

March 24, 2025

To the Montgomery County Council
Regarding: ZTA 25-02, More Housing NOW Legislation

Dear Councilmembers,

I write in opposition to ZTA 25-02 and align my comments with those submitted by Lou Morsberger, Vice Chair, Board of Managers, on behalf of Chevy Chase Village.

We know allowing larger structures in residential neighborhoods to house more people will:

- 1) create more stress on our very old and decerped utilities, with no plan on addressing/upgrading them;
- 2) decrease tree canopy coverage, decreasing air quality while increasing urban heat,
- 3) worsen already bad stormwater management systems, with no plan on addressing/upgrading them; and,
- 4) decrease public safety by limiting residential parking, thus jamming more cars onto side roads for parking instead of putting them in driveways where they belong; and,
- 5) exacerbate already overcrowded schools with no plans on how to address the problem.

Last year, Councilmember Friedson said during a public listening session his proposal to address a housing shortage would not change zoning laws; however, this legislation does that. This legislation is a giveaway to developers and land speculators under the dubious guise of a housing shortage crisis. County Executive Marc Elrich said the data does not back up the bill sponsors justification.

Because the lack of data and the lack of planning to address the concerns above, the council should table this bill and put in the work. Zoning changes should be done in a more deliberate process, including more resident input, like during a master plan review.

Sincerely,
Ben Gielow

Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Cc: Chevy Chase Village Manager