April 11, 2023

Mr. Eli Glazier

Multimodal Transportation Planner Coordinator

Montgomery County Planning Department  
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

2425 Reedie Drive

Wheaton, MD 20902

Dear, Mr. Glazier:

As noted in our letter of March 22, 2023, the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) continued its discussion, initiated at our March meeting, of the Draft Montgomery County Pedestrian Master Plan at our April 11th meeting. And, as a result of that discussion, GOCA acknowledges the comprehensiveness and specificity of the draft Montgomery County Pedestrian Plan. Overall, GOCA supports the plan, but would like, in particular, to note the following:

* We applaud the County for looking at its overall policies and priorities for investment, and for its adoption of the Complete Streets Design Guidelines, which emphasize providing safe transportation options for all people.
* We appreciate that the County is aware of the many no-or low-cost options it has for improving conditions for pedestrians, such as adjusting signal timings and painting roadways to alert drivers to smaller streets intersecting with the larger one.
* We fully support using a more data-driven approach to prioritizing improvements (Key Action B-1a), as often, the people who may need them most are also the people with the fewest resources available to them to be able to affect change.
* We also note that most suggested revenue increases would have to be approved by the Montgomery County Council, and should go through their own public review and comment period.
* We have some concerns about Key Action B-10a, transferring Maryland State roads to County control. While we think that a conversation may be in order, we hope that this conversation would encompass a range of options. For instance, it might be more effective to convince MDOT SHA that their guidelines for roadways in urban and Town Center areas should be changed. Such an action would address the issues without having to transfer roadways and accompanying costs.
* While we agree with MA-2d, whereby the County would take responsibility for shoveling snow on more sidewalks, we encourage them to broaden this beyond formal sidewalks. For instance, the pathway connecting the Hallowell neighborhood to Buehler Road, which is used by people walking into the Town Center as well as children walking to school, cuts through Southeast Olney Park. This portion of the pathway is never cleared, and generally becomes icy and dangerous.
* Regarding Action P-5b, walking school buses, the same concept has been successfully implemented with bikes in other parts of the country.
* In establishing a two-tiered vehicle fee, the determination should not just be based on the size of the vehicle, but somehow also needs to account for safety features a car may have such as software to prevent lane drifting or automatic breaking.
* In the Olney area, we suggest one more “goat path” to be formalized: halfway along the St. Peter’s Catholic Church driveway (2900 Olney Sandy Spring Road, Olney), there is a path worn by students at the Parish School cutting through the condos on Buehler Rd near St. Peter’s on their way to town after school, as well as residents of the condominiums accessing the school, playground and church.

Sincerely,



Helene I. Rosenheim

President