

RESIDENTS FOR SAVING A RURAL MONROVIA

September 29, 2009

Jan H. Gardner, President
David P. Gray, Vice President
Kai J. Hagen, Commissioner
Charles A. Jenkins, Commissioner
John L. Thompson, Commissioner
Board of County Commissioners
Winchester Hall
12 E. Church Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Re: Proposed Monrovia Town Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing to express our strong support for the Planning Commission's recommendation that the Monrovia Town Center Planned Unit Development be removed from the County's Comprehensive Plan. This huge development is contrary to the goals of the County's Growth Management Initiative and would overwhelm the infrastructure and destroy the rural and historic character of our community.

We have attached a letter to the Planning Commission dated January 12, 2009 in which many of us set forth these concerns in more detail. Since January, we have grown in size to over 170 members whose names are listed below.

We urge you to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation regarding the proposed Monrovia Town Center. Please contact Jeannie Pellicier at jeannieandvic@comcast.net if you have any questions. Thank you for our consideration.

Sincerely,

Belinda Rich
Kathy Wright
Robert Wright
Ada Miller
Susan Sier
Jeff Sier
Susan Delaney
Charles Shobe
Meg Melnik
Wally Melnik
Susan Davis
Jennifer Twiford
Thomas R. Twiford
Bonita Bennett
Monica Penn
Valerie J. Posada
James A. Posada

Kathleen Wagner
Dave Walsh
Lisa Walsh
David Ladson
Charles Dunn
Virginia Dunn
Marty Patterson
Mark Askine
Ginnie Patterson
Chris Coccagna
Mitzi Mitcham
Paul Mitcham
Donna Schofield
Phil Schofield
Paul E. Bogley
Jean Bogley
Cindy Hines

James Hines
Laura Hines
Ryan Hines
Joy Hines
Dorothy Mae Winslow
Chuck Winslow
Todd Fister
Andy Aholt
Paula Sowers
Cherie Howard
Jeff Howard
Jim Brinegar
Gail Brinegar
Mark Woods
Amanda Jankowski
Jared Jankowski
Andrea Berry

Letter to Board of County Commissioners

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Dave Berry	Michael Metcalf	Roxanne Kukucka
Bonnie Miller	Mary Coleman	Kevin Mulligan
Woodrow Marth	Karen Burroughs	Anya Crane
Julianna Fuhrmann	Earl Burroughs	Reetu Hota
Paul Fuhrmann	Mary Atwell	Susanta Hota
Julie Darling	Dave Honchalk	James Betts
Jackie Carpenter	Suzanne Honchalk	Robert Luck
Tom Dailey	Mark Granger	Mary Ann Heddleson
Jamie Dailey	Jan Granger	Dave Hartman
Martie Harner	Kathryn Snyder	Mary Carberry
Timmy Harner	Bill Helsel	Laura Willet
Cindy McCathran	Karen Helsel	Alan Nanavaty
Billy McCathran	April Martin	Donnie Leonard
Lee Whitten Peigh	Stacey France	Nancy Nanavaty
Brian Peigh	Michele Holsinger	Jennifer Beiter
William Eby	Susan King	Fritz Beiter
Michelle Eby	Dennis King	Ilene Glassman
Jennifer Russo	Stacie Doherty	Nancy Spain
Michael Russo	Steve Doherty	Darrin Dimmick
Tina Flynn	Judy Krieger	Jeanne Dimmick
Daniel Flynn	Jim Krieger	Patricia Van Hoof
Lori Maze	Linda Meyer	Vincent Hackley
Liz Peterson	Robin Abel	Dawn Pierpoint
Jon Peterson	Joyce Abel	Shawn Pierpoint
Jane Barger	Joe Roundy	Gary Coleman
Jim Barger	Jim Palmer	Mette Espino
Susan Thompson	Katie Palmer	Kim Mong-Kerwin
AnnMarie Kline	Jann Nakoski	Jerry Kerwin
Maureen Wilks	Richard Way	Jackie Anthony
Timmy Wilks	Phil Chalkley	Marvin C. Anthony
Dave DeTroye	Tara Washington	Ruby Kirklin
Missy DeTroye	Perry Washington	Jose Paredes
Mindy Tapscott	Nancy Cornelison	Delmy Paredes
Jake Tapscott	Margaret Bettiger	Alidda Paredes
Ronn Wiehler	Gary Cornelison	Stan Abretski
Marie Wiehler	Alice Hilderbrand	Karen Ortner
Jeannie Pellicier	Upton Hilderbrand	Edward Ballow
Victor Pellicier	Richard Hoffman	
Julie Parenti	Paul Kemp	
Bob Parenti	Charlie Metz	
Tony Parenti	Susan Temple	

cc Eric Soter, Director, Planning Department
Jim Gugel, Chief Planner, Comprehensive Planning

RESIDENTS FOR SAVING A RURAL MONROVIA

January 12, 2009

Audrey L. Wolfe, Chair
Catherine Forrence, Vice Chair
Robert L. White, Jr., Secretary
Joseph F. Brown, III, Member
Richard Floyd, Member
John B. McClurkin, Member

Frederick County Planning Commission
12 East Church Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Re: Relocation of Eastern Boundary of Monrovia Community Growth
Boundary to Ed McClain Road

Dear Commissioners:

We understand that this Wednesday, January 14, you will review a "Monrovia Land Use Plan" (dated December 16, 2008) at a workshop with Planning Staff under the County's Growth Management Initiative. As you know, a key purpose of this Initiative is to "link the pace of residential growth with the county's ability to provide adequate roads, schools, public safety and other government services." The Initiative is also intended to "preserve the rural, cultural and historic character of the county."

The proposed Monrovia Town Center Planned Unit Development is contrary to the goals of the Growth Management Initiative. This huge development would overwhelm the infrastructure and destroy the rural and historic character of our community. It is far removed from any "Priority Funding Area" under state law, in direct conflict with principles of Smart Growth, and a classic example of harmful and ill-advised sprawl which the Growth Management Initiative is designed to address. We note that this PUD does not have final APFO approval and is subject to the County's moratorium on subdivision activity, pending completion of the Growth Management Initiative.

We request that you recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that this PUD be removed from the County's Comprehensive Plan and water/sewer service area. We ask that you make this recommendation by moving the eastern boundary of the Monrovia "Community Growth Boundary" westward to Ed McClain Road. We further request that during your subsequent review of the County's Comprehensive Zoning Map you recommend (through appropriate changes to the Map) that the farmland encompassed within this PUD be reclassified as agricultural.

We are some 130 residents of the historic village of Monrovia, Green Valley, Ijamsville, Pleasant Grove, Windsor Knolls, New Market, Mt. Airy and other nearby communities. (We continue to gather signatories to this letter and will periodically update the list.) While we live in different neighborhoods, we all rely extensively on Route 75, Route 80 and other local roads for commuting to work, carpooling with our children to and from school and after-school activities, running errands and visiting friends and relatives. Route 75 is already severely congested. Its narrow, winding and sight-restricted roadbed impedes automobile and truck traffic, greatly prolongs commute times, and poses serious risks to the safety of drivers and passengers (including our children) who have no other alternative for north-south travel in the region. Route 80 is also subject to severe traffic congestion in Monrovia and its environs. The volume of high-speed traffic at certain times of the day makes it almost impossible for us to safely access Route 75 and Route 80 from our neighborhoods.

The Monrovia Town Center PUD was approved by the prior Board of County Commissioners on September 28, 2006, just weeks before its term concluded. Commissioners Mike Cady, John Lovell and Bruce Reeder voted in favor of the project. Six weeks later, Commissioners Cady and Lovell failed in their bids for reelection. (Commissioner Reeder did not run for reelection.) None of the Commissioners who supported this questionable project are now in office.

The Monrovia Town Center PUD encompasses over 400 acres of rural farmland situated at the intersection of Route 75 and Route 80. It includes 1,608 age-restricted dwelling units and 30,000 square feet of commercial space. In 2004, the Board of County Commissioners also approved a PUD now known as Lansdale Active Adult which is contiguous to the Monrovia Town Center, to the west of Ed McClain Road. The Lansdale Active Adult PUD includes 1,100 age-restricted dwelling units.

Taken together, these two PUDs total over 2,700 dwelling units. These units would house approximately 4,500 people (assuming an average household size of 1.67 people per age-restricted household in Frederick County.) This would increase the population of Monrovia by five-fold, from about 1,148 (in 2004) to 5,648 – the size of a small city. This population increase would generate almost 20,000 additional car trips per day (assuming 6-7 car trips are generated in aggregate by the inhabitants of each residential unit and including third-party trips such as emergency medical services, trash and recycling pick-ups, home repairmen etc.)

The County did not conduct a regional traffic study prior to approving the Monrovia Town Center PUD. In other words, the prior Board of County Commissioners made no attempt to assess the traffic impacts of this project over the length of Route 75 as it proceeds approximately 7 miles south to the Route

355/I-270 corridor, or over the length of Route 80 as it proceeds east and west of the project. As noted, these roads are already severely congested. Even without an additional 20,000 cars per day from these age-restricted developments, these adverse traffic conditions will be greatly compounded by the development of three new subdivisions in the Town of New Market, the Costco distribution center on Baldwin Road, on-going development at Greenview and Lake Linganore and further explosive growth in Urbana.

In the absence of a regional traffic analysis, the Monrovia Town Center PUD was apparently approved on the assumption that major improvements would be made to Route 75 where it intersects with I-70 to the north and I-270 to the south. The 2004 Transportation Plan for the Urbana Region states that these improvements are the County's "number one priority for state secondary highway projects" and "would provide a more direct and faster route to I-270 and Montgomery County." We now know, however, that these improvements have either been cancelled or postponed for 20 years or more.

In addition, it would cost over \$125 million to improve Route 75 as it proceeds south approximately 7 miles from the proposed Monrovia Town Center PUD to the Route 355/I-270 corridor. (This cost projection conservatively assumes that roadway improvements to Route 75 would cost \$18 million per centerline mile, and does not include the cost of right-of-way easement acquisition.) The State of Maryland has refused to fund these improvements because this segment of Route 75 is outside a "Priority Funding Area". The County itself cannot afford to make these improvements.

The traffic mitigation measures proposed for the Monrovia Town Center were developed under the County's existing Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. These measures are only designed to facilitate access to the development and the movement of traffic in the immediate vicinity of the project. Unfortunately, however, the traffic mitigation measures in this case will not accomplish even these limited objectives. The most recent traffic impact studies for the project indicate that ramps and intersections at the Route 75/I-70 interchange will fail to provide adequate levels of service until, at some undetermined point in the distant future, road improvement escrow accounts are fully funded through additional development in the area.

We understand that the only reason that the Monrovia Town Center PUD is age-restricted is to circumvent the schools test under the APFO. We question, however, whether this development strategy can justify a project whose limited demographic would fragment an otherwise diverse, interdependent and varied community. We also note the substantial financial and practical pressures that can lead to the conversion of age-restricted communities to neighborhoods for all ages that impose even greater demands on local infrastructure.

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Last year, based on careful analysis, the County redrew future growth boundaries in the revised New Market Region Plan. It took this step to avoid traffic gridlock on local roads, school overcrowding, parkland shortages and a deterioration of other public facilities and services. We request that similar measures be taken to preserve the quality of life in Monrovia.

Finally, in November 2006, the citizens of Frederick County voted decisively for candidates who would address massive and unchecked sprawl in their communities. The Planning Commission now has the opportunity to respond to this mandate. We urge the Commission to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that this ill-advised and poorly planned development be removed from the Comprehensive Plan for Frederick County.

Please contact Jeannie Pellicier at jeannieandvic@comcast.net if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cherie Howard

Jeff Howard

Jim Brinegar

Gail Brinegar

Mark Woods

Amanda Jankowski

Jared Jankowski

Andrea Berry

Dave Berry

Bonnie Miller

Woodrow Marth

Julianna Fuhrmann

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Timmy Harner

Cindy McCathran

Billy McCathran

Lee Whitten Peigh

Brian Peigh

William Eby

Michelle Eby

Jennifer Russo

Michael Russo

Tina Flynn

Daniel Flynn

Lori Maze

Liz Peterson

Jon Peterson

Jane Barger

Jim Barger

Susan Thompson

AnnMarie Kline

Maureen Wilks

Timmy Wilks

Dave DeTroye

Missy DeTroye

Mindy Tapscott

Jake Tapscott

Ronn Wiehler

Marie Wiehler

Jeannie Pellicier

Victor Pellicier

Julie Parenti

Bob Parenti

Tony Parenti

Michael Metcalf

Mary Coleman

Karen Burroughs

Earl Burroughs

Mary Atwell

Dave Honchalk

Suzanne Honchalk

Mark Granger

Jan Granger

Kathryn Snyder

Bill Helsel

Karen Helsel

April Martin

Stacey France

Michele Holsinger

Susan King

Dennis King

Stacie Doherty

Steve Doherty

Judy Krieger

Jim Krieger

Linda Meyer

Robin Abel

Joyce Abel

Joe Roundy

Jim Palmer

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Katie Palmer
Jann Nakoski
Richard Way
Phil Chalkley
Tara Washington
Perry Washington
Nancy Cornelison
Margaret Bettiger
Gary Cornelison
Alice Hilderbrand
Upton Hilderbrand
Richard Hoffman
Paul Kemp
Charlie Metz
Susan Temple
Roxanne Kukucka
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Dawn Pierpoint
Shawn Pierpoint
Gary Coleman
Mette Espino
Kim Mong-Kerwin
Jerry Kerwin
Jackie Anthony
Marvin C. Anthony
Ruby Kirklin
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