



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

July 30, 2020

Ms. Tiara McCray
Montgomery County Department of Transportation
100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

RE: Abandonment Request No. AB-771
Ellsworth Drive between Georgia Avenue and Fenton Street
Silver Spring Central Business District Sector Plan

Dear Ms. McCray:

At the Montgomery County Planning Board's regularly scheduled meeting on July 30, 2020, the Planning Board reviewed Abandonment Request No. AB-771, for abandonment of the Ellsworth Drive public right-of-way and pedestrian and vehicle access easement in Downtown Silver Spring. After a briefing by Planning staff, the Planning Board voted 5-0, with all members present, in favor of recommending abandonment and transmitting comments to the Montgomery County Department of Transportation.

The Planning Board heard testimony from the Petitioner, residents of Silver Spring, and a representative from the Montgomery County Sierra Club. Please consider this letter, its enclosures, and the following comments as the Planning Board's testimony for the official record.

Although the abandonment was recommended for approval, Vice Chair Fani-González, Commissioner Patterson, and Commissioner Cichy wanted to make it clear that, while they voted in favor of the abandonment, they have serious concerns about the potential impacts synthetic turf can impose on public health and the environment. Commissioner Cichy also wants to ensure that public access along Ellsworth Drive continues to be permitted so that people can still walk their dogs and the annual Silver Spring Thanksgiving Parade can maintain its traditional route.

Commissioner Verma and I stated that we do not believe the issue of whether synthetic turf is allowed in Montgomery County should be decided through individual regulatory cases, and we

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believe that Planning Board review is not the best forum to address these type of broad policy issues that are better considered by the County Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and a recommendation on this petition. Please contact me directly or contact Katie Mencarini with the Area 1 Team of the Planning Department at 301-495-4549 if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,



Casey Anderson
Chair

Enclosures

cc: Gwen Wright
Katie Mencarini
Stephanie Dickel
Elza Hisel-McCoy
Matthew Mills
Al Roshdieh, MCDOT
Mitra Pedeem, DPS
Adam Ortiz, DEP
Raymond L. Crowel, DHHS
Rebecca Torma, MCDOT