

Dr. Linda Smoling Moore
Dr. David George Seiler
Ashton, MD 20861

February 25, 2021

Dear Honorable Councilmen and Council Woman:

My husband and I are residents of Ashton, MD. We choose this area because of the rural and historic ambiance of the area. Accordingly, this letter is to register our concerns regarding certain development the Planning Board proposes to allow regarding the Ashton Village Plan.

We are in strong opposition to the MC Planning Board's proposed zoning changes for that SE corner. We believe building heights should be kept in accordance with the rural village concept. Specifically, the proposed zoning for the SE quadrant is CRN-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.5 H-45, which would allow 45 foot tall buildings. This is significantly higher than what is found in the current zoning which allows for only 35 feet and is out of character with the rural village concept. Likewise, the proposed increase in density is out of character with the rural village concept.

Further, the proposed level of development at the SE quadrant will undoubtedly lead to a marked increase in traffic with a potentially dangerous impact on the intersection of Routes 108/650. Concerns regarding available parking are also raised by the proposed plan.

Moreover, it is unclear whether the guidelines in the draft will be enforceable. While many of the examples of buildings in the Planning Draft (pages 90-94) appear to be in line with the qualities of a rural village, there is no guarantee this will be carried out to the final product.

Finally, the plan proposes an Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) to ensure community and stakeholder input. While we strongly support the establishment of an IAC, we are concerned the language regarding this provision is brief and it does not require an IAC to be involved during the design phase to ensure the best outcome for all stakeholders.

We are deeply concerned the Planning Board's proposed plan appears destined to create expensive and intractable problems for MoCo, greater than any problems it purports to solve. There has been strong Ashton community opposition to the above noted aspects of the Planning Board's proposal. It is our hope the County Council will take this opposition into consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

 

Dr. Linda Smoling Moore
Dr. David George Seiler