

November 15, 2021

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

Dear County Councilmembers:

I wanted to provide comments on the Redistricting process.

First, I would like to thank the Redistricting Committee for their time and efforts. They had a complex task and had to accomplish it with a very tight schedule.

I live in the Layhill View subdivision, which is part of Layhill, which is a Census-designated tract. I have lived in Layhill since 1982. I feel the wishes of the residents of Layhill have not been taken into consideration in the Redistricting process, like others have in the County.

I am writing to request that the entire Layhill, a Census-designated tract, be moved to the East County District. I think Layhill, which is a Census-designated tract (CDP), should ideally be with Olney. However, since Leisure World was moved, it appears the path is not straight to Olney, which is where most people in Layhill have in common. **Therefore, I am recommending that the Council consider moving Layhill CDP to the new East County (District 5) or proposed District 7 (option 2).**

I support proposed maps from citizens, who have incorporated Layhill into District 5 or District 7. I am opposed to Map 1 as it includes Layhill in District 6, which is not preferred.

Layhill has nothing in common with the new proposed District 6 and has never had anything in common. The residents of Layhill have been subjected to lower-level grocery stores and shopping having to go other areas to shop for groceries, including Cherry Hill in East County, Burtonsville in East County, and Olney, as well as places outside of Montgomery County.

Layhill CDP has a population of 5,764 with the following demographics based on the 2020 Census (Please see below for the full statistics on Layhill):

- 31.4% White
- 40.6% Black
- 18.8% Asian
- 13.0% Latino

I think Map 1 (e.g., the Redistricting Committee's selected map) incorrectly places the entire northern border for Layhill CDP as Bel Pre/Norwood. Map 1 does not account for the northern part of the Layhill CDP.

Below is information about Layhill, according to the Census 2020 (see Figure 1):

- The southern border of Layhill CDP is Indian Springs/Popular Run.
- The western border of Layhill CDP is Rippling Brook.
- The eastern border of Layhill CDP is the Northwest Branch and is situated next to Cloverly.
- A northern portion of Layhill CDP is Norvale Road and Layhill Road (shown by the Red Arrow) (Figure 2). This is above Bel Pre/Norwood.
- There is another northern area that goes up Layhill Road past Longmead Rd and is the tip of the Layhill CDP border, which is very close to 200 (Figure 2) (shown by Blue Arrow)
- There is another border for the Layhill CDP that dips just after Morton Hall and Norwood Rd, as well as, Alderton Lane, and then continues along Norwood Road to Cloverly.

Figure 1

Census 2020 Map of Layhill, Census-designated tract (CDP)

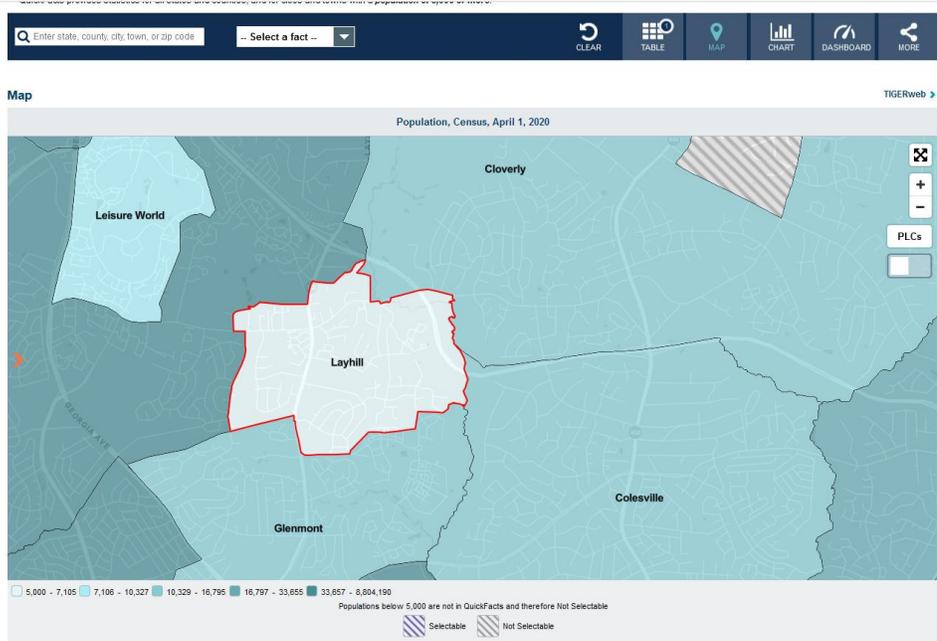
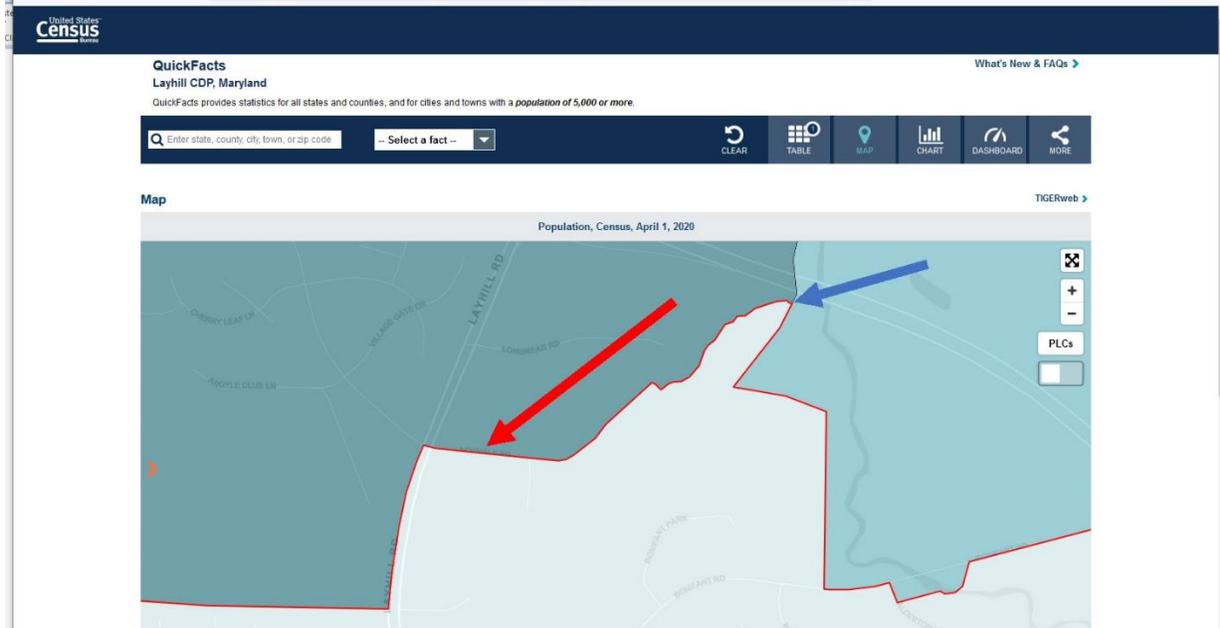


Figure 2

Map showing the northern borders of Layhill



RECOMMENDATION

Option 1 - Preferred

1. Factor the northern parts of the Layhill CDP (e.g., Norvale and the tip that is closest to 200) into the equation, which would not break up the Layhill CDP and validate all of Layhill CDP moving to the new East County District very easily.

Option 2 –

1. Move Leisure World to be part of District 7. This would allow Layhill to move to District 7 as well.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

1. The community was not afforded the opportunity to review the three maps, prior to the final selection, in **an interactive format**. So, it was very difficult to determine where the lines were drawn.
2. Map 1 won with a 6-5 vote. A report from the dissenting Commissioners was voted down or not agreed upon. I feel a report from the dissenting/"minority" Commissioners, who did not agree with the final map selection, should be allowed so that the Council and the public can have a full understanding of why Map 1 was the Commission's choice. The Commissioners rejected the idea of a "minority" report, which would have been a report by those who dissented. The commissioners rejected the idea because they stated the process was not followed. It appeared that they did not have a clear process, even though the chair stated they did. I feel a decision should have been made upfront that the process would include all information about how they made their decision for the selected map, including some of the concerns that may have been expressed by opposing Commissioners and whether their concerns were addressed or not. The Commissioners should not have had to vote on what constituted a "full" and "transparent" report.
3. It appeared that the "true" Mid-County, which is where Layhill is located, was not given much consideration from its residents about what areas they felt they had in "common with", which is the phrase that was used when considering to draw the lines.
4. I am very concerned that Layhill, which is Census-designated place, has been split. Northern part of Layhill is in another district.
5. Layhill is being forced to be a part of Wheaton and Glenmont. There are no commonalities, except for the road being used. The border for Layhill is Popular Run and goes north to 200 and east to the Northwest Branch (See Appendix A). Layhill should be with Olney or the new East County district.
6. Why wasn't Takoma, Forest Corners, and downtown Silver Spring aligned with either the new District 6 or East County District 5 since there may be more commonalities? This would free up Layhill to go to East County. However, I have heard those residents did not want to be aligned and their wishes were granted. Please give the same consideration to the residents of Layhill.
7. The Commission had a complex task and a very tight schedule. However, they appeared disorganized at times. For example, on the day that they were set to vote on the final map, an amendment was made to an original motion. The attorney, Mr. Drummer, stated that they could not amend a motion unless the person who made the motion honors it. So, the amendment was not allowed. Then, the commissioners voted based on the parliamentary procedure that the attorney stated. After the commissioners voted, then the attorney stated that he made a mistake. Based on Robert's Rule parliamentary procedure, an amendment can be made to a motion and then a vote can be taken on the amendment. An acceptance of a motion by the person making the original motion is not in Robert's Rules or most parliamentary procedures. Finally, the commissioners were allowed to properly vote on the amendment, but it did not make a difference since I think the Commissioners already had decided their positions.

Again, it was very difficult for the public to understand where the lines were drawn on the three proposed maps since the resolution was very poor on the three maps that were posted late on the

commissions' website. After Map 1 was selected, then an interactive feature of Map 1 was posted on the site. TOO LATE! However, the public never got to view an interactive map of the other two maps, which were not selected. I feel if we have seen an interactive version of all of the maps, the public could have understood the redistricting process better.

The Commission stated that they were not bound to have a public hearing prior to submission of their proposed map to the Council. This is a very critical process and a forum specifically for that should be allowed the next time this is done. The public was not allowed the opportunity to provide "formal" input.

CONCLUSION

Please consider moving Layhill to District 5 or District 7. This is an opportunity for correction.

Thanks for any and all consideration given.

Sincerely,

Pat Grant
Resident – Layhill, Maryland

- **Statistics – Layhill CDP** (See below or [click HERE](#))

Race and Hispanic Origin

White alone, percent	□□ 31.4%	□□ 76.3%
Black or African American alone, percent(a)	□□ 40.6%	□□ 13.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent(a)	□□ 0.0%	□□ 1.3%
Asian alone, percent(a)	□□ 18.8%	□□ 5.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent(a)	□□ 0.0%	□□ 0.2%
Two or More Races, percent	□□ 6.5%	□□ 2.8%
Hispanic or Latino, percent(b)	□□ 13.0%	□□ 18.5%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	□□ 23.3%	□□ 60.1%

Population Characteristics

Veterans, 2015-2019	221	18,230,322
Foreign born persons, percent, 2015-2019	37.6%	13.6%

Housing

Housing units, July 1, 2019, (V2019)	<u>X</u>	139,684,244
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2015-2019	85.7%	64.0%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2015-2019	\$451,000	\$217,500
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2015-2019	\$2,724	\$1,595
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2015-2019	\$729	\$500
Median gross rent, 2015-2019	\$1,951	\$1,062

Some historical facts

- <http://www.justupthepike.com/2011/12/forgotten-village-of-norwood-makes.html>
- There used to be a Post Office in Layhill:
<https://mht.maryland.gov/secure/medusa/PDF/Montgomery/M;%2027-11.pdf>
- <https://cdn.website-editor.net/020d9c979f77483189db333592c7de7f/files/uploaded/History%2520of%2520Montgomery%2520County%252C%2520Maryland.pdf>

