

RE: Testimony in Support of ZTA 20-07: Missing Middle Housing

Thank you to Council President Hucker and councilmembers for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important issue. My name is Berk Ehrmantraut and I live in Silver Spring. I am writing to you in strong support of building more “missing middle” housing, such as duplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings, in Montgomery County.

I’m fortunate to have a good job with good pay that allows me to rent a studio apartment on my own not far from the Metro. I love living here, and eventually I’d like to be able to buy a home here. As someone in my twenties without a family yet, I don’t need a detached single-family home. A townhome or condo would be plenty of space for me to purchase my first home, but without expanded “missing middle” housing there aren’t very many options, especially at an affordable price.

I’m fortunate to be able to afford to live here right now, but that is not true for everybody. Because Montgomery County is a great place to live, lots of people (like me!) want to live here, and we should diversify the type of housing available to increase our housing stock and allow that to be a reality. We should be striving for a county where everyone can find an affordable place to live.

Therefore, I urge you to take up and support bold initiatives to legalize middle housing types in Montgomery County, especially near transit and neighborhoods historically off-limits to people with lower incomes and people of color.

Thank you,

Berk Ehrmantraut
Silver Spring, MD