

#32

COMPLETE



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Q1

Contact information

Name

spring Donald Silverstein

Email



Political Affiliation

Unaffiliated

Q2

Planning Board member

What are you applying for?

Page 2: Housing Production

Q3

Montgomery County needs 60,000 homes by 2040 according to the Planning Department. Where in the county do you think density should be increased to accommodate the construction of new housing? Select all of the options that apply. If you don't think density should be increased in Montgomery County, please select "I do not think density should be increased anywhere in Montgomery County."

New housing should be concentrated within a close distance of Metro and Purple Line stations.

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New housing should be built throughout existing residential neighborhoods in duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings.

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New housing should be built on the site of aging commercial properties, like shopping centers and office parks.

Q4

How many additional units (including the aforementioned 60,000) do you think should be built here by 2040?

I do not support another housing production goal for 2040.

Q5 **Yes**

The recently passed Thrive 2050 plan identifies main corridors in the county as “complete communities” where more housing and mixed-use development should occur, including changing single-family zoning to allow a variety of house types. Do you support this goal?

Q6
 As a Planning Board member, your role is to advise the council on strategies for increasing housing production. Please rank the following policies that would increase housing production in the order you’d advise the council to undertake them:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| Legalizing two-unit buildings countywide | N/A |
| Legalizing four-unit buildings countywide | N/A |
| Increasing the percentage of affordable housing required in new development | 2 |
| Incentivizing the conversion of older office buildings, shopping centers, etc. to residential properties | 3 |
| Reducing parking requirements in new construction | 4 |
| Legalizing and incentivizing housing above public facilities, such as libraries, recreation centers, and fire stations | 1 |
-

Q7 **Yes**

In 2020, the County Council—under advice from the Planning Board—eliminated the housing moratorium, in which building permits could not be issued in areas where schools were over capacity. Do you agree with this policy change?

Q8 **No**

The Planning Department is currently working on Attainable Housing Strategies, a study of ways to expand housing options (such as duplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings) in Montgomery County. Planning staff have draft recommendations, which include: allowing up to three homes by-right on lots currently zoned for one house (R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200) allowing up to four homes on lots closer to transit creating a new optional method of development to encourage construction of duplexes, cottage courts, townhomes, and small apartment buildings near transit, along the Growth Corridors identified in Thrive 2050, and near activity centers. If you were a Planning Board member, would you vote to advise that the County Council pursue these recommendations as written?

Q9

If you answered yes, why would you recommend the Council make these changes? If no, what would you change?

I would not throw out the previous requirements in R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 by allowing increased by-right development. That is not fair to the property owners who relied on those requirements when purchasing their properties. The zoning code would need to be amended to create a new review/approval process where addition homes could be added under specific conditions.

Page 3: Affordable Housing

Q10

I consider affordable housing to be (check all that, in your opinion, apply):

- Means-tested or income-restricted,**
 - Subsidized,**
 - Rent-controlled,**
 - Costing no more than 30 percent of one's household income**
-

Q11

I consider market-rate housing to be (check all that, in your opinion, apply):

- Not means-tested or income-restricted,**
 - Unsubsidized,**
 - Not rent-controlled**
-

Q12

The Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program requires that at least 12.5% of homes in a new residential development with at least 20 homes be set aside as affordable homes. The cost of doing so is paid by a project's developer. Because the number of MPDUs is tied to the number of total units, the larger a development is, the more MPDUs will be built. Conversely, if the initial density proposed by a developer is reduced during the approvals process, rather than maintained or increased, fewer MPDUs will be built. Planning Board commissioners are likely to hear from some constituents concerned by a project's potential impact—real or assumed—on traffic, parking, views, and property values and rents, and whether it fits the character of the neighborhood. If a development with MPDUs came before you, what would you do, given the likelihood of at least some pushback?

I would encourage developers to maximize the height and density of the project.

Q13

Montgomery County spends an estimated \$180,000 of taxpayer dollars to educate a public school student from kindergarten through 12th grade. However, many children who grow up in Montgomery County cannot afford to live there as adults. Should it be a priority for the County to ensure that a child on whose education it has invested can afford to live here as an adult?

Yes

Page 4: Affordable Housing

Q14

If you selected yes, which policies to make housing more affordable do you think the county should pursue? Select all that apply.

- Zoning for denser housing,**
- Reducing or eliminating parking requirements,**
- Down payment or closing cost assistance,**
- Rent stabilization,**
- Higher MPDU requirements,**
- Increasing the affordable housing trust fund**

Page 5: Affordable Housing

Q15

How will you ensure that the County produces housing for residents who make between 50% AMI and 80% AMI?

I would employ a combination of the strategies listed in questions 10 and 14 above. For rental housing, I would consider allowing additional density in exchange for landlords agreeing to some measure of rent control. For units subject to purchase I would set aside a certain number of units priced such that these residents could afford a mortgage costing less than 30% of their income.

Q16

How will you ensure the County produces housing for residents who make between 80% AMI and 120% AMI?

I think market forces will work to ensure an adequate stock of housing is available for this economic group. If statistics prove otherwise I would employ some of the strategies listed in my answer for question 15 but with different targets.

Page 6: Transportation

Q17

Yes

The County's Climate Action Plan includes a target of reducing trips made by private vehicle to 60 percent of total trips (from 75 percent in 2018). Do you agree that incenting residents and visitors to drive less should be an explicit policy goal of the County?

Q18

Yes

A 12-year study, published in 2019, found that protected bike lanes drastically lowered fatal crash rates *for all road users* in Seattle (-60.6%), San Francisco (-49.3%), Denver (-40.3%) and Chicago (-38.2%), among others. Would you, as a Planning Board member, support removing single-occupancy vehicle parking and travel lanes for protected bike lanes?

Page 7: Transportation

Q19 **They should repurpose whatever lane their staff believe is best on any given street.**

If yes, how do you think the county and/or state of Maryland should prioritize repurposing street space to create protected bike lanes?

Q20 **Yes**

Do you think Montgomery Parks should expand its Open Parkways program, in which roads in County parks such as Sligo Creek Parkway, Beach Drive, and Little Falls Parkway are closed to cars?

Page 8: Transportation

Q21 **Yes**

The Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, approved in 2013, recommends a network of bus lanes on major roads throughout the county. Today, buses are primarily delayed by sitting in single-occupancy vehicle traffic. Bus riders are more frequently Black and brown, and less affluent, than rail riders and drivers. Would you support removing single-occupancy vehicle parking and travel lanes for dedicated bus lanes, which make bus service faster and more reliable?

Q22

The county's climate action plan goal to be carbon-free by 2035 requires most of the reduction of its transportation emissions to come from residents turning existing single-occupancy vehicle trips into transit, walking, and biking trips. Please describe at least one trip you currently take by car (even if you, yourself, are not driving) that you can commit to taking on foot, by bus, by train, via a mobility device, or by bike instead.

I live within walking distance of many restaurants and commercial establishments in Kensington. I often drive to some of them. I would commit to walking or biking to these places whenever practical.

Q23

Reducing traffic fatalities and injuries will not only require incentives for people to drive less and nudges to make them drive better. It will also require policies that actively reshape the County’s transportation systems and its landscape to decrease single-occupancy vehicle trips, and to slow down the speed of those trips when people do make them. Please rank the following policies in the order that you would advise the Council to pursue them. If you would not advise that the Council pursue a specific policy, please select N/A.

Removing minimum parking requirements in new developments near transit	2
Implementing road diets on arterial streets	3
Making some streets, especially residential streets, car-free	N/A
Building more housing and affordable housing in the County near transit and job centers	1

Q24

Governor Wes Moore’s administration will revisit plans to add four high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes to I-270 and I-495, including whether to move forward with the project and whether or not to institute tolls on part or all of the road. Please select which of the following configurations you would support. If you would not support a specific option, please select "none of the above."

- Add toll lanes,**
- Add untolled (free to drivers) lanes**

Q25

The Planning Department has started to expand its toolbox of outreach methods in order to hear from a broader variety of community members, in addition to traditional outreach formats. The following is a list of potential sources of feedback for a hypothetical project coming before the board. Rank how important each of these sources would be to your decision-making process. If this source would not be important to you, please select N/A.

Comments from residents at a Planning Department presentation to a civic association	2
Door-knocking in an apartment complex	3
Online survey of 500 residents	6
Pop-up event at a community festival	5
Booth at a farmer’s market	4
Letters, emails, and calls from neighbors adjacent to the site	1

Q26

In your own words, could you describe what this data means for the Planning Board as it makes decisions in the future?

This data indicates a majority of those surveyed are in favor of additional housing in their neighborhoods. While this makes the preference of those surveyed clear, it is not an exhaustive survey of all residents nor do we know how many people were surveyed or where the respondents live. Still, this survey is a strong indication that there is broad support for additional housing in existing neighborhoods. Therefore, I think the Planning Board should lean towards supporting new housing in existing neighborhoods as it makes decisions in the future.

Planning Board applicants: endorsement questionnaire



Sun, Apr 30, 2023 at 12:36 PM

Dan,

Thank you again for working with me on the survey response. I have just submitted an updated questionnaire. Please include the comments listed below with the survey PDF. I have organized them by question number.

4. I responded to this question by selecting the option that does not support additional housing production. If we meet the projected goal of 60,000 homes by 2040 we will not need another 60,000+ units. While we should periodically update the projected need for housing, creating a surplus of 60,000 units or more by 2040 would not be among my priorities.

18. While I do support creating additional protected bike lanes, off street options should be created for vehicle parking when those lanes are taken for bike lanes.

21. As in question 18, if vehicle parking lanes are removed in favor of dedicated bus lanes, off street parking options should be created.

23. I would advocate for making some streets car-free, especially in urban areas like the streets in downtown Bethesda, but not residential streets. Making residential streets car-free would make it impossible for residential property owners to drive to their homes.

24. I-270 and I-495 are part of a regional road network. There was an obvious failure of the jurisdictions on both sides of the Potomac River to work together on traffic mitigation strategies. With expansion of the number of lanes on the Virginia side of 495, a horrible bottleneck is being created on the American Legion bridge and the beltway entering Maryland. Additional lanes are needed to ease this growing traffic jam.

25. I ranked the community input options in the order that I think reflect the greatest amount of interest and likelihood of highest response. Many, many surveys show up in e-mail inboxes every day. I do not believe there are many responses to such messages from the planning department. If there are data to prove otherwise I would move this up in my priority list.

If you have any questions about my responses or comments or require any additional information, please let me know.
Don



**Donald P. Silverstein, PE, LEED® AP | Executive Vice President
Development /Construction**

