

FW: MoCo Climate Action Plan Comments

Climate <Climate@montgomerycountymd.gov>

Thu 2/11/2021 5:40 PM

To: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]**Sent:** Thursday, February 11, 2021 5:34 PM**To:** Climate <Climate@montgomerycountymd.gov>**Subject:** MoCo Climate Action Plan Comments**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Hello,

Thank you for providing access to the Montgomery County Climate Action Plan draft and for allowing commentary. I have participated in the survey after reading the plan but have further comments.

My initial comment is with regards to building/housing. I live in a home that was built in 1968. It has a heat pump with a back-up oil heat system. When I moved here in 2005, I was told that this system works well here in Maryland because the heat pump is only efficient to a certain temperature and when it drops below that set temperature, the oil heat kicks in. This helps keep our electric bill lower in the winter although we do need to pay for an oil tank fillup once a year. In the scenario that you set, you said there would be a sort of grandfather clause to existing home systems until the home is sold or the system breaks down and needs to be replaced. Will an all-electric system be not only sufficient but also cost-efficient for the environment we live in? The cost of replacing the system will be great and my husband already doesn't like the idea of being forced to replace the system at some future time when we would be retired and on a fixed income.

I didn't see anything that referenced gas stoves for cooking, gas barbecues, gas fireplaces or wood burning fireplaces/wood stoves. We don't have a gas stove, but I know that some homeowners are very adamant about how cooking on a gas stove is vastly more desirable than cooking on an electric stove. It's understandable if gas stoves are not an option in new builds but in existing homes, I think you will find some push back in requiring replacement. With regards to fireplaces, we have a wood burning one in our home. When the electricity goes out, and it periodically does, the fireplace is our only means of heat in the winter. Will we be allowed to continue to use our fireplace? There is also an ambiance that fireplaces lend to homes that is not easily relinquished.

There was no mention of gas-powered lawn equipment and tractors used either by homeowners or landscape/gardening companies. I am not fond of gas-powered lawn equipment. They smell and they are loud, but they are also more powerful in our experience. With just under an acre of property that is a wooded lot with lawn, we have found the need for many gas-powered tools. Will electric tools be able to handle our yard's needs? As we age, we find we need more help doing our seasonal yard work which requires more powerful tools.

We would love to replace our asphalt driveway with a permeable one, but I would need more information as to how the permeable pavers behave in conditions like ours: a wooded lot, an inclined driveway, snow removal, moss growth, etc. Is there a county website that addresses these questions/concerns? I believe the cost would prohibit us from being able to replace it, but we would be interested in replacing our concrete patio and walkways with permeable pavers when the concrete fails and we can afford to do so.

Community builders should only be allowed to offer green building and landscaping options before they are even allowed to build. I see new builds in the Clarksburg area that do not address any of the CAP suggestions/plans and the Vision Zero plan. It puzzles me why this isn't being addressed and implemented now.

With regards to transportation, we live in upper Montgomery County, near the border of Frederick County in a rural area within a developed neighborhood. There are no sidewalks within our neighborhood and only narrow asphalt roads. We connect to Lewisdale Road which also does not have any sidewalks and is a narrow asphalt road. There is absolutely no room for walkers nor bicyclists, but they do use the road periodically. There are many blind curves and hills and vegetation that blocks views of traffic turning onto Lewisdale from side roads. This is very typical of the region we live in. I would never bicycle on this road and I feel very uncomfortable when there are bicyclists on the road as there is no room for cars and bicyclists together. If you are walking, you are forced to use people's lawns to walk on to stay off the road.

We have a regional park that backs up to our property, Little Bennett Regional Park, with biking, hiking and horse trails but we must drive our car over to the park parking lot to access the park. Why are there no access trails to the park for residents who live near the park? We certainly would not ride our bikes or walk on the road because of the danger.

We have two gas-powered vehicles we use for commuting to Bethesda for work and for hauling the children around to their activities. We have been blessed that my husband still has a job during the pandemic that can be completely tele-worked. I believe that is a wonderful option and certainly makes a great deal of sense not only during this time but in the future as well. We are interested in getting electric vehicles when our cars finally wear out (going on 17 years for one and 14 years for the other) but we require all-wheel drive due to weather conditions and where we live. Cars with two-wheel drive can't get up our very slightly inclined street during snowy/icy weather. We also find that all-wheel drive is a

safety necessity living here in Maryland. Will there be electric vehicle options with all-wheel drive to choose from when it is time for us to purchase new cars?

I am excited to see that Montgomery County has big vision regarding its Climate Action Plan. It is past time to start implementing a plan for our county to get to carbon neutrality by 2035. I feel hopeful but anxious. I am glad to see racial and socio-economic issues are going to actively be identified and addressed. An absolute necessity. We all live here; let's all rise together. I can only provide you with my experience and I know there are so many other experiences out there that differ from mine, but it is important to include the entire county and all its variants in the Climate Action Plan.

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts and concerns. I look forward to doing my part as a resident to make our county even greater than it already is.

Best regards,
Christa Boroskin



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