

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
www.whiteflint.org

Contact: Barnaby Zall 301-231-6943

Immediate Release

Statement on the Introduction of Legislation to Coordinate and Expedite the Implementation of the White Flint Sector Plan

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In the four-year development of the White Flint Sector Plan, Friends of White Flint and other organizations held hundreds of meetings with thousands of Montgomery County residents. Most people agree with the vision for a transit-oriented, sustainable, walkable White Flint. But there was some opposition; what was surprising was the nature of that opposition.

Why did people oppose the White Flint Plan? It wasn't, as we predicted, because we were proposing a new kind of urban model – transit-oriented, walkable, sustainable.

Much of the opposition to the White Flint Plan sprang from fear that Montgomery County would not follow-through on its promises. The 1992 North Bethesda-Garrett Park Master Plan, for example, promised transit-oriented development. But what it produced was . . . Rockville Pike today.

Today County Councilmembers Duchy Trachtenberg and Mike Knapp will introduce legislation to resolve that problem. The bill would designate a county employee to coordinate the financing and development of County infrastructure in White Flint, advise the County and State about “any action needed to expedite the financing and development of County infrastructure,” “serve as primary point of contact for residents and businesses,” and “take or recommend any other action needed to assure that County infrastructure keeps pace with private development.” There would be one person with the responsibility for infrastructure, and the accessibility for residents and businesses (who often get lost in the shuffle of complicated planning processes).

Accountability, accessibility, action. A good prescription. Would it be a guarantee of success? No, but it's a good start, and it's precisely what's needed to resolve many peoples' concerns.

A confidence booster. Because a lack of confidence is generating a lot of the opposition to the White Flint Plan. So something that boosts confidence in the likelihood of success will go far in resolving fears about the White Flint Plan.

At its meeting on January 14, the Board of Directors of Friends of White Flint voted to endorse the Trachtenberg/Knapp bill.

Friends of White Flint is a non-profit corporation promoting a sustainable, walkable and engaging community in White Flint. Its Board is divided evenly between residents, businesses and property owners. www.whiteflint.org