

## County Council Thrive Montgomery 2050 Testimony

Good evening. I'm Brenda Freeman and I live on Dale Drive. I support certain aspects of the TM2050 proposal to improve housing opportunities and its goal of addressing the impact of climate change. However because the way the process is being conducted, I cannot support Thrive Montgomery 2050 as presented.

My concerns are:

Insufficient Public Awareness about TM2050 and Inadequate Time To Respond. The County's planning hearings were open to the public and continued during the 2020 COVID outbreak. This means many residents weren't looped in. I can think of no reason to approve a plan in mid-2021 that won't go fully into effect until 2050. More time is essential to craft a quality plan for the County's future and to allow County residents more involvement.

Divisive Language in TM2050. Page 36 of TM2050 describes single-family homes having "entitlement" zoning. The zoning is not an entitlement and was created by the Montgomery County.

Stakeholders Need a Range of Development Options. More timing would allow planners, residents and others to develop competing plans and to choose from the best of them. TM2050 as currently drafted caters to the needs of big developers and their investors.

Dishonest Representation of Moderately Priced Housing. Montgomery Planning attached photos of building in DC Cleveland Park's historic area as an example of moderately priced housing.

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/attainable-housing-strategies-initiative/#:~:text=The%20Attainable%20Housing%20Strategies%20Initiative,for%20the%20county's%20diverse%20populations.>

Role of Developer Lobbyists in Planning. The Coalition for Smarter Growth, Montgomery for All, and Greater Greater Washington are lobbying organizations largely funded by developers. Therefore what may appear to be public support is instead the interlocking work of paid lobbyists representing special interests. They are not Montgomery County residents.

Rezoning to Eliminate Single Family Homes is part of TM2050's development objectives. The Planning Board extended the Boundaries of Downtown Silver Spring (DTSS) to include a number of homes in Woodside Park, including the SDA Church on Colesville Avenue *without the consent of their owners.*

Putting these homes into the Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities (SSDAC) Plan allows for duplexes, triplexes, quads and up to 20 unit apartment buildings on single family zoned lots in the proposed plan's area. *TM2050 would do the same thing in all single family zoned areas throughout the County.* The SSDAC plan would set the precedent. And, of course, it is being rammed through during the pandemic, too.

Transit Corridors, Rezoning and Density. A transit corridor is described as a major road close to Metro or other public transport. We need more clarification of what this means as it could further empower the County to up-zone more residential areas.

Who Pays? *Nowhere are the costs to taxpayers who subsidize the infrastructure for developers mentioned.* High density permits developers to create more housing stock and also tear down existing housing. It is unclear how the burden of infrastructure costs will be shared between developers, commercial interests, and taxpayers. The public needs to know.

Planning for Low Wage Renters Without Planning to Increase Their Income. TM2050's emphasis on rentals mentions people earning \$50,000 a year in 2050. A salary of \$50,000 in 2050 will be below the poverty line. The equivalent of \$50,000 a year in 2000 was estimated at around \$77,000 in 2020.

Rental Units. Developers emphasize rental units because they are profitable for their investors. Meanwhile the renovation of empty commercial buildings in DTSS could be used to house people *now* rather than waiting for 2050. Condos are less profitable for developers but create wealth for their owners.

Below are the homes on Colesville that were put into Downtown Silver Spring's expanded boundaries without their owners' consent.

#### **Woodside Park Homes added to the Downtown Master Plan**

Corner of Colesville and N. Noyes (1000 N Noyes Drive)

1006 N. Noyes Drive

8910 Colesville Road

8908 Colesville (readdressed to Noyes Court)

8904 Colesville Road

8908 Colesville and 1 Noyes Court 2 Noyes Court

2 Noyes Court

3 Noyes Court

4 Noyes Court

8800 Colesville Road Seventh Day Adventist Church (Corner of Noyes and Colesville)

8800 block Colesville Road

1000 Noyes Drive (corner of Colesville and Noyes)

1004 Noyes Drive

1006 Noyes Drive

1007 Seventh Day Adventist church house

1108 Noyes Drive

1009 Noyes Drive

More information regarding what could happen keeps coming out on the list serve. This unnerving message just appeared on the list serve today. While the county is talking about missing middle housing and the like. The Planning Board and developers want entire blocks.