



11115 Fawcett Road
Potomac, MD 20854
March 12, 2012

To: Montgomery Planning Board c/o Chair Francoise Carrier
(via email to MCP-Chair@)mncppc-mc.org)

Subject: Planning Director Rollin Stanley's remarks in *Bethesda Magazine*

The members of the Executive Committee of the Montgomery County Civic Federation condemn the remarks made by Planning Department Director Rollin Stanley, as reported in two articles in the current issue of *Bethesda Magazine*.

Mr. Stanley's dismissive attitude toward county residents is reflected in his comments regarding citizen concern over density of development ("Some of the people living in single-family homes say, 'We don't need any high-rises.' 'I'm sorry, you do,' he declares impatiently..."; *In like Flint*, March-April Bethesda magazine). This mischaracterization of residents' valid concerns and his offensive portrayal of those who disagree with his views ("He has little patience with dissenters. Stanley goes so far as to accuse them of being 'rich, white women...spreading fear.'"; *The future is looking up*, March-April Bethesda Magazine) should not be tolerated by a county government that strives to make citizen inclusion one of its hallmarks.

Mr. Stanley's comments are particularly offensive given that two of the members of the group of women he disparaged, Neighborhood Montgomery, are former Planning Board Commissioners. His remarks certainly do not send a message that puts the Planning Board in a good light, even given the statement issued from the Board dais on March 8 (which reads, in part, "This agency has a responsibility to the public, to invite public participation in the planning process, to encourage public discourse, to solicit the views of all residents of the county, from all backgrounds, and to remain respectful to those individuals and organizations regardless of the opinions they hold. Unfortunately, Mr. Stanley's comments did not portray these values.")

We are aware that Mr. Stanley has sent a letter of apology to the editor of the Bethesda Magazine, but it is the residents of the county to whom he should apologize. We believe he has violated the public trust to such an extent that the rebuilding of any degree of trust will take longer than can be afforded.

In *The future is looking up*, Mr. Stanley is quoted as saying "I'd never planned on doing suburbs." This makes us question whether he was ever a good fit for a county comprised of suburban communities, more densely developed transit centers, and rural areas. The sentiments

attributed to Mr. Stanley in these recent articles are indicative of a pattern of behavior that has angered members of the civic community for several years. This latest example of his disregard for citizen opinion and disdain for those who do not support his views and tactics is, for us, the "straw that broke the camel's back." As a result, we believe Mr. Stanley should be asked to resign immediately, and a search should be undertaken for a new Planning Director whose skill set and attitude are a better fit for a county that values the participation of its residents in government planning and decision making.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

/s/

Peggy Dennis, President
Montgomery County Civic Federation

cc: Montgomery County Council members (county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov)
County Executive Isiah Leggett (ocemail@montgomerycountymd.gov)