

Jennifer Presley
 700 Woodside Parkway
 Silver Spring. Md 30910

From: J. P.

Sent: Sunday, July 19, 2020 8:27 AM

Subject: Overreach of the Planning Council and street abandonment

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good morning. I second my neighbor's letter to you regarding Ellsworth Drive in downtown Silver Spring, copied below. Please, please, please stop the installation of artificial turf by rejecting the abandonment of the street to Folger/Pratt. The County Council needs to retain some oversight to the direction and esthetics of this area, and will not if the road is ceded to the owners. We rejected Mall of America two decades ago. Let's not slowly slip backwards.

It seems to me that our unelected Planning Council is acting as a committee of often two (a full vote of the four members is often not present or choosing to vote), to make major changes to our neighborhood with no oversight. The plans to change R60 zoning is yet another worry for me. Certainly it should be possible to create secondary dwellings with individual review, but to allow the close-in R60 neighborhoods to experience larger building creep would be very sad. There surely are enough unused parking lots and vacant land to accomplish middle-level housing.

I beseech the Council to reconsider the freedom of action that has been given to this unelected and tiny decision-making council. Danger is ahead for the future of downtown Silver Spring and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Thank you

Jennifer Presley
 700 Woodside Parkway
 Silver Spring. Md 30910

On Sun, Jul 19, 2020 at 5:59 AM James Ehrman

Dear Councilmember Hucker and colleagues,

I write again concerning the matter of installing plastic carpeting on Ellsworth Drive.

I write subsequent to "consideration" of this issue by the Planning Board. The word

James Ehrman
 602 Greenbrier Drive
 District 5

“consideration” appears with quotation marks because the word’s inherent meaning — per my dictionary: “meditation or consideration,” “regard or account; something taken, or to be taken, into account” — has nothing to do with the Board’s handling of the matter. That the Board has invited and heard public comment is indisputable; such is required by law. But that, having complied with its legal/bureaucratic obligation, it also has “considered” what was heard is not. Clear examination of this unelected Board’s conduct suggests, to the contrary, disinterest in what County residents have had to say.

I understand the project of which installation of plastic carpeting on Ellsworth is a part requires prior County approval for “abandonment” of it. I accordingly join multiple neighborhood residents in **urging the Council to refuse abandonment.**

James Ehrman
602 Greenbrier Drive
District 5

From: "James Ehrman"

Date: June 21, 2020 at 10:25:30 AM GMT+2

Subject: [SOECA] Ellsworth Plastic Carpet Proposal

Reply-To: SOECA@groups.io

Dear Councilmember Hucker and colleagues,

The first rule of those who practice medicine is, "Above All, Do No Harm." This rule ought to be equally applicable to those who practice politics. And specifically: It should guide Council decision making with regard to the

proposed installation of plastic carpeting (synthetic turf) on Ellsworth Drive.

Comments previously submitted by multiple SOECA residents lay out the multiple health and safety concerns this proposal raises. They merit your close attention. And warrant a political decision to avoid the probable harm to Sligo Creek, SOECA residents and, indeed, visitors in general to Downtown Silver Spring that installing plastic carpeting would bring.

James Ehrman
602 Greenbrier Drive
District 5



From: "Susan Andrea"

Date: 7/28/2020 5:38:59 PM

Susan Andrea
402 Dale Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Submitted 1st Comment on 7-14-20

This is to register my strenuous opposition to the proposal to "abandon" Ellsworth Drive. Do not allow this. Ellsworth should remain public space and as such be subject to uses, rights, and regulations that are determined by the citizens through their elected representatives, not subject to the wishes of a private company whose only interest in the site is profit.

I remember the early days of the Ellsworth area redevelopment when there was an attempt by private security guards to prevent a photographer from taking pictures. We simply cannot have a repeat of that or anything similar that would restrict the public from engaging in any lawful activity that would be permitted on any public street. Ellsworth is public space and should remain public space.

Susan Andrea
402 Dale Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910

~ rg Steinman
Silver Spring, MD

Date: 7/29/2020 11:44:52 AM

Subject: Right-of-Way Abandonment, AB-771, Ellsworth Drive

Dear Councilmembers,

This email is in regards to the Planning Board's recent request for a Right-of-Way Abandonment, AB-771, Ellsworth Drive. I am also attaching my testimony from June 18, 2020 explaining my opposition to synthetic turf on Ellsworth Drive.

I urge you to not go forward with the abandonment of Ellsworth Drive. Health, safety and welfare are at the heart of the findings required to abandon a right-of-way. (Chapter 49 Findings Section 49-63(c)(1)-(2)).

Synthetic turf is opposed by the environmental community for health and safety reasons, as well as many other reasons. Also, in a July 13th letter to the President of the County, the County's Department of Environmental Protection opposed the installation of synthetic turf due to stormwater considerations and expressed concerns regarding health and safety that have been raised as well.

I urge you to not proceed with the abandonment of Ellsworth Dr. in Downtown Silver Spring until the developers have formally agreed to use a truly natural and permeable alternative consistent with ecological and health and safety benefits..

Thank You,

~ rg Steinman
Silver Spring, MD

From: Ms. Rg Steinman

Silver Spring

Re: Downtown Silver Spring - Project Plan Amendment 91998005C / Site Plan Amendment 81999002M

Date: June 18, 2020

I support an earth-friendly renovation of Ellsworth Dr., including natural surfaces (wood, stone, pavers) and plants. Synthetic turf is not natural, and it is not earth-friendly. It creates toxic plastic pollution that ends up in our rivers and, our oceans, in fish, birds, mammals, and finally, in us.

Greenwashed Product Contains Toxic Chemicals

The "blades of grass" in this "plastic carpet" contain PFAS (PFAS stands for a broad group of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances), which have been associated with multiple health problems, including cancer. And we don't know the other toxic compounds that are in this product because the manufacturer (SYNLawn.com) considers this proprietary information. But when we don't have all the information, we really cannot make an informed choice?

Product Is Not Recyclable

Synthetic turf begins breaking down, creating microplastic pollution, from day one, its best day. It has a limited life span – especially when compared to wood, stone, pavers, and trees – and creates a disposal nightmare because no one is recycling synthetic turf. Rather, it is being dumped or shipped to an undisclosed address in Asia.

Product Not Designed For Ellsworth Drive Uses

Furthermore, according to the manufacturer's website, this product is recommended only for landscape, pets, play, rooftop, and golf. It is not designed for the very heavy foot traffic (pedestrians, farmers markets, etc) or vehicular use (emergency vehicles, delivery trucks and weekly Farmers' Market trucks) that will occur on Ellsworth Drive.

Maintenance Nightmare

Would you want to walk in a public place paved with Synlawn? Think about it. Urine and waste from people walking their dogs, chewing gum stuck to the "grass" blades, spit, bird poop, food and drink spilled. Would you let your child walk or crawl on this? And on a warm, sunny day, synthetic turf heats up hotter than asphalt. And, given climate change, things will heat up.

A Better Way

Urban development, coupled with climate change, intensifies the urban heat island effect. This calls for resilient solutions to make outdoor spaces more adaptable to environmental conditions and comfortable for people, while improving, not sacrificing, the environment. Shade trees are a key component of such a solution. Trees and other plantings provide beauty, clean air, cooler temperatures, shade, and, importantly, reduce stormwater runoff. Trees, by their very nature, are uplifting and graceful; and when coupled with plant containers, benches, and other shade structures, they create a cooling and inviting public area. Trees and other plantings are the cheapest beneficial infrastructure.

Go with the science. Ditch the Synturf.

Do what's right for the sake of the planet, and what's right for the health of us all.

~ rg Steinman
Silver Spring

From: "sheldon fishman (gmail)"
Date: 7/29/2020 3:49:02 PM

Sheldon Fishman
Silver Spring, MD 20902

Subject: 7/30/2020 Item 5 Ellsworth Drive: Abandonment No. AB771 - approve with condition

Members of the Planning Board,

Attached is my written testimony.

In brief, I am writing as an individual but I am writing for them.

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I support a *thoughtful* renovation of Ellsworth Ave and vicinity.

*I urge you to approve this abandonment with the condition that the developer install a safer and better solution than petroleum-based plastic for Ellsworth Ave. Green plastic is not green space. *

Two conditions should be added if you approve the synturf:

Bacteria and viruses thrive longer on plastic than other surfaces

1. Require monitoring the levels of biologic toxins, require procedures to disinfect the surface, require procedures to remove the disinfectants without discharging into the ground water.

At the end of its allowed use, the plastic rug needs to be disposed

2. Require that the vendor sign an agreement and deposit a bond to fulfill extended producer responsibility (EPR) to recycle or safely dispose the plastic solution you are approving today.

Sheldon Fishman
Silver Spring, MD 20902
sheldon.fishman@gmail.com

Montgomery County Planning Board
July 20, 2020 - Item 5
Ellsworth Drive: Abandonment No. AB771
approve with condition

Chair Anderson and Members of the Planning Board

My name is Sheldon Fishman. My wife and I have lived in Silver Spring for 47 years and raised our four children here. I am optimistic our grandchildren also will be well educated by Silver Spring MCPS schools and enjoy Montgomery County Parks.



In brief, I am writing as an individual but I am writing for them.

I support a *thoughtful* renovation of Ellsworth Ave and vicinity.

I urge you approve this abandonment with the condition that the developer install a safer and better solution than petroleum-based plastic for Ellsworth Ave. Green plastic is not green space.

Two conditions should be added if you approve the synturf:

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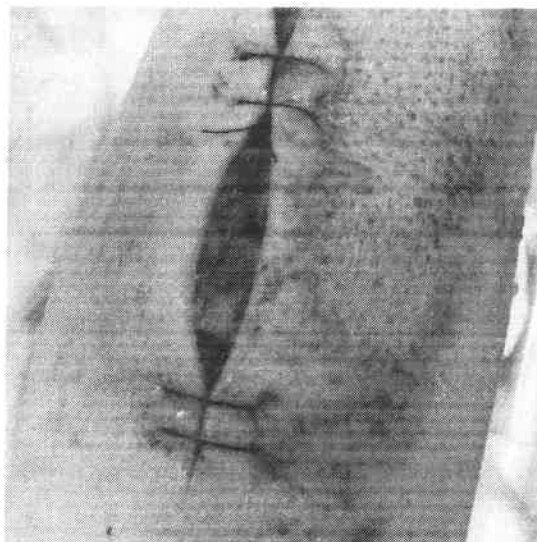
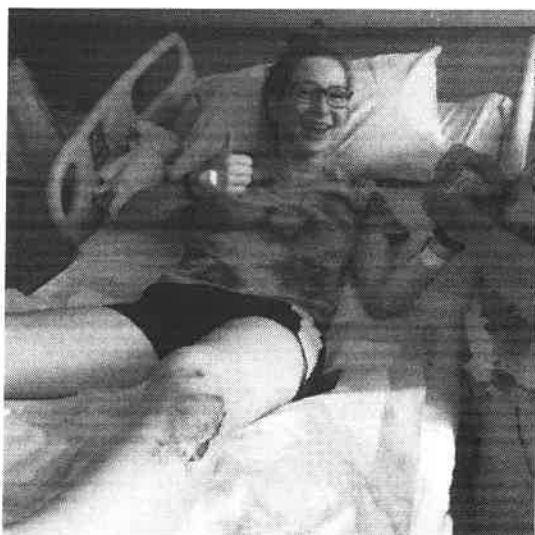
For me, the compelling reason is the **increased risk to children, adults, and the environment of every form of synthetic turf** currently on the market. The new pretty plastic synthetic solution you are being asked to approve today is dead and deteriorates every day. A vote to approve this synturf will expose current Silver Spring children to avoidable and steadily increasing serious risk when they walk, play, and eat on the field you are being asked to approve today. We are happy to provide a catalog of these avoidable elevated risks and the scientific data supporting these concerns.

Health Concerns

- **Exposure to Toxins**
 - Acute: Respiratory and Mucous Membrane Irritation
 - Chronic: Cancer and Neurotoxicity
- **Excessive Heat**
 - Dehydration
 - Heat Exhaustion
 - Burns
- **'Turf Burns' and MRSA Risk**
 - CDC reported turf burns as a risk factor for MRSA infection in football players (MMWR August 22, 2003 / 52(33);793-795)
 - CDC reports cluster of MRSA infections in LA Rams Pro football players all associated with 'turf burns. (NEJM 2005 Kazakova et al.)

Mount Sinai Children's Environmental Health Center

Here is a picture of an athlete after playing on a synturf and suffering severe burns compounded by toxins on the field



As you weigh approving this plastic solution, please also weigh the consequences that this solution has a limited life cycle. Just like every current synthetic field, it deteriorates every day until it becomes so dangerous it must be removed, disposed and replaced. Your sister agencies, such as MCPS, have not done due diligence on disposal and have been satisfied with long standing vendor promises that their product can be “recycled”. There has not been and is not today a facility to recycle these enormous plastic rugs.

For example, here is a picture of the Richard Montgomery High School synturf being “recycled”. It is dumped near the Bird River which flows right into the Chesapeake Bay.



I ask you to consider the environmental justice implications of approving this synturf. Each of the elevated risks to children is even higher for populations of poor and minority children who are more likely to be exposed previously to some of these toxins.

When the plastic rug must be disposed, is disposal also an environmental justice issue? Since it can't be recycled, and is cannot be disposed in many municipal landfills, where does it go?

Sometimes it goes to “private landfills” which is code word for landfills near poor and minority communities.

I understand that we are asking you to make a decision that special interests have a strong incentive to challenge you. Those who proposed the synturf will blame you for any delay and are unlikely to accept any responsibility for any delay in going from a bad plastic decision to better solution. I appreciate the strength it takes to make a hard decision like this.

More reasons to disapprove the proposed plastic solution and to insist on a better solution

The Covid-19 virus lives longer on plastic than other surfaces. The cleansing products needed to mitigate Covid-19 have risks which are less than the risk of Covid-19 but still serious risks to people and the ground water.

The Montgomery County Council proclaimed that we have a climate crisis. I assume you are familiar with the overwhelming evidence presented by the vast majority of reputable scientists and international organizations that precipitated this proclamation and the commitment of Montgomery County to address this crisis. If you approve this contract, its impact on greenhouse gas emissions is equivalent to cutting down 1,100 trees.

Sheldon Fishman
9913 Dameron Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20902
(301) 681-6986
sheldon.fishman@gmail.com

Date: 7/14/2020 6:04:44 PM

Susan Andrea
402 Dale Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910

This is to register my strenuous opposition to the proposal to 1) use synthetic turf on Ellsworth Drive and 2) "abandoning" Ellsworth Drive. As to the synthetic turf proposal, there are too many negatives and too many unanswered questions to allow this to go forward. These concerns have been made known to you.

Even more important is the possible abandonment of Ellsworth Drive. Do not allow this. Ellsworth should remain public space and as such, be subject to uses, rights, and regulations that are determined by the citizens through their elected representatives, not subject to the wishes of a private company whose interest in the site is profit. I remember the early days of the Ellsworth area redevelopment when there was an attempt by private security guards to prevent a photographer from taking pictures. We simply cannot have a repeat of that or anything similar that would restrict the public from engaging in any lawful activity that would be permitted on any public street. Ellsworth is public space and should remain public space.

Susan Andrea
402 Dale Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910

From: Kathy Lorr

Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:41 PM

Subject: SAY NO TO ARTIFICIAL TURF AND ABANDONMENT IN DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING

Katharine A. Lorr and Richard Lorr

Dear Planning Board and County Council,

This letter is to OPPOSE the installation of artificial turf on Ellsworth Avenue in downtown Silver Spring. In addition, we OPPOSE the process for abandonment of that area. Plastic turf is an unacceptable alternative for our downtown, long proven to be unsafe, unhealthy, unsanitary, and unattractive. Our neighbors in the Seven Oaks –Evanswood Community Association have raised vehement objections to this proposal (see the messages you have received from Anne Vorce, Stephen Estrada, James Ehrman, and Cathy Kristiansen among others.)

We write as residents of Silver Spring for over 38 years who live about half a mile from the area proposed for coverage by this artificial turf and abandonment. In normal times, we would walk daily along Wayne Avenue, Ellsworth Drive and elsewhere in the downtown area. As frequent shoppers, browsers, and diners in Downtown Silver Spring, we treasure our diverse, environmentally conscious and vibrant community. We love the tree canopy and wildlife along Sligo Creek where we live and the fact that we can walk easily to the post office, the library, the metro, and other downtown businesses, getting exercise and enjoying all aspects of

the city.

RE ARTIFICIAL TURF. Please consider that the damage done by artificial plastic turf to humans and our environment is well-documented. Moving forward with this proposal is negligent. While artificial turf was a temporary/interim solution before the Civic Center Plaza and the skating rink were developed, Silver Spring deserves high quality urban landscaping that enhances the experience and enjoyment of being in our downtown. Examples of higher quality urban design abound, e.g., the High Line above the west side of Manhattan, with its mix of concrete, sculpture, murals, and careful plantings; and Louisville, Kentucky's urban downtown mix of art, sculpture, and walkable open areas. You have a great opportunity to make Silver Spring a go-to place to explore, meet friends, relax, and do business. If your goal is simply to save money, please leave the street the way it is which is fine. We do not want **PLASTIC** which is bad for the environment and people.

RE ABANDONMENT. Why haven't the consequences of this proposal been fully spelled out and vetted to the public? We find the concept of abandonment particularly odious because it will or can potentially undermine all efforts to promote the public's interests in sound, safe, healthy and environmentally-friendly use of this space, including the problems surrounding artificial turf. Abandonment is clearly contrary to the public interest, our basic rights, and the Planning Board's own mission statement.

WHAT WE NEED: To thrive, our diverse community needs more shared spaces that are safe, healthy, green, aesthetic, environmentally friendly, and walkable. We **NEED** more green spaces and outside public environments where our diverse community can congregate and socialize. Open streets can easily be enhanced with art, murals, and thoughtful plantings that would remind everyone of the beauty of the natural world. Thank you for doing all that you can to preserve our precious tree canopy and wildlife along the Creek.

Katharine A. Lorr and Richard Lorr

From: "Sylvia Tognetti"
Date: 7/29/2020 9:05:54 PM

Dear Members of the Council,

This is to share with you comments I submitted to the Planning Board opposing Abandonment of the Right-of-Way in Downtown Silver Spring unless plans for synthetic turf are abandoned and the project is designed to advance goals for stormwater management using critical green infrastructure.

These were submitted after the deadline because I did not know until this afternoon that the Planning Board would consider this matter prior to the Council in September.

With best regards,
Sylvia S. Tognetti

Sylvia S. Tognetti - Planning Board Comment - July 29th, 2020

July 29, 2020

Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue,
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Chair Anderson and Planning Board members –

This letter is to express my opposition to Abandonment of the Right-of-Way No AB771 on Ellsworth Drive, for the purpose of installing artificial turf. I also want to express strong support for many of the comments submitted by others in opposition to the use of artificial turf in Downtown Silver Spring, in particular the Sierra Club Montgomery County Group submitted June 28, and the Montgomery County Stormwater Partners Network submitted on June 2. In addition, I call your attention to the comments of Adam Ortiz on behalf of the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) expressed in correspondence with the County Council and attached to the testimony of Anne Vorce for the hearing on July 30.

Although I am commenting as an individual, as the Water Issue Lead for the Sierra Club Montgomery County Group, I have a special concern with whether this project is compatible with the existing stormwater management facility given the context of increases in heavy precipitation events that are already occurring as a result of climate change, and which are not factored into current codes for the design of stormwater or other infrastructure. As indicated by DEP, the addition of synthetic turf on top of the existing impervious surface would be a missed opportunity to advance the County's obligations for stormwater management under the MS4 permit. This permit requires removal of impervious surfaces and treatment of stormwater runoff in older neighborhoods such as DTSS, which were not built to treat stormwater to the maximum extent practicable. And as indicated by the Stormwater Partners Network, it is not known whether the stormwater facility would capture degraded micro-plastic particles. However, the cleaning materials would generate non-stormwater discharges that would be in violation of the stormwater permit.

For these reasons, I urge you to recommend to the Montgomery County Council that this Right-of-Way not be Abandoned. Alternatively, that Abandonment is approved only on condition that stormwater management objectives are advanced, for example, by installing pervious pavers instead of synthetic turf or other forms of green infrastructure which is critical for increasing climate resilience.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sylvia S. Tognetti

From: "Carol Van Dam Falk"
Date: 7/30/2020 8:13:57 AM

Subject: Right-of-way Abandonment 77-1 Ellsworth

Members of the Planning Board,

Apologies for sending my written testimony a bit late. I am writing on behalf of myself, a 35-year resident of Montgomery County, Maryland.

I support an environmentally friendly renovation of Ellsworth Drive.

Synthetic turf is not environmentally friendly; it contains known carcinogens. The synthetic turf industry has not been honest about the toxic nature of their product in the past, nor has it stood behind their warranties for the reported life of the plastic carpets. What is most worrisome to me however is the damage done to the environment by the tire crumb that escapes from the turf infill into our waterways. I urge you to consider using natural grass rather than installing synthetic turf for this project. It is cheaper to maintain, does not harm the public, and will always look better than synthetic turf.

Sincerely,

Carol V. Falk
Cabin John, Md. 20818

Olivia Bartlett, Environment Lead
 Barbara Noveau, Executive Director, DoTheMostGood, Montgomery County

Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 7:50 PM

Attachment: Planning Board Site Plan Amendment Comment

Subject: Opposition to MNCPP Decision re: Downtown Silver Spring Project Plan Amendment 91998005C / Site Plan Amendment 81999002M

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Montgomery County Council Members:

DoTheMostGood Montgomery County (DTMG) is a grassroots organization with over 2200 members throughout Montgomery County. We advocate for actions that support the health and safety of our members and the general public in Montgomery County. We recently learned of the Board's decision on June 18, 2020 to approve the application of more than 8500 sq feet of Synturf on Ellsworth Avenue in downtown Silver Spring. We strongly support the idea of continuing to invest in Ellsworth Drive as the heart of a walkable, livable, downtown Silver Spring. The farmers market, festivals, and other neighborhood amenities draw people to this transit-accessible area. However, the rationale for installing artificial plastic turf in this location rather than alternate surface treatments that are safe for people and the environment was not adequately defined. We strongly oppose installation of Synturf on the road surface for the reasons outlined in the attached letter and we have requested that the Planning Board reconsider its decision to allow synthetic plastic turf carpet (Synturf, specifically SYNLawn's SYNTipede 343 product) to be installed on Ellsworth Drive as part of the Downtown Silver Spring proposal - Project Plan Amendment 91998005C / Site Plan Amendment 81999002M. We hope that you will also consider the public health and environmental hazards of Synturf in this application if this proposed project comes to the County Council for discussion or approval.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Olivia Bartlett, Environment Lead
 Barbara Noveau, Executive Director, DoTheMostGood, Montgomery County



June 28, 2020

**Reference: Downtown Silver Spring Project Plan Amendment
91998005C / Site Plan Amendment 81999002M**

**To: Planning Board Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Fani-Gonzalez, Commissioner Cichy,
Commissioner Patterson, Commissioner Verma, Planning Director Wright, and Mr. Mills:**

DoTheMostGood Montgomery County (DTMG) is a grassroots organization with over 2200 members throughout Montgomery County, from Chevy Chase north to Germantown and from Potomac to Silver Spring. We advocate for actions that support the health and safety of our members and the general public in Montgomery County. For these reasons, we request that the Planning Board reconsider its June 18, 2020 decision to allow synthetic plastic turf carpet (Synturf, specifically SYNLawn's SYNTipede 343 product) to be installed on Ellsworth Drive as part of the Downtown Silver Spring proposal - Project Plan Amendment 91998005C / Site Plan Amendment 81999002M.

Overall, we strongly support the idea of continuing to invest in Ellsworth Drive as the heart of a walkable, livable, downtown Silver Spring. The farmers market, festivals, and other neighborhood amenities draw people to this transit-accessible area. However, the rationale for installing artificial turf in this location rather than alternate surface treatments that are safe for people and the environment was not adequately defined. We strongly oppose installation of Synturf on the road surface for the following reasons:

Installation of Synturf as proposed will result in plastic and chemical pollution of Sligo Creek and all of its downstream waterways, including the Anacostia River, the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. Although it is proposed that the SYNTipede product will be used without an underlying layer of padding or crumb rubber bits, which is the most common microplastic pollution that comes from turf fields, the "blades" of artificial grass themselves detach, degrade, and flow into the storm drains. Walter Johnson High School had rivers of plastic "blades" wash off when it rains. These "blades" float, so they will not be captured in the storm drain settling tanks and will end up in Sligo Creek. It does not appear that the Montgomery County Department of Environment (DEP) has conducted testing to identify degraded microplastic particles smaller than the existing filter sizes.

Installation of Synturf as proposed will also result in chemical pollution of Sligo Creek and downstream waterways. Synturf grass "blades" are made with PFAS forever chemicals and toxic flame retardants that are dangerous to our health and should not be in our waterways. In addition, the safety sheet for the proposed glue to hold the Synturf to the asphalt says not to send it into storm drains, and it is not clear where the developer will put runoff. Furthermore, synthetic turf must be cleaned frequently with disinfectants, fabric softeners, and other toxic chemicals to remove a build-up of spilled food and drinks as well as biological contaminants such as blood, vomit, spit, sweat, urine, animal feces, etc. Furthermore, according to the Safety Data Sheet provided by the applicant and the manufacturer, vehicular fluid leakage on the turf (presumably from the emergency vehicles and delivery trucks that will be allowed) may need to be cleaned by using mineral spirits or dry cleaning fluid. However, it is illegal to put these substances on our streets and down our storm drains. Most artificial turf also contains antimicrobials, which are often toxic, to prevent acquisition of MRSA, a serious staph infection resistant to many antibiotics, from

contact with the artificial turf. Since COVID-19 lives on plastic for up to 3 days, synturf carpet manufacturers are now also alerting owners to use specific, powerful cleaners frequently. All of these chemicals will wash into the storm drains that lead to Sligo Creek.

The plastic blades, adhesives, and solvent-based wash products that will be required to clean the Synturf are materially very different from the materials and cleaning products used on ordinary concrete or asphalt streets. It is unlikely that the stormwater facilities under Ellsworth that now protect Sligo Creek will be able to filter out the adhesives and solvent-based wash products - not to mention any small particulate deterioration of the turf. Generating such "non-stormwater discharges" would be a violation of the county MS4 permit, and these types of pollutants would not be trapped by a particulate settling tank.

It's particularly important to note that all of these chemicals will also end up in the mouths of our children and pets playing on the Synturf, as well as the fish and other marine life in the waterways!

Installation of Synturf as proposed will result in increased heat in downtown Silver Spring

It is well documented that synthetic turf results in temperatures up to 60 degrees F hotter than ambient temps, much hotter than grass, concrete, or even asphalt. The resulting surface is dangerous to play on and radiates heat into the air. The applicant's consultant provided a shade map but not a temperature map and "guessed" that the synthetic turf would be around 10 degrees hotter than the current asphalt. This is not consistent with actual thermal and infrared temperature readings taken by citizens around the county over the past several summers. This is an important issue since a hotter Ellsworth Avenue will discourage exactly the types of gatherings the proposed pedestrian mall area is supposed to encourage.

The proposed installation of Synturf seems counter to the manufacturer's warranty. Per the manufacturer's own literature, the particular version of Synturf proposed is not intended for use in a high traffic area. The carpet manufacturer warranty says it's for use on rooftops, playgrounds and dog parks. However, the proposed Ellsworth pedestrian mall have much heavier use by thousands of pedestrians plus carts, delivery vehicles, farmers markets, emergency vehicles, snowplows, etc. It is unclear if this type of heavy use will require more frequent repair or replacement of the entire surface, which would be very costly and disruptive.

Synturf is not recyclable. It is appalling that the Planning Board would approve use of tons of plastic made from petroleum that cannot be recycled and will end up in landfills like the artificial playing fields from several Montgomery County high schools. This decision is particularly disappointing given the County's Climate Emergency Resolution. The applicant indicated the Synturf "can be processed and used as a combustible fuel" but a strong goal of the County is to close the Dickerson Incinerator, so it is unclear where the used Synturf will go at the end of its limited lifespan.

We believe these serious concerns were not adequately addressed in the Staff Report or the Planning Board discussion and decision. On behalf of all the DTMG members across the County, we hope that the Board will reconsider this ill-advised decision, eliminate the synthetic turf from the proposal, and require the applicant to implement an environmentally sound alternative, such as natural grass or a permeable surface, or make no change at all to the surface on Ellsworth. Green plastic is not green space.

Thank you for your consideration.

Barbara Nouveau, Executive Director
Olivia Bartlett, Environment Lead
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County

Date In: 7/16/2020

Modified:

Subject: No synthetic Turf in Downtown Silver Spring - (Katz Webform)

Comments:

Cathy Henderson

621 Bennington Lane

Silver Spring

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-4206 MD08

(301) 587-0723 (H)

Why turn over a public road to a developer? Why increase the temperature of the area? Why not just use paint to highlight the pavement? People with dogs walk there. Who wants to clean up after them? Why would a child ever want to play in such filth? I lived through the crazy water park idea era. This proposal seems just as insane.

An easy solution is to have a contest of high school students to design the paint landscaping. So much easier to clean and maintain. Please save money and do the right thing to protect our environment.

Sincerely, Cathy Henderson

Silver Spring, MD 20910