

February 25, 2021

Dear Montgomery County (Md) Council,

Please accept these comments as part of written testimony for the County Council Public Hearing of March 2, 2021...regarding the Ashton Village Center Sector Plan.

The Ashton/Sandy Spring area is a lovely part of Montgomery County - and we truly enjoy its small town character.

We are very concerned with the zoning modifications being considered for the planned Ashton Center development at the intersection of Route 108 and New Hampshire Avenue. Development at that site is understandable, but as 20-year residents of Ashton, we are opposed to the type and amount of development now being proposed.

Relaxing design guidelines, allowing higher density, and approving taller building heights - than those recommended by the County Planning Staff - will irreparably damage the charm of living in this area.

We respectfully insist that:

- Buildings not be over 40 feet tall in the southeast quadrant behind the existing Sandy Spring Bank.
- Density in that quadrant not be over the recommended FAR of .5 (specifically, not .75 as the developer requests).
- Building lengths not be increased beyond those already recommended. Retain the limits of 80 feet in length for buildings (commercial and residential) along Route 108.

No specific plans have been provided by the developer on what the buildings would actually look like and what would be built here. Providing extra allowances for the developer (to possibly take advantage of) introduces an unacceptable amount of long term risk regarding the ramifications for the area's beauty, integrity, and practicality for the surrounding community having to coexist with the site.

If you lived here, wouldn't you also have these same types of concerns?

Do not overdevelop the site and take away the small town rural feel of the Ashton/Sandy Spring community.

Respectfully,

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