

Nancy Floreen, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

September 19, 2016

Re: Westbard Sector Sectional Map Amendments

Dear Council President Floreen:

At this critical juncture in the evolution of the Westbard Sector as the sectional map amendment process is underway, the Citizen's Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH) believes there are some critical issues about building heights which must be resolved before the sectional map amendment process is completed. The purpose of the Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) is to provide the zoning necessary to implement and be consistent with the Sector Plan. The SMA does not accomplish this for the reasons set forth below. Accordingly, a vote on the SMA must be deferred until these issues are corrected.

1. The height of high rise buildings permitted by the SMA zones is higher than envisioned by the Westbard Sector Plan because it would appear to allow additional height for MPDUs mandated by the Sector Plan.

Developers should not be given an incentive or reward of additional heights for providing 15% MPDUs because the Sector Plan mandates that 15% MPDUs be provided. (Section 1.2.3 of the Westbard Sector Plan) When a mandate set by the County Council is simply being followed, there is no rationale for giving additional height. As the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance Division 4.7.1.B states: "Granting points as a public benefit for any amenity or project feature otherwise required by law is prohibited." (page 4-96)

2. The heights of townhouses are clearly specified in the Sector Plan, but the SMA would allow those heights to be increased by adding roof top terraces whose height would not be considered.

CCCFH raised concern that the townhouse height limits could be exceeded by adding roof top terraces and we were repeatedly assured that a zoning text amendment (ZTA) would remedy this inconsistency, We are aware of no such ZTA having been adopted to date. The ZTA must be adopted in advance of the Sectional Map Amendment to clearly limit the heights of townhouses.

Accordingly, these issues must be resolved before the Sectional Map Amendment can be finalized. A vote on the SMA must be deferred pending resolution of these issues.

CITIZEN'S COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynne Battle
Jenny Sue Dunner
Marnie Shaul
Citizen's Coordinating Council on Friendship Heights

cc: Council Members, Council Staff, Casey Anderson, Planning Board Staff