

I am writing to oppose the Montgomery County's proposal to forego reducing the real property tax rate to fully offset increasing property assessments.

The property assessment process already disadvantages owners of older, small houses by constantly inflating the "value" of the land without consideration of the house. This leads to valuations that are out of line with the prices home owners can actually command should they sell.

The county's proposal to forego reducing the property tax rate will have the effect of further pressuring elderly owners on fixed incomes like my wife and me to sell our modest homes to developers who will build mini mansions that will command higher taxes.

Rather than endlessly increasing our property taxes, the county should focus on negotiating seriously with its unionized employees to lower costs and making a serious commitment to economic development that brings new jobs and income.

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