

Agenda for March 11 is here:

https://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/GeneratedAgendaViewer.php?event_id=16425

TO: MC County Council

FR: Executive Committee of the Kensington Heights Civic Association

DATE: March 11, 2025

RE: ZTA 25-02

My name is Donna Savage and I am testifying on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Kensington Heights Civic Association, of which I am vice president. KHCA represents more than 00 single-family homes. Our northern boundary is University Blvd. West.

If passed, the Workforce Housing Zoning Text Amendment 25-02 will affect a number of properties in Kensington Heights and will impact the entire community.

When the Wheaton Sector Plan process was wrapping up back in 2012, we were promised that the Wheaton-Kensington Master Plan would be in the pipeline in the next five to ten years. It is now thirteen years later and, instead of a thoughtful master plan process in which neighborhoods can participate in planning at the community level, we have a shotgun splatter county-wide "workforce housing" zoning amendment overlay. This approach effectively removes the public's ability to self-govern and engage in designing the future of their own communities; the properties directly affected are in the many thousands. Massive upzoning without a master plan process is a recipe for disaster. We've thrown a lot of money at the Planning Department, at MNCPPC, to help us design and develop working, thriving, and healthy

communities. In return, the public has been effectively removed from the process. Twenty years of promises to implement Smart Growth and Transit Oriented Development have been cast aside.

Sprawl is not a planning paradigm and is not a solution to our housing problems. It is a developer's dream. Much easier to knock down single-family homes and raze remaining green space than negotiate, for example, for Wheaton Urban District real estate with small businesses and families who expect a fair price and return on their multi-generational investments.

All of this massive new growth has to be smart. It has to be transit-oriented. We have to build on top of Metro stations and develop urban cores, as otherwise we lose the battle. We lose the battle with traffic and with infrastructure, like water and sewer and schools. We lose the battle for decent air quality and water quality and economic competitiveness -- and every other quality of life we hold near and dear here in Montgomery County.

Developers will not abandon above-market returns and do the hard work of Smart Growth Mixed-Use TOD unless they are forced to do so by an informed and determined public.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our thoughts with you