

I write to oppose ZTA 25-02.

The alleged goals of the More Housing N.O.W. bill and ZTA 25-02 are laudable, but the de-zoning proposal does not accomplish those goals.

- a. Carving up established neighborhoods does not address Montgomery County's housing needs.
 - b. A real plan would identify "greenfield" opportunities that would allow for properly planned developments that include workforce housing. The White Flint and the Geico campus are prime areas for planned communities supported by adequate infrastructure. **White Flint was closed 10 years ago.**
 - c. If no developer will step up, you need to examine what other rules and regulations are disincentivizing them to build there, and not shoehorn random development opportunities where they don't belong.
2. ZTA 25-02 is not supported by data demonstrating the number of units needed for "workforce housing" and how many units need to be built to satisfy its stated goals. How will you know when you have achieved "success"?
 - a. As written, this bill is an open-ended gift to developers, enabling them to develop as much **market-rate** housing as they want, regardless of the damage they do to existing infrastructure and community.
 - b. Please don't disguise a developer give-away in the name of workforce housing. That is disrespectful to residents and workers you claim to want to help.
3. One of our local firemen said increased density will result in serious safety risks in my community. As it is, his firetrucks can't pass on many narrow streets in Bethesda and Chevy Chase, and he said more density would mean more street parking and more obstacles to getting to homes needing fire or EMT services.
 - a. He also said that many fire hydrants in Montgomery County operate at low pressure. He provided a specific example where they had to hook up a block away to get sufficient water. Is this because the population density is overtaking our available water supply? Have you researched this at all?
 - b. If my house burns down because the fire truck couldn't get to me, then it isn't worth living here anymore.
4. Duplexes have no workforce housing minimum requirements. Why are they included if they can be sold at market rates? This makes ZTA 25-02 a windfall for developers that does not produce more affordable housing and that unnecessarily disrupts established neighborhoods. Failure for the "workforce."
5. Why allow triplexes and quadplexes to include businesses like day care? This will increase traffic and parking problems in effected neighborhoods, and what does that have to do with workforce housing in any case? This is another example of how internally inconsistent this hastily written bill is. Put daycare in appropriated zoned retail and commercial areas.

6. ZTA 25-02 has not taken into account the strain on existing infrastructure, cost of mitigating that damage, and who will bear the cost of any infrastructure expansions required by additional housing under this bill. I believe in a variety of housing options for a variety of income levels, but what is the point of offering those if the underlying infrastructure will start breaking down? In your effort to make room for more people who want to live in Montgomery County, you could be making Montgomery County a less attractive place to live. And, above I have pointed out that in reality you are not broadening housing access for the “workforce.”
7. You need to work with the MCPS to determine the impact on our already overcrowded schools. A thoughtful plan would predict where best to house new incoming students under this plan, and the cost on school resources. Many schools are already overcrowded as it is.
8. The County Council has not followed a transparent, democratic process in introducing the More Housing N.O.W. bill. More time was spent with paid lobbyists than the residents and taxpayers. The community does care about the goals of more housing options in Montgomery County, but you did not provide any meaningful opportunity to hear alternative proposals. You are “checking a box” at these public input sessions and u are more attentive to special interests than the people who voted for you. This also appears to be staged as a political talking point while not really addressing the problem in a meaningful way.

9. I will not vote for anyone who supports for this bill.

10. We are tired of the County Council bombarding Montgomery County with half-baked ideas that waste tax-payer dollars. I want the best for Montgomery County, but this Council keeps proposing things that sound good in the abstract (like bike lanes, linear parks, and upzoning), but in reality they have not and do not deliver any benefit to the county or residents. The County does not take seriously its responsibility to be thoughtful, fact based, and resident driven. We are tired of being used as a social re-engineering petri dish.
11. This Council refuses to work with the community on viable alternatives to challenges, including affordable housing. You seem to be serving other interests, like housing non-profits that depend upon you for funding. You should be following the desires of the taxpayers, residents, and community. Don’t impose your personal agendas on our neighborhoods. Work on behalf of your constituents, or we will no longer consider ourselves your constituents.
12. Maryland, and Montgomery County especially, could be heading into a recession with the loss of federal jobs and federal funding for a variety of programs. This is NOT the time to pursue this effort. You need to wait to understand these effects before passing such a significant change in property zoning and embarking on such an ill-considered talking point plan.

13. I chose to live in a single-family zone neighborhood, and I pay big taxes accordingly. If my property values go down as a result of this plan, will my taxes go down? Or will my taxes go up if my neighborhood needs infrastructure expansion? There is already a proposed tax hike on the table.

14. Many people think that the lack of jobs is what is causing people to leave the County. A better approach would be to focus on attracting high-quality corporations to offer good jobs and grow the tax base.

Again, the community is tired of the county continually shoving ill-considered and unwanted social engineering pet rocks down our throat. This is NOT representative democracy. Money is expended on projects that the community did not seek and have clearly failed. All the choked roadways with no bicycle traffic in the bike lanes is a daily reminder of this backwards approach. This is not a 'build it and they will come' situation. The reality is here.

Focus on leveraging the far better opportunities at White Flint and GEICO.

We will not support or vote for those who continue to support these unwanted efforts.