

Monday, June 28, 2021

Ref: Public Hearing: Thrive Montgomery County 2050

To The Council President and Councilmembers:

Good evening,

I am Dr. Dace Denito, President of Lincoln Park Civic Association in Rockville. I read with interest the draft for Thrive 2050. I found it interesting that Equality is part of the proposal at different levels. But the reality is a different thing when it comes to implementing. We need more details. The previous "Wedges and Corridor" plan certainly contributed to disparities in community wealth, quality of Life and health, leaving close to a 30 year-gap in Life expectancy between residents living in Chevy Chase and those living in Silver Spring.

The problem is, when it comes to economic development, Minority rich neighborhoods always seem to draw the short stick, and we end up with the polluting parts, with industrial zones, sometimes Heavy industrial zones less than 1 mile from residences. Reforms and investments are needed and should be tailored, targeted in ways overlapping the Montgomery County DHHS Health Report map from 2018. Equality to us is reform in zoning where heavy Industrial zones would be banned within 2 miles from residences. Light-industrial zones should be redefined excluding air and noise pollution. Equality means access to more moderately priced units with affordable energy costs with sustainable solutions in walkable/bikeable neighborhoods. We are in favor of zoning reforms providing for Missing Middle Housings close to transportation. Equity also means more community gardens and less food deserts in the less "healthy zip-codes".

In Lincoln Park, we have been waiting for redevelopment on Stonestreet Avenue in Rockville for more than 25 years. We hope that we will not have to wait until 2050. Pricey real estate developers and planning commissions pushing for industrial zones have effectively pushed Black and Brown people out of their neighborhoods for decades. We hope for real change and a more Equitable Future.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Dace Denito, PhD

President, Lincoln Park Civic Association Inc.

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