

As President of a Community Alliance I am sending this to the Council and asking that they reject the Master Plan as it is currently represented, an incomplete Master Plan. It still needs work and promises of the County Government not implied promises by developers. No other Master Plan across the county has had the County Executives rubber stamp of "REVENUE NUETRAL" placed over the cover letter.

There are so many things about the Shady Grove Master Plan that could create a positive, healthy, economic change to our County, but if implemented the way of the current master plan it will fail. Creation of this current new Urban Community, "Shady Grove Master Plan" is a total farce. The creation of a "Amity Drive" Elementary School, the creation of a library, the creation of new ball parks, the creation of aesthetically pleasant streetscapes at the border of this new community, (Rockville Pike, Rte 355) and the creation of a new community center. All of these are promises that the PHED committee, Planning Board and communities feel should be within the new Master Plan for the Shady Grove sector.

The problem is one of the members of the PHED committee (Nancy Floreen), states we should not be expending tax dollars when we can get the developers to foot the bills for all of these expenses. The original charrettes, Planning Board and County Council, had a professional presentation by a highly qualified Transit Oriented Development (TOD) consultant who was quoted that TOD communities do not solve traffic problems they only change the economic structure around the transit stations. I now ask are we really building an Urban Community or are we just stuffing density into a community and attempting to get developer's promises like Clarksburg and not waste tax dollars.

But where are the problems of this Master Plan?

- Library (developer promised, maybe)
- Streetscape (developer contested)
- Ball parks (developer promised, to meet needs of old communities neglect not to meet new needs)
- Community Center (never promised by anybody)
- Traffic (not considered a problem of the new master plan it is only through traffic)
- New Elementary School on Amity Drive development (under County law it could have been a 3 year reservation cycle but the Planning Board restricted it to a 2-year reservation and the clock started ticking 14 months ago, the County needs to open their checkbook now.)

The **TRAFFIC** within the new Master Plan will be considered a negative impact to a broad spectrum of the County, but it is considered not generated by the Master Plan it is considered through traffic. That means any morning commuter that starts his day across the street from the master plan in Mill Creek Towne or Candlewood is not part of this local traffic generation. They are outside the Master Plan and not part of the local traffic. All traffic generated from Rockville, Gaithersburg, Upper Rock Creek or Un-incorporated Gaithersburg Derwood communities are not part of this local traffic. They are problems of the through traffic, whether they are Derwood or not.

The **COMMUNITY CENTER** is totally unjustified by the parks and recreation department (Jeff Bourne) because they can't justify 30,000 residents that would be using the Urban Village Community Center. Of course the very narrow, specific questions asked by the PHED Committee chairman asked residential numbers of the specified Master Plan. The answer ignored the people living across Rte 355 that would use the new Community center, the residents across Redland Road in Candlewood and the residents across Mid-County Highway in Mill Creek Towne. Those folks have an accumulated population of 51,000 residents but they are not in a specified narrow focused Master Plan that is considered by the County Government a community. Derwood is not considered a community by the Government, but the Shady Grove Master plan without any current schools in its boundaries is labeled a community.

So when Mr. Bourne is asked where these folks should be going to a community center, he states the Bauer Drive community center supports the folks of lower Derwood. He also states that the Bauer Drive community center is currently supporting 80-90,000 residents using the Bauer Drive Community Center. That huge 90,000 number is well above the 30,000 required to support a community center because it drags

in residents well beyond their local community. Derwood residents should not have to go miles out of the way to reach a recreational facility. When we ask about where the new residents will be supporting community recreation and civic functions, there is no good answer. Shouldn't a Shady Grove Community Center be developed and support a new Urban Village? Wouldn't this new center take some of the burden off of the 90,000 users in Bauer Drive? The residential Easter Egg Hunts, the community Halloween parties for small children and civic meeting places only exist in incorporated cities like Takoma Park, Rockville and Gaithersburg. The Shady Grove Civic Alliance meets monthly in a rented school meeting room outside of the Shady Grove Master Plan, because there is no school currently in the Shady Grove Sector geography, but the County Government wants to limit a small geography in the Master Plan and call it a community.

Since we are an unincorporated County community the limited facilities that the County provides us are shared by the entire county whether they are residents in incorporated cities or not. But, if we desire to use Rockville or Gaithersburg services we pay added fees because we are not residents. When we look at the community centers that my tax dollars of years gone by are paying for, (i.e. the Silver Spring armory replacement Community Center, the Potomac Community Center) my tax dollars paid for all of the other communities, why can't my tax dollars be used for my own community? If we are going to build new communities, government investment must be included, not just promises by developers. Would the massive changes have been made in Bethesda if the County had not invested in the parking structures? With new development comes new investment. If we are going to build a new Urban Community then step up to the plate and hit a home run, don't just watch three pitches go by without taking a swing (let the developers do it).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/14/AR2005121401287.html>

This is what we need at the Metro. We don't need a big Potomac style rec center with all the outdoor tracks and fields and basketball court and such. But they need a place for meetings, classes, gatherings, Easter Egg hunts, safe secure PEE WEE style Halloween parties. It should be next to the 4 acre park and just down from a row of speciality shops that include a restaurant, Starbucks, gift shop, small art theatre and an art gallery. The council wants this to be urban. This would be urban.

There are new community centers popping up all over the county. Why can't we have one? We need it.

A Place With Many Purposes

Thursday, December 15, 2005; GZ03

Takoma Park held a grand opening for its new community center on Sunday. Located at Philadelphia and Maple avenues, the center includes meeting rooms, a computer learning center, an art room and city offices. A teen room, dance room and game room will be completed next summer. The city is considering adding a gym, though it has not yet been funded.

City Manager Barbara Matthews said the city wanted to "create a central place where the community could get together for a variety of purposes."

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