

**Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment  
Public Hearing**

January 25, 2024

**Seth Grimes -- Support**

Council Members,

**Please approve the Planning Board version of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment. It provides a sensible vision for the plan area, with appropriate zoning recommendations.**

My comment will focus on one point: **the likely real-world environmental impact of the MMPA is not at all alarming.** Here is a summary paragraph from the assessment:

*"Using the new Quant Tool and assuming the Plan is adopted as proposed, at full build-out (every rezoned property is torn down and redeveloped at maximum allowance) the model projects an overall increase in GHG emissions of approximately 78% by the year 2045. However, it is noteworthy that while the model projects an overall increase in GHG emissions at full build-out, **per-capita GHG emissions are projected to be reduced in all four emissions categories.**"*

I do see two major flaws I see in Montgomery Planning's climate assessment.

Issue #1: The assumption that every rezoned property is torn down and redeveloped at maximum allowance is highly speculative and unrealistic, although I'm guessing that assumption was required by the methodology. The thought that a dozen larger apartment buildings and many other, smaller buildings will be flattened and replaced within the next 21 years is simply laughable. I note that Montgomery Housing Partnership owns half the large apartment buildings on Maple Ave., and they have no plans to tear down or sell their properties.

Another excerpt:

*"Most emissions come from two of the four emissions categories: Lifetime Embodied Building Waste and Lifetime Transportation... The increases in these two emissions factors can be linked to the Plan's anticipated rise in population from approximately 4,000 to over 10,000 people."*

Issue #2: These anticipated new residents aren't materializing from the ether. They'd be moving here from somewhere else. Wherever they're coming from, they're generating waste and they're traveling. A better question is whether they'd generate more or less waste and transportation impact if they move to new housing in the MMPA area. The MMPA area is well served by transit, walkable, and bikeable. New residents' transportation impact may well be equal or less in the MMPA area than it would have been, wherever they moved from, a net positive for the region.

If you read the full report, you'll see recognition there may be *"less than full redevelopment"* and that *"redevelopment in urbanized brownfields can reduce sprawl into greenfields and concentrate development where infrastructure such as metro lines, shops, community centers, and schools already exist."* You'll also read, **"The Plan has strong environmental recommendations to improve Takoma Park's climate resiliency, carbon sequestration capacity, energy efficiency, water and air quality, and more."** That is the most important point.

Please vote to approve the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment.

Seth Grimes

