

From: **Cristina Echavarren** [REDACTED]
Date: Thu, Jul 31, 2014 at 9:23 PM
Subject: Master Plan Rezoning of Residential Properties - Sacks
To: Elza Hisel-McCoy

Mr. Elza Hisel-McCoy
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Hisel-McCoy,

My husband and I own property in the Sacks Subdivision, which is included in the proposed South Bethesda District. As you know, Bethesda has grown and changed significantly since the 1994 Sector Plan was approved, and now we are embarking on the 20-year cycle of a new Downtown Bethesda Master Plan. Some of the biggest changes recognized by MNCPPC are a new town core located barely a block from our neighborhood that will include a station for the Purple Line and a new south entrance to the Bethesda Metro Station.

The Sacks Subdivision has become increasingly isolated from other single family neighborhoods since getting to these other neighborhoods now requires traversing streets where there are large commercial buildings or high-density residential properties. The newest multi-purpose structures adjacent to our neighborhood have further eroded an earlier definition of “a small residential neighborhood close to downtown Bethesda.”

Given the likely continued rapid pace of construction, we are in favor of rezoning our R-60 properties to a higher density residential neighborhood with transfer development rights (TDRs). As we understand it, this zoning change would be an innovative approach to transitioning our neighborhood in a way that provides flexibility for property owners. As you may also know, a previous process of selling all our properties to a developer divided our community between those who wanted to sell and those who did not. We believe that allowing a new high-density residential zoning with Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) such as has been used in agricultural reserve areas and in the Woodmont Triangle area of Bethesda would allow individual property owners more freedom to choose between current housing and higher-density housing.

There is no denying that downtown Bethesda will need increasingly more housing stock during the next decade than is currently available and that the only way to obtain this demand for housing is by building up.

I do hope the MNCPPC staff report will recommend the Sacks Subdivision be designated with a higher density zoning including TDRs.

Sincerely,

M. Cristina Echavarren

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