

Judy Penny

From: Regina Belard <r.n.belard@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 12, 2021 4:39 PM
To: mayorcouncil
Subject: Planning for RedGate

Thank you for keeping RedGate a park! Natural open places like RedGate Park are essential to the health and well-being of our community and a step toward combatting habitat loss and climate change.

As you work on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the City, please make sure that it includes the protection and expansion of natural green spaces and wildlife corridors, the trees in our communities, and the planting of native species.

It is very important to our family and greater community to preserve and expand natural spaces in Rockville and make them available for all to enjoy. We would also encourage the planning board to explore the possibilities of:

- collaborating with local nature centers (Croydon Creek, Meadowside) and UMD Cooperative Agricultural Extension to create a beautiful space with native species.

-building a new nature center

-adding signage that educates the public (especially the young) about the importance of our natural environments.

- calling on community volunteer gardeners (we have a strong network in Rockville!) to help plant/donate native plants at RedGate with the help of other local school groups, Cub Scouts etc. to educate and encourage community service. If children do not grow up with the enjoyment, education, and appreciation of nature, they are much less likely to prioritize stewardship of the natural environment as adults.

-finally utilizing this beautiful, new space for community enjoyment, education, and outdoor events

Thank you!

The Belard Family

18 Lodge Pl.

Rockville, MD 20850

FROM THE DESK OF

STEPHANIE F. YOFFEE

June 12, 2021

City of Rockville
Mayor and Council
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

**RE: Opposition to Allowing High Density Development and
High Density Housing in East Rockville**

*Dear Honorable Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton, Council Members Monique Ashton,
Beryl L. Feinberg, David Myles, and Mark Pierzchala:*

Thank you for considering testimony from East Rockville Residents in response to the Mayor and Council's recent discussions about the future of East Rockville. I am writing to today about my opposition to approval in any form of future development which includes high density housing/apartments and/or multiple unit dwellings in the East Rockville neighborhood. I oppose the consideration of discussions related to this high density development to be part of the City of Rockville 2040 Plan since these discussions have been part of the Stonestreet and WMATA Plans.

By way of introduction, I have been a City of Rockville-East Rockville Resident since 2013, and have owned the property at 702 Maple Avenue at the corner of Maple and Reading Avenues. I am a Maryland native, and have lived in Montgomery County for over 50 years. I lived many years growing up in the Capitol View Park Historic District. I now consider my house and property, which is registered with the Maryland Historical Trust and City of Rockville Historic District, part of an historic district. In addition, I bring many years of experience as a design professional and design policy expert including legislative experience with the Maryland General Assembly and as a graduate of The Rhode Island School of Design and The George Washington University. In 2014, I founded **MarylandByDesgin**, a design policy advocacy group to implement a design thinking approach to many of Maryland's growth issues and challenges.

CONTACT

702 MAPLE AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850 EMAIL: STEPHYOFFEE@ICLOUD.COM

I have witnessed the hyper-development in the areas of Montgomery County closest to the District of Columbia, especially around Metro Stations, and the negative impact it has had on many aspects of the quality of life including stresses on inadequate transportation infrastructure, overcrowding of green-livable open spaces, worsening climate change, and using scarce natural resources in an unsustainable way. The key principle of the high density development discussions focusing on East Rockville have been misguided by the concept of the need for high density development in close proximity to public transportation hubs, specifically around the Rockville Metro Station, instead of a design thinking approach that focuses on the wholistic access to a transportation hub from various distances in the surrounding area within a radius in proximity to the Rockville Metro Station. This discussion has been driven by the perspective of planners and developers who stand to gain financially, along with the City of Rockville, which will benefit financially from additional tax revenues, by creating a density of housing that is inappropriate for a neighborhood that has been designed to honor the historical and conservation design principles expressed in the East Rockville Design Guidelines.

The East Rockville Design Guidelines have been carefully crafted over several years by East Rockville Residents and the East Rockville Civic Association. These design guidelines should be respected, not overridden by the 2040 Plan or the City of Rockville. The Mayor and Council and the City of Rockville have many economic and fiscal tools they can use to provide affordable dwelling options and multi-modal transportation to those who are economically disadvantaged among the diverse local population if this is the goal, rather than incentivize developers to build more housing units which is contrary to the East Rockville Design Guidelines that consider the effective density aspects of the East Rockville neighborhood. The City and Mayor and Council need to learn and adopt a design minded and human centered approach to these issues rather than a pro-developer, revenue driven approach to the future of East Rockville's neighborhood. Additional transportation modes such as shuttles, bicycles and car sharing can be implemented and incentivized by the City to make public transportation hubs, like the Rockville Metro Station, more accessible to Rockville Residents from the entire surrounding radius of East Rockville and beyond, rather than overdevelop the immediate area surrounding the Rockville Metro Station.

The East Rockville Design Guidelines prioritize the smart growth, open space, environmental sustainability and historic preservation policies and principles of the City of Rockville and more specifically East Rockville neighborhood. As a proponent of design thinking and understanding the importance of a wholistic approach to the physical characteristics of a city such as Rockville, I urge the Mayor and Council to use any and all design driven approaches that are an intelligent combination of economic incentives for long-term home ownership, innovative improvements to existing single family dwellings, and innovative transportation options through the WMATA and Stonestreet Planning processes. This approach would encourage the most responsible environmental growth in East Rockville that is consistent with the growth of the City of Rockville as a whole.

I would be more than happy to provide additional design thinking resources to the Mayor and Council related to the mission of **MarylandByDesign** as it relates to design policies which have been considered not only at the local level, but also the state level. Please feel free to contact me at any time through my email address provided.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie F. Yoffee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" and "Y".

Stephanie F. Yoffee

Owner of 702 Maple Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20850

Founder of MarylandByDesign (www.marylandbydesign.org)

cc: Ms. Deborah Landau, President
East Rockville Civic Association

Judy Penny

From: Stephanie Yoffee <stephyoffee@icloud.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 12, 2021 6:02 PM
To: mayorcouncil
Cc: President ERCA; Andrea Gilles
Subject: Letter in Opposition to High Density Dwellings in East Rockville
Attachments: Letter-Mayor & Council-density East Rockville.pdf

Follow Up Flag: FollowUp
Flag Status: Flagged

Good afternoon Honorable Mayor and Council Members,
Please consider the attached testimony as part of the ongoing discussion that began at the June 1st Session of the Mayor and Council. This testimony addresses the issue of high density dwellings as part of the development in East Rockville.

Please confirm that this testimony has been received and entered into the record for this most important discussion.

Judy Penny

From: Jeannie Khouri <jeanniekhouri@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 13, 2021 8:58 AM
To: mayorcouncil
Subject: 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please include the protection of existing natural green spaces in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the City. Green spaces, like the Tree Protection Area on Halpine Drive, are essential to the health of our community. As Twinbrook continues to grow it is essential that natural open spaces, our tree canopy, and the establishment of additional green spaces, are part of the plan.

I know that the Mayor and Council are committed to equity. Twinbrook is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Rockville, including socioeconomic. Please ensure that the comprehensive plan provides that Rockville citizens of ALL backgrounds and walks of life have equal access to ample green space in our neighborhoods.

Thank you,
Jennifer Khouri
5711 Ridgway Ave

Judy Penny

From: Mary Lee <mleehancock@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 13, 2021 5:08 PM
To: mayorcouncil
Subject: High Density in East Rockville

Unfortunately, I'm not eloquent enough to adequately put forth the ideas that come to mind when I consider the density being proposed in the 2040 plan. And I'm quite resentful that I even need to address this issue after all the work that has been done on the Stonestreet Plan. A part of me is very concerned this Plan will be adopted because our residents have been focusing on caring for children, parents, pets and whatever, while completely rearranging their lives to accommodate working from home. And now they need to focus on a response to this Plan. This whole scenario brings to mind the proposed Town Center Master Plan from back in September 2001, another example of the City coming up with ideas that served no one in the East Rockville area.

The East Rockville residents have spent a lot of time and energy developing the East Rockville Design Guidelines. I'm at a loss to understand your desire to override all that effort by introducing apartments into our community through the 2040 plan. Additionally, the 2040 Plan is not the appropriate place to address increasing density in East Rockville as the Stonestreet Plan and WMATA planning both already address this issue.

East Rockville remains an eclectic mix of Victorian era housing, vintage post-war housing, and housing built right up to the present time. It maintains a low key, small town feeling. Unfortunately, the area was not developed as a subdivision, all at one time, but rather its piece-meal development resulted in the erosion of what should have been natural boundaries. The 2040 Plan appears to exploit that by increasing density in a residential block that currently contains houses built in the 1930's as well as one built in 1898.

I am curious as to how many East Rockville residents are in favor of this plan. Since I've never spoken with anyone who favors increasing density in our neighborhood, my impression is that it is only the developers and people who don't live in East Rockville who support the idea of increased density in this area. I sure don't.

Sincerely,
Mary Lee Hancock

Judy Penny

From: Farhud Batmanglich <batmanwithaglich@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 13, 2021 6:21 PM
To: mayorcouncil; Jim Wasilak
Subject: Zoning

Follow Up Flag: FollowUp
Flag Status: Flagged

To whom it may concern,

I would like to petition the City of Rockville to zone my properties listed below to RA or RF in the updated Comp Plan. Please let me know what additional steps I need to take to move this request forward.

17 North Street, Rockville, MD 20850
19 North Street, Rockville, MD 20850
21 North Street, Rockville, MD 20850

Thank you very much,

Farhud Batmanglich

Judy Penny

From: Tracy Niebauer <tracyagster@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 13, 2021 8:47 PM
To: mayorcouncil
Subject: Natural Green Spaces

Mayor and Council,

I just learned the official news: that RedGate is going to be sustained as a park and open, green space! I am thrilled at the information. Thank you for keeping RedGate a park, for providing more greenspace for us humans to explore and unwind within, and for adding to the dwindling quantity of habitat necessary to sustain the wild organisms among us.

Natural open places like RedGate Park are essential to the health and well-being of our ecosystem, and we need more - not less - of these spaces. Bearing this in mind as you work on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the City, please make sure that it includes the protection and expansion of natural green spaces and wildlife corridors, the trees in our communities, and the planting of native species. Without green spaces and wildlife corridors, the biodiversity around us will continue to diminish - leaving other species in peril and humans worse off as well. Without trees, animals are challenged to find sufficient habitat to live/hunt and humans are challenged to find the serenity that nature offers. I don't even need to mention the value that trees offer humans with regard to pollution reduction and temperature moderation. As for native species, they too offer countless benefits to humans and animals alike. So many of our native insects feed solely on native plants, and baby birds often are fed only on native insects. Without native plants in our communities, entire species are challenged to survive. One plant is NOT as good as another when it comes to sustaining biodiversity within a region.

Clearly, there are countless other arguments that could be made for the value of greenspaces, trees, and native plants. In the interest of brevity, I have listed only a few, but I do hope that my point is well made. Again, I thank you for your commitment to keeping RedGate natural and free from further development and I encourage you to consider other initiatives that could be equally valuable to the City of Rockville as you work on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you for your time,

Tracy Niebauer

611 Nelson St, Rockville, MD 20850

Judy Penny

From: Michael Dutka <ditko86@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 14, 2021 10:41 AM
To: mayorcouncil; Planning Commission
Subject: Comments on 2040 comprehensive plane

Dear mayor and council,

I included a link to an article in the Journal of the American Planning Association. I thought it might be useful when discussing the Rockville 2040 comprehensive plan. I believe the plan should go further (particularly near mass transit stations) in rezoning detached single family zones to zones that would allow a wider array of housing types. The article describes the drawbacks of detached single family zoning better than I can and I hope you will consider some of the ideas presented. Thank you for your time and consideration

-Michael Dutka

713 Shetland Street
Rockville MD 20851

"Local planning in the United States is unique in the amount of land it reserves for detached single-family homes. This privileging of single-family homes, normally called R1 zoning, exacerbates inequality and undermines efficiency. R1's origins are unpleasant: Stained by explicitly classist and implicitly racist motivations, R1 today continues to promote exclusion. It makes it harder for people to access high-opportunity places, and in expensive regions it contributes to shortages of housing, thereby benefiting homeowners at the expense of renters and forcing many housing consumers to spend more on housing. Stacked against these drawbacks, moreover, are a series of only weak arguments in R1's favor about preferences, aesthetics, and a single-family way of life. We demonstrate that these pro-R1 concerns are either specious, or can be addressed in ways less socially harmful than R1. Given the strong arguments against R1 and the weak arguments for it, we contend planners should work to abolish R1 single-family zoning."

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2019.1651216>

Judy Penny

From: Wendy Perry <wrrperry@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 14, 2021 1:29 PM
To: mayorcouncil
Subject: RedGate Park

Dear Mayor and Council members,

The green spaces in our city are precious resources that cannot be replaced. In the planning for 2040 please maintain RedGate Park as an oasis for wildlife as well as native plants and trees. This land is a gem that we should pass along to those that follow us.

Sincerely,
Wendy Perry
Rockville 20852

Sent from my iPhone

Judy Penny

From: Jake Rose <williamjacobrose@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 14, 2021 12:47 PM
To: mayorcouncil
Subject: 2040 Comprehensive plan

Hello,

Thank you for keeping RedGate a park! Natural open places like RedGate Park are essential to the health and well-being of our community.

As you work on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the City, please make sure that it includes the protection and expansion of natural green spaces and wildlife corridors, the trees in our communities, and the planting of native species.

With increasingly severe storms, porous surfaces like nature spaces can be the best mitigation against damaging storms. The world will be in a different place by 2040 so we need to account for what is to come moreso than what is here.

Thank you,

William Rose

5923 Vandegrift Ave

Rockville, MD 20851