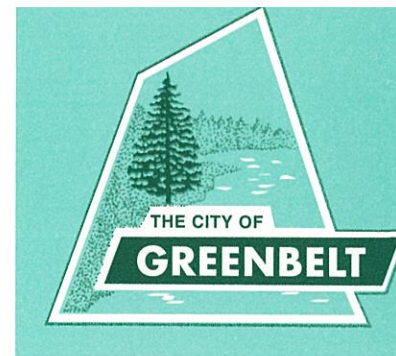


CITY OF GREENBELT

25 CRESCENT ROAD, GREENBELT, MD. 20770-1886



October 10, 2017

The Honorable Derrick Davis, Chair
Prince George's County Council
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

CITY COUNCIL
Emmett V. Jordan, Mayor
Judith F. Davis, Mayor Pro Tem
Konrad E. Herling
Leta M. Mach
Silke I. Pope
Edward V.J. Putens
Rodney M. Roberts

RE: Zoning Re-Write – Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone

Dear Chairman Davis:

On Monday, September 11, 2017, the Greenbelt City Council, in response to a citizen petition, voted unanimously:

- a) To request that the draft Greenbelt Neighborhood Conservation Overlay (NCO) Zone prepared by Clarion Associates be included in the Zoning Re-Write Comprehensive Review Draft; and
- b) To request that the Greenbelt NCO Zone regulations be immediately released so that the public review process can begin. This would enable the Greenbelt City Council and citizens to work concurrently on refining and revising the Greenbelt NCO Zone regulations to Greenbelt so that it can be adopted when the entire Zoning Re-Write Ordinance is adopted.

The City of Greenbelt has been very involved in the County's zoning re-write project since its inception and has consistently voiced concerns about the impact the project will have on Greenbelt, particularly on Historic Greenbelt. Since the release of Module 1, the City has repeatedly referenced how it believes the proposed elimination of the Residential Planned Community (R-P-C) Zone could potentially threaten the historic character of Greenbelt.

While the R-P-C Zone is limited in the protection it affords individual houses in Historic Greenbelt, it does serve a valuable purpose of protecting the community's overall character. Historic Greenbelt's National Historic Landmark designation is based on the overarching site plan which created superblocks with areas of clustered development and planned open space linked to a town common including a commercial town center (Roosevelt Center) via inner walkways and underpasses. The R-P-C Zone caps housing density based on the residential superblocks that were part of the 1937 original planned community. This means that densities of future development cannot exceed the density found on the ground today, even though higher densities may be permitted by the underlying zones. These density limits are crucial to protecting the community's historic fabric because today's R-T Zone, as well as the proposed new zones, allow for higher densities than permitted under the R-P-C Official Plan, thereby threatening the original development, historic character and the planned community features, as well as the National Historic Landmark designation.

As suggested by the County's consultants and the M-NCPPC zoning re-write project team, the NCO Zone proposed in the new draft ordinance would be an appropriate zoning tool to replace the existing R-P-C Zone for Greenbelt. In fact, upon the release and review of Module 1 in March 2016, M-NCPPC staff made a commitment to work with the City on drafting an NCO Zone for Greenbelt for inclusion in the new zoning ordinance. Not only would an NCO Zone address concerns related to the removal of the R-P-C Zone, but perhaps, more importantly, it would address the unique development pattern of Historic Greenbelt where traditional residential zoning categories cannot be applied. Without an NCO Zone, there will be no means to review and approve development (i.e., additions/renovations) within portions of Historic Greenbelt.

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The City was pleased to learn two months ago that a draft NCO Zone for Greenbelt was completed and proposed to be released with the Comprehensive Review Draft in early fall. Understanding that the Greenbelt NCO Zone was a draft that would require significant public review and input, the City was eager to have the draft zone to share with the community and begin the public input process.

The City finds the County Council’s recent direction to M-NCPPC staff to place the Greenbelt NCO Zone on hold and not to release it as part of, or at the same time as, the Comprehensive Review Draft concerning and totally unacceptable.

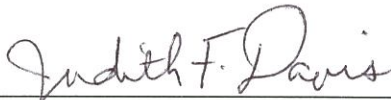
While the City understands that other communities may be interested in having their own NCO Zones, these communities are not losing the R-P-C Zone designation. The Greenbelt NCO Zone can be used as a model for development of future NCO Zones. The potential for irreparable damage that could occur to Historic Greenbelt between the time the R-P-C Zone is repealed and the NCO Zone is adopted and placed on the appropriate properties is significant and of grave concern to the citizens of Greenbelt.

Therefore, the City asks the County Council to reconsider the inclusion of a Greenbelt NCO Zone in the final Comprehensive Review Draft or approve the Greenbelt NCO Zone concurrently with the approval of the Zoning Ordinance. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Terri Hruby, Acting Director of Planning and Community Development, at (301)345-5417.

Sincerely,



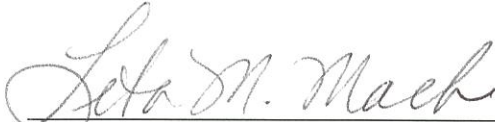
Emmett V. Jordan
Mayor



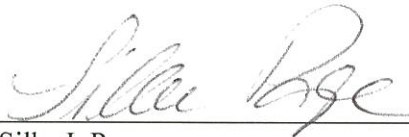
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Council Member



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Council Member




Leta M. Mach
Council Member



Silke I. Pope
Council Member



Edward V.J. Putens
Council Member



Rodney M. Roberts
Council Member

- cc. City Council
- The Honorable Todd Turner
- Derick Berlage, M-NCPPC
- Nicole Ard, City Manager
- Terri S. Hruby, Acting Director of Planning and Community Development