

ROGER BERLINER

Montgomery County Council – District 1

1) Do you support funding and advancing the Purple Line to groundbreaking as described in the Locally Preferred Alternative and the Environmental Impact Statement without qualification?

I do, consistent with the statement I filed with the state regarding additional mitigation measures that would not affect either the timing or the route of the line. For example, I do believe we can go beyond the current federal standards for noise and approximate the county standard; I believe we can do more to address vibration issues; I believe we can do more to address tree canopy with advanced technology; and I believe we can make sure that the construction process itself takes community concerns into account. All of these concerns can be addressed without slowing down this critically important transit project.

2) Would you support more transit, pedestrian, and bicycle-friendly road design in our school zones and urban centers even if it slows drivers down?

Yes. I believe it is essential that we retrofit our roads and design new roads in a manner that recognizes all users. I worked hard to get as many complete –streets elements into the revised road code in 2008 and am now making a second attempt with the Urban Road Code Bill I introduced this year. That bill will take our current road code, and refine it in such a way that more appropriately defines turning radii and road widths in order to create the kind of urban streets and places that our community desires and that are conducive to walking and biking, creating a safer environment for all.

3) Do you support changing existing traffic lanes to dedicated bus lanes for BRT?

Yes, absolutely. For rapid transit to be effective, it must utilize dedicated lanes wherever possible. Our right of way is limited and expanding our current roads is both costly and disruptive. We must shift our thinking and planning and start utilizing our roadways in the most efficient manner possible. This was of course a fairly significant source of opposition during the passage of the Countywide Transit Corridors Plan, but with proper educational and outreach efforts, I believe the plan will be successful.

4) Will you support stopping all spending on the M83 highway?

I have always believed that the costs associated with M83 were prohibitive. Given how hard it has been to get the gas tax passed and a dedicated stream of funding established in Annapolis, we must spend our transportation dollars wisely. Again, this means getting the most bang for the buck – literally. I have long-supported a transit first approach for our county and funding the Purple Line, the CCT, and a rapid transit network are my top priorities. I have recently joined TAME (officially) and believe a transit alternative to M83 is the most appropriate path forward for our county. In response to my pointed questions as Chair of the Transportation Committee, the Administration has agreed to explore transit alternatives before pursuing M83 further.

5) How would you increase the housing supply in our urban centers?

The County's deficit of affordable housing is a serious problem that must be addressed. Planning for transit oriented mixed-use development in our urban areas is an important step for our county to take and it has. The White Flint Plan is a perfect example of this and will include a number of affordable units upon buildout.

Although we have one of the strongest MPDU policies in the nation, it is still, unfortunately, not enough. In 2012, I sponsored and passed legislation that requires our county to consider co-location of affordable housing with all new capital projects. I am pleased to say that the Fire Station being planned for White Flint will now include up to 150 affordable units that might not otherwise have been planned. Affordable housing is also being planned for the Silver Spring Library site as a result of our focus on using county assets to support this critical need in our county.

In that same vein, I am currently working on a bill that will require our county to consider public private partnerships for all of our county-owned parking garages in our business districts. We must make the highest and best use of these properties - and in my opinion that would include affordable housing. We need to let go of our suburban style parking structures and utilize scarce government assets in planning for the needs of future generations.

DUCHY TRACHTENBERG  
Montgomery County Council – District 1

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YES

2) Would you support more transit, pedestrian, and bicycle-friendly road design in our school zones and urban centers even if it slows drivers down?

YES

3) Do you support changing existing traffic lanes to dedicated bus lanes for BRT?

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4) Will you support stopping all spending on the M83 highway?

YES

5) How would you increase the housing supply in our urban centers?

We must continue to develop a zoning code that favors denser housing development in urban areas and we should further assist development plans in those areas that increase the supply of housing, particularly those that increase the supply of affordable housing.

JAMES KIRKLAND

Montgomery County Council – District 1

1. I generally support the Purple Line as now proposed. If it had been up to me, it would have been BRT on the rail right-of-way some years ago. In the late 1980's, I was delivering blueprints in down-town Bethesda. One day I asked the guys in the trailer at the Apex site if they were going to leave room for a trolley station. I was dismayed to learn they were only going to leave room for a tunnel.
2. I generally support improved pedestrian and bicycle access, but not where it reduces car lanes to only one in each direction. In any group of, say, four or more cars, one driver is unfamiliar with the area or looking for an address, etc. The whole road can't simply grind to a halt while these people attempt to get it together.
3. I feel that a reduction from three lanes to two is feasible in order to allow for a BRT lane, but as stated in Question 2, two lanes into one lane is very problematic. Let's not forget about cars who would have to make right turns across the bus lane.
4. I am running as a Libertarian- style Republican in Council District 1. The proposed M-83 Highway is not in this district. I have not seen the map options for this project.
5. I would like to see more affordable-housing options offered in existing detached-home neighborhoods. One of the centerpieces of my campaign is that MoCo is, on the whole, actually NOT interested in affordable housing. Over the years a vast and overbearing housing code has been assembled with the unacknowledged defacto goal of removing blue-collar and lower-income residents from upscale neighborhoods at the behest of intolerant elitists.