



## SILVER SPRING CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

September 8, 2014

To the Members of the Montgomery County Council:

**Advice from the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board on  
the proposed "The Blairs" Redevelopment**

At its May 19, 2014 joint meeting of the three standing committees and its June 9, 2014 full Board meeting, the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board and interested community members viewed a presentation from The Tower Companies regarding the proposed redevelopment of The Blairs, Phases I and II. Tower expects to submit a Site Plan application for these initial development phases shortly, and is requesting support for the project from the Board.

The presented plan incorporates revisions to the Approved Master Plan, primarily as it relates to building massing fronting Washington, D.C.'s Eastern Avenue. The presentation noted that these adjustments are in response to ongoing coordination with appropriate agencies and affected neighbors, and seek to enhance the experiences of both future residents and neighboring communities. Board members and meeting attendees appreciated the project team's efforts to adjust their plans in response to feedback received, and believe the plan remains welcoming to the Silver Spring community at large.

It is noted that the plan proposes a large 'temporary' green space, and we ask that the project team provide clarification on intended programming of the area, along with addressing any relevant issues relating to safety, aesthetics, and access. We wish to ensure a successful space that will benefit the Silver Spring community through what we would anticipate to be a multi-year existence.

Additionally, the Board notes the ongoing community concern over protecting and expanding affordable housing in Silver Spring and the County at-large. As the number of Silver Spring residents who live in rental housing grows, our diverse residents should feel secure in their ability to remain in their homes and continue to enjoy Silver Spring's opportunities.

Over the course of this long-term project, the Board expects to request periodic updates from the Tower Companies regarding construction and tenant relations, and looks forward to working with The Blairs team as the plan moves forward towards an end result that the community can enjoy. Notwithstanding the above concerns, we are excited and pleased to offer our support to the project.

Sincerely,

Bernice Mireku-North

Chair, Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board

cc: Ike Leggett, County Executive; Casey Anderson, Planning Board Chair; Gwen Wright, Planning Director

