



✨ Special Thanks To Our Volunteer Board ✨

- Dedicated service beyond regular duties
- Extra meetings since July on ASHI
- Balanced multiple commitments
- Maintained high engagement despite vacancies

"Together we make our community stronger!"

Our Approach and Process

1

Swift and Informed Response

GOCA initiated a rapid yet thorough response process, focusing specifically on the Greater Olney area. This approach ensured that the unique needs and characteristics of our community were at the forefront of our considerations.

2

Balanced Understanding

Before formulating a response, GOCA prioritized gaining a comprehensive understanding of the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. This involved careful analysis of proposed changes and potential impacts on our community.

3

Constructive Engagement

GOCA maintained a collaborative stance throughout the process, engaging constructively with county officials. This approach aimed to foster productive dialogue and ensure that Greater Olney's voice was heard and respected.

4

Information Gathering

A crucial part of our process involved attending councilmembers' presentations, having the Planning Staff present, and organizing community feedback sessions. These activities provided a well-rounded perspective on the initiative.

Scope of GOCA's Letter

What it is:

- Feedback on Planning Board's ASHI proposal
- Input to Council members as their constituents
- Constructive suggestions for improvement

What it isn't:

- Final position on future legislation
- Response to Council's eventual modifications
- Opposition to housing solutions in general

Status:

- Planning Board → Council → Possible Legislation
- We are at initial feedback stage
- Part of longer legislative process



Recognizing the Housing Shortage

- **Months of Supply Metric:** A key indicator of housing market health. A balanced market ideally has 5-7 months of supply.
- **Montgomery County Reality:** Currently, only 1,6 months of supply, indicating a severe shortage.
- **Historical Context:** This shortage has persisted for over a decade, highlighting a long-term trend.

*Data Source: National Association of Realtors.



Need for a Comprehensive and Multi-Faceted Approach

Absence of a Coordinated Strategy:

It is not evident that this initiative is part of a broader plan with other housing solutions being pursued concurrently.

Alternative Solutions:

Exploring options like retrofitting vacant commercial buildings, as suggested by Councilmember Sayles, Jawando and Glass, should be prioritized.

Perception of Targeting:

A comprehensive approach avoids the impression of favoring developers or focusing solely on smaller properties.

Data and Projections:

Updating data and projections to reflect post-COVID realities and hybrid work models is crucial for informed decision-making.

Infrastructure Concerns and Analysis

<u>Concern</u>	<u>Community Voice</u>	<u>Planning Staff/Board Analysis</u>
<i>School Capacity</i>	Many schools in the county are already at or near capacity.	Impact taxes and Utilization Premium Payments will mitigate overcrowding in schools. <u>No data or specific explanations are provided to support this claim.</u>
<i>Parking</i>	Limited options in transit-poor Olney.	7+ miles from metro stations.
<i>Overall Infrastructure</i>	Need for area-specific solutions.	Lack of supporting data makes it hard to evaluate.

By-Right Zoning Concerns and Performance Measures

1

Measured Approach

The community expresses a strong preference for the phased implementation of zoning changes.

By-right zoning introduces potentially irreversible changes to zoning regulations.

2

Regular Assessment

There is a clear need for frequent performance assessments of any implemented changes. The proposed 2-4 year check-ins by the Planning Board are viewed as potentially too infrequent to address rapidly evolving housing market dynamics.

3

Conditional Approval as a Starting Point:

A more cautious approach with conditional building approvals initially would allow for better assessment and control.

4

Unpredictable Outcomes:

The Planning Board's admission that it's "impossible to estimate precise housing market" outcomes underscores the need for a flexible, data-driven approach to zoning changes.



Conclusion: A Balanced and Collaborative Approach



Understanding Complexity:

Recognizing that the housing shortage is a multifaceted issue requiring a nuanced approach.



Community Input:

Acknowledging and valuing the diverse perspectives and ideas shared by community members.



Key Recommendations:

Prioritizing a comprehensive strategy, data-driven decision-making, and infrastructure considerations.



Open Dialogue:

Encouraging continued discussion and collaboration among stakeholders to achieve the best outcomes for the entire community.