

Friends of White Flint

Promoting a Sustainable, Walkable, and Engaging Community

P.O. Box 2222, White Flint Station, Kensington, MD 20891-2222 301-984-1200

May 1, 2009

Montgomery County Planning Board
The Hon. Royce Hanson
Chairman
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RE: Redesign of Rockville Pike

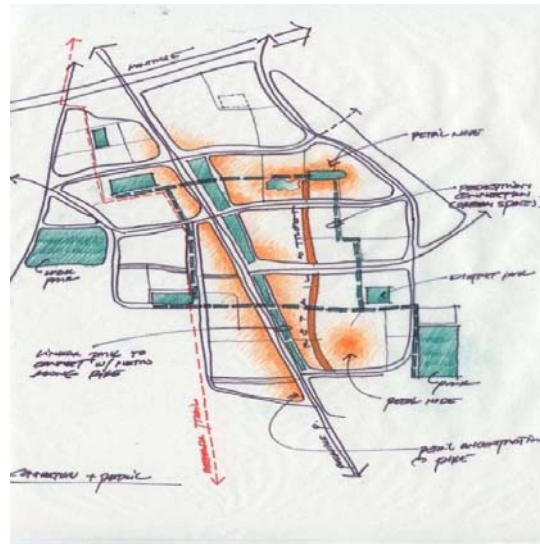
Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board:

I am writing to express our concern about the Board's recent preliminary decision to reject consideration of the Rockville Pike road section prepared by Glatting-Jackson.

As you know, Friends of White Flint is a nonprofit organization dedicated to achieving the Goal and Vision described by the former White Flint Advisory Group in its 2008 Final Report to the Board. Our members include the largest community organizations, businesses, employers, and property owners in the White Flint area, as well as many other equally-valuable members. Our Board is evenly divided between residents, businesses and property owners. We have actively promoted the revitalization of the Pike.

The Board has been struggling with two problems: making White Flint a destination, and tying the Sector together with a common identity. We believe that one answer to both problems lies in a design feature on which there is general agreement. That feature is generally called "The Promenade," and has an East-West component thought to run along the proposed Main Street, and a North-South component to run along a revitalized Rockville Pike. These two Promenade sections naturally fit together into a "T" running along the east-west and north-south "spines" of the Sector. Together the Promenade will focus development projects, and will give residents inside and outside the Sector a reason to come to the Sector for more than a single purpose.

The Public Hearing Draft has a chart which gives a pictorial representation of the combined Promenade design. From Page 23 (“T” feature in orange):



The Promenade design depends on a viable north-south component along Rockville Pike. We believe that the north-south component fits well with the Glatting-Jackson design of the Pike. We do not have that confidence with the less-pedestrian-friendly and -bike-friendly road section tentatively adopted by the Board at its April 30, 2009, meeting.

We understand that much work remains to be done with the design of Rockville Pike. We believe, however, that any redesign of the Pike should be consistent with the vision of a destination and a unified Sector.

We hope that the Board will reconsider its decision to reject the Glatting-Jackson road section design, and permit sufficient flexibility to allow this well-thought-out and comprehensive design to be considered during the White Flint redevelopment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barnaby W. Zall
Co-Chair