- 1) If I understand the proposal correctly, it would relieve developers of a number of zoning restrictions that are now in place which would create a chaotic array of development in the affected areas and put the quality of our neighborhoods at risk.
 - 2) The affected areas are now vibrant, friendly, and collegial neighborhoods of homeowners. The proposal would weaken these bonds by imposing nonresident-owned rental properties into the mix. Moreover, the owners of such multi-unit properties would have no personal connections to the neighborhoods.
 - 3) Ironically, and paradoxically, in our neighborhood - North Chevy Chase - the County in just the last two years approved the demolition of more than 200 garden apartments and (still to be done) town houses that are or were solid brick construction, quite attractive, with ample off-street parking and open green spaces. Importantly, these 200+ units were already AFFORDABLE units, and are in the process of being replaced by a smaller number of luxury town houses that will sell for \$1.5 million, \$2 million or more and will be unaffordable. So, the County has allowed the destruction of 200 affordable units and the Planning Department now is proposing the potential destruction of single-family homes in a vital and vibrant neighborhood in order to build 200 additional dwelling units. What the Department hopes to add with one hand it has already taken away with the other hand.
 - 4) Even the County Executive, Mark Elrich, who is a strong supporter of affordable housing, has acknowledged that the Planning Department's proposal is overreaching and unnecessary. As Mr. Elrich notes, there is ample, open land available to accommodate constructing affordable housing near public transportation or other amenities and no need to impinge upon neighborhoods of existing, single-family homes. Again, in our own neighborhood, North Chevy Chase, there is a large tract of land that the County already owns and which is partly developed - the site of the Chevy Chase Library on Connecticut Avenue. This land could accommodate a few hundred apartments within walking distance of a new Purple Line station at Chevy Chase Lake, and could include a vital amenity - a reconstructed public library on the lower floors of one of the buildings.

For these reasons and others, I strongly oppose the Planning Department's Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. Its possible benefits would pale in magnitude to the costs and damages it would wreak on our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,
Matthew Gelfand

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Stuart Dwyer - Chevy Chase, 20815

I live in the Brookdale neighborhood of Friendship Heights and want to register my strong opposition to the so-called Attainable Housing Strategy and broad-brush efforts to do away with single family zoning.

1400 multifamily housing units are currently under construction or planned for delivery in this neighborhood within the next several years. Five blocks down River Road hundreds of townhomes and apartments are under construction at Westbard.

I am not opposed to this development.

What does concern me is the flawed rationale underlying Priority Housing Districts that assumes Metro is the answer to the transit needs of ever-denser settlement. Studies indicate trips increasingly take place between “activity centers,” not suburbs to downtown & back, for which Metro was largely conceived over 50 years ago. Incoming residents who will occupy these new developments will have cars, and they will cause congestion absent far more aggressive public transit development than anything I’ve seen contemplated.

Allowing multiplexes in Brookdale’s narrow streets, which were designed for single family homes, would compound those issues exponentially.

I strongly urge the Council to reject, or substantially revise, the proposals under consideration. Let’s leverage our infill opportunities where they make sense – including office conversions -- and let’s be much more aggressive about developing the world class transit required as a foundation for growth.

In closing, I would note that the smart growth movement was built in part on the notion that the opinions of those living in neighborhoods impacted by planning decisions mattered. Sadly, those claiming the mantle of that movement now appear to have reverted to the “we know best, get out of the way” approach that characterized a previous generation of urban planners.

Ironically, while many of those groups claim to speak for working class communities, in Thrive 2050 (on which these proposals are based) the voice of the latter came through most authentically in the following statement: The plight of the working class (sic) and many BIPOC people we talked to felt that the needs of working-class families were not considered in the planning themes of Thrive.”

The current Attainable Housing Strategy is not the answer. Jane Jacobs once said “As in all Utopias, the right to have plans of any significance belonged only to the planners in charge.” I hope the Council will ensure that we don’t go down that road again. Thank you.

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Julie Lees - Silver Spring, 20910

I am writing to express my opposition to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative currently under review as the basis for a potential zoning text amendment.

I live in North Woodside, an inside-the-beltway neighborhood with Craftsmen bungalows, narrow streets, undersized lots, and a below average tree canopy. We would be a Priority Housing District. A neighborhood street, Columbia Blvd., falls within 500 feet of the Georgia Avenue Growth Corridor, so developers could replace existing homes with apartment buildings. The rest of the neighborhood would be eligible for quadplexes under the Small Scale guidelines.

Our neighborhood includes attainable smaller homes. AHSI would allow developers to buy them and replace them with more expensive units in multi-family dwellings, possibly with absentee landlords with uncertain commitment to upkeep and the community. The yet-to-be-developed Planning Book would likely not be legally enforceable and would not reflect the architectural style of our community.

AHSI greatly increases the power of developers by allowing them to increase density by right on R60 lots, while imposing limited requirements regarding the design of the new structures. This leaves existing neighborhoods with few tools to protect tree canopy, manage parking and water runoff. The result will be large structures with either one or two driveways leading to parking lots in rear yards, decimating the tree canopy. Also, Planning Board members and staff recommend reduced parking requirements, counter to current market demand and real-life family requirements. North Woodside's streets are narrow and heavily parked already.

The Council is considering reducing the developer's tax through the Growth and Infrastructure Policy. Combined with AHSI, this would increase density while reducing infrastructure funding.

Our downcounty area has ample potential housing in the pipeline. Lyttonsville's Sector Plan increases permitted single family homes and townhouses from 499 to 1,334 and permitted multifamily units increases from 2,864 to 5,577. At the Forest Glen metro site, 2,186 units are approved. Our area cannot handle ever-increasing density.

Given the price of lots in our area, developers are far more likely to build expensive new duplexes or triplexes than "attainable" alternatives that will meet the county's goal of making communities more equitable and more inclusive.

This policy extracts nothing from developers, does not address fundamental questions from residents regarding parking, environmental impact and lacks incentives for affordable or attainable housing. Please vote no.

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Clarke Camper - CHEVY CHASE, 20815

I appreciate the intent of the proposal but it is a terrible idea that will have significant negative impacts on thriving single-family communities. Allowing developers to place multi family housing in existing single family communities will harm Montgomery County in the long run by diminishing the attractiveness of such communities and lowering property values. I urge you in the strongest way possible not to advance this proposal.

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Elizabeth Dalgard - Chevy Chase, 20815

Dear Members of the Montgomery County Council,

As a resident and homeowner in Montgomery County, I respectfully ask the council to reconsider the proposed Attainable Housing Strategies Zoning Changes. While well-intentioned, the plan as currently drafted is a one-size-fits-all mandate, giving little or no consideration to the unique needs or interests of specific neighborhoods and communities.

As a resident of the Chevy Chase Village Historic District, I am particularly concerned that the new zoning rules would significantly undermine generations of successful preservation efforts to maintain the historic character and architectural significance of this neighborhood. Homeowners in the county’s historic districts must abide by strict rules and reviews by the Historic Preservation Commission in order to update or modify their homes. However, the new zoning rules would give property owners and real estate developers free reign to significantly modify, or replace, these homes with multifamily housing units.

The new rules would allow any homeowner – even in the historic district – to convert their single-family home to a duplex or triplex “by right.” Additionally, most of the village historic district would fall within a “Priority Housing District” due to its proximity to the Friendship Heights Metro Station, meaning that historic homes could be demolished and replaced with “quadplexes.” Finally, approximately 160 properties within the Village are located within 500 feet of Connecticut or Wisconsin Avenues, which are identified as “major growth corridors,” thereby allowing up to four-story apartment buildings with up to 19 units each on these properties.

This development is not only unwanted by our neighborhood, it is in direct conflict with the stated goals of the county’s Historic Preservation Commission and Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code. At a minimum, the new zoning rules should make clear that these changes do not apply to historic properties or to neighborhoods designated as historic districts.

I am also concerned with how this proposal will affect our current infrastructure and environment, as no studies have been completed regarding this aspect of the rezoning project.

I am in support of attainable housing within Montgomery County, but this rezoning proposal currently only benefits developers who will buy properties, tear them down to build multi-unit residences, and sell them at market value, not at an affordable housing rate. As Marc Elrich has stated, this proposal is a fraud.

Thank you for your consideration.

113 Katherine Hample - Chevy Chase, 20815

2 Completely against this. I think it is very irresponsible to be this reckless with establish zoning in residential neighborhoods. I don't understand how we can have multifamily next to traditional residential. There is a better way to achieve attainable housing. But throwing up multi unit structures within an established historical neighborhood seems irresponsible and I am completely against it. This is a developer dream and a homeowners nightmare.

113 Michael Goldman - Chevy Chase, 20815

3 I am strongly opposed to this Initiative. It will not provide affordable housing. It might well reduce the stock of less expensive residences in the County, will cause severe disruption to our neighborhoods as no planning was done for all the necessary infrastructure changes, including traffic! And it will provide a windfall for developers. This initiative reflects an actual corruption in our government as it disguises developers ambitions under the cloak of affordable housing. It is quite CYNICAL.

113 Ann Toch - Chevy Chase, 20815

4 I am a resident of Chevy Chase Village. My husband and I own a home at [REDACTED] We would like to express our opposition to the zoning changes being contemplated for our neighborhood for all of the reasons spelled out in the recent letter sent to the County Council on October 17 from the Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers.

113 Darryl Edelstein - Chevy Chase, 20815

5 I am totally opposed to the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative for Montgomery County. I think this zoning plan will be disastrous for our neighborhood. I understand the goal of the plan is to make more attainable housing in the County and while this is a worthwhile goal and may be achievable and desirable in certain parts of Montgomery County, it will be neither achievable nor desirable in Chevy Chase Section 5. Firstly, as regards to our neighborhood I am not sure for whom this plan will make housing more attainable. This is not designed to address affordable housing and as such the market will dictate the price of these new multi-unit dwellings. If the new apartments in Chevy Chase Lake are anything to go by they will be sold at top dollar well in excess of \$1 million. The only people this will be attainable for are those that can already afford to buy houses in the neighborhood. Secondly it will be disastrous for our neighborhood in terms of schools, traffic, parking, storm management and many other factors. BCC High school is already beyond full capacity and there is no more land at the site for further expansion of the school. Has the County drawn up plans for building another high school to accommodate the increased number of children that will result from this new zoning plan? Traffic is already really bad and will only get worse. I invite you to drive down our street Williams Lane which is very narrow and already can't accommodate two cars if any cars are parked on the street and explain to me where all the additional cars will be parked. Lowering the required parking per unit from 2 to .75 will only make matters worse. It is already very difficult for emergency vehicles to come down our street and adding all these additional cars will only make it

more unsafe. What about stormwater management and sewerage which is already at capacity – what plans have been drawn up to accommodate what will be needed? From the listening events I have attended and everything I have read the County has failed to address any of our concerns and have no answers to our questions regarding this yet somehow think its okay to move forward without adequate plans in place and that somehow the pieces will magically fall into place. This is totally unfeasible and totally unreasonable. The only ones that will benefit from this plan are the developers. As the CFO of a real estate company I understand the economics of this and I am sure the developers are chomping at the bit to take advantage of this new zoning plan which could spell huge profit that will come at our expense. I strongly urge you to vote no on this new zoning plan. As mentioned before I am sure there are certain neighborhoods that could benefit from this plan and are in favor of it and a more laser focused approach to address this should be made to determine which neighborhoods benefit and which ones don't. Ours clearly does not and we are being hurt by this blanket approach to zoning.

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Rick Hellings - Chevy Chase, 20815

This plan will destroy neighborhoods and create housing nightmares. Homeowners will face skyrocketing property taxes, devastating reductions to home values, and a destruction of their neighborhoods. High rises and multi family homes in our community will not solve the housing issue, just make it worse. Please don't destroy our communities with this senseless plan.

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Mary Sheehan - CHEVY CHASE, 20815

I have been a happy resident of Montgomery County for over 30 years. Never have I been more disappointed and shocked by the actions of the MoCo County Council and Planning Board. I am unalterable opposed to the AHSI. It would change the character of our communities and the nature of our neighborhoods irreversibly.
I attended one the Listening Session at BCC High School. I am in full agreement with the residents who spoke in opposition to the proposed plan. It should be clear from those comments how deep and wide the opposition to the plan is. The Council needs to listen to the vast majority of residents and drop this thoughtless, hasty and detrimental plan!!

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John Sharrow - Chevy Chase, 20815

October 18, 2024.

As resident of Martin Addition since 1968, and have listened and understand the issues with the Attainable Housing strategies. It is certainly favors property developers sponsored by local politicians.

I opposed any legislation that would pass the Attainable Housing Strategies.