

Action Committee for Transit

www.actfortransit.org

P.O. Box 7074, Silver Spring, MD 20907

Mr. Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Subject: Falkland Chase Historic Designation

Dear Mr. Hanson:

The Action Committee for Transit urges the Planning Board not to designate as historic those Falkland Chase buildings that are partially located within a potential right-of-way for the Purple Line. We take no position on historic designation of the remainder of the complex.

The Purple Line is a vitally needed transportation link that will serve travelers who live and work in all parts of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. It is faced, however, with a small group of extremely well-funded and unprincipled opponents. The opponents have already disbursed over \$1,000,000 in documented expenditures, and much more money that is not identified on the public record. They have not hesitated to use both judicial and administrative procedures to delay and obstruct the project. Consistency has been no concern in this effort; for example, they filed a petition with the Interstate Commerce Commission asking that body to forbid the use of the Georgetown Branch right of way for a trail, and when that petition failed they argued that light rail should not be built because it would "destroy" the trail.

In this context, the Planning Board should take extreme care not to put anything in the way of the Purple Line that could become a pretext for delay in the hands of unscrupulous opponents. We urge you, therefore, to carefully delineate any historic designation so that all buildings that might be altered or removed in the course of building the new light rail line are completely outside its scope.

Sincerely,

Ben Ross
President