

## **Resolution of the Montgomery County Civic Federation On the Office of the People's Counsel**

*Whereas* the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc. (MCCF), believes that County residents are critically important stakeholders in the discussions and deliberations about land use planning in Montgomery County; and

*Whereas* the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., believes that County residents have not been adequately and appropriately involved in recent County decision-making about land use planning and policies in the County; and

*Whereas*, during the February 14, 2022, MCCF General Meeting, members voted to transmit a letter to the County Council recommending that funding for an Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) be restored in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget; and

*Whereas*, the Civic Federation believes that continuing to withhold funding for this agency is not in the public interest, and defunding the OPC has led to an imbalance of representation on issues related to land use; and

*Whereas* the Office of the People's Counsel serves to protect the public interest in land use hearings by promoting full and fair representation of relevant issues to achieve balanced administrative records as well as providing technical assistance to residents so that they can effectively participate in the County's land use process; and

*Whereas* reestablishing the OPC will help to restore a balance of trust and integrity to the planning and public engagement process; and

*Whereas* many neighboring jurisdictions have Offices of the People's Counsel; and

*Whereas* the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., strongly supports proposed funding in the amount of \$248,598 (or .0039% of the total recommended budget) for the Office of the People's Counsel;

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED***

That the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., calls upon the Montgomery County Council to approve the total amount of funding recommended by the Montgomery County Executive for the Office of the People's Counsel; and *further be it resolved*

That the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., calls upon its member associations to request their residents to contact the Montgomery County Council in support of full funding for the Office of the People's Counsel.

*Approved this 9th day of May 2022.*

*Karen Cordry, Secretary*