



Mike Houston &lt;mhouston@tpss.coop&gt;

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**TPSS Letter Re: Fact Sheet**

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Mike Houston &lt;mhouston@tpss.coop&gt;

Wed, Mar 17, 2021 at 2:00 PM

To: Suzanne Ludlow &lt;suzannel@takomaparkmd.gov&gt;

Cc: Kate Stewart &lt;kates@takomaparkmd.gov&gt;, JarrettS@takomaparkmd.gov, Cindy Dybala &lt;cindy@takomaparkmd.gov&gt;, Peter Kovar &lt;PeterK@takomaparkmd.gov&gt;, Terry Seamens &lt;TerryS@takomaparkmd.gov&gt;, Talisha Searcy &lt;TalishaS@takomaparkmd.gov&gt;, Kacy Kostiuik &lt;kacyk@takomaparkmd.gov&gt;

Bcc: Diane Curran &lt;diane.curran@tpssboard.com&gt;, Michele Rosenfeld &lt;rosenfeldlaw@mail.com&gt;

March 17, 2021

Ms. Suzanne Ludlow, City Manager  
City of Takoma Park  
7500 Maple Avenue  
Takoma Park MD 20912

RE: Fact Sheet re Takoma Junction Site Conditions and Limitation

Dear Ms. Ludlow:

I am writing on behalf of the Takoma Park-Silver Spring Food Co-op in response to the discussion related to delivery vehicles in the above-referenced "Fact Sheet." The Fact Sheet, dated March 10, was posted earlier this month on the City's website. I also appreciated the opportunity to discuss the Fact Sheet in our meeting on Monday, March 15. Because the Fact Sheet raised written concerns about our operations that were posted on the City's website, I would ask that you also post this letter on the City website, so that the Co-op's response to these issues can be made available to members of the public.

As you know, the Co-op has used the City-owned parking lot on our building's west side for deliveries for more than 20 years. In my three years as General Manager, we have had no safety issues with deliveries, and I was not informed of any previous problems. Thus, it was very troubling to learn, via the Fact Sheet, that the City now believes the Co-op's use of the parking lot next to the Co-op for deliveries creates "unsafe conditions."

I can assure you that the Co-op has every interest in ensuring the safety of all pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists in the parking lot and on the public sidewalks and streets. We respond as quickly as possible to any safety concerns that are brought to our attention, because we want to be good neighbors to City of Takoma Park residents. We also want to be good stewards of the lot we currently sublease from the City's tenant, the Neighborhood Development Company.

As we discussed, I was previously unaware of any situations in which 18-wheel trucks have been observed backing into MD Route 410 traffic. I agree that any such occurrence would pose a safety hazard. Therefore, I plan to address your concern by re-opening the Sycamore Avenue-side parking lot, which has been closed for the past year as part of our Covid-19 response. The closed Sycamore lot was used for socially distanced queuing, out-door grocery pickup, and twice-monthly distribution of food assistance boxes to large numbers of food-insecure individuals and families. We will now use other spaces for those activities. By opening the Sycamore lot, we will free up more parking space on the City-owned parking lot, thereby giving delivery trucks more room to maneuver. In effect, we will return the City-owned parking lot to its pre-pandemic role of providing overflow parking for the Co-op and parking for patrons of other Takoma Junction businesses.

In addition, I would be pleased to work with the City and the State Highway Administration to seek installation of appropriate signage and other enforcement measures in order to prohibit left turns

4/26/2021

Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op Mail - TPSS Letter Re: Fact Sheet

upon entering or exiting the City-owned parking lot on Md Route 410. Please contact me at your earliest convenience about this matter.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you to address any concerns you may have about the safety of our deliveries.

Sincerely,

Mike Houston  
General Manager

Cc: Mayor Stewart  
All City Councilmembers

Mike Houston  
General Manager  
tpss.coop  
TPSS CO-OP 301-891-2667  
Fax: (301)891-2695

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 **2021.03.17 TPSS Letter Re Fact Sheet.pdf**  
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Mike Houston <mhouston@tpss.coop>

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## TPSS Letter Re: Fact Sheet

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Mike Houston <mhouston@tpss.coop>

Fri, Mar 19, 2021 at 3:42 PM

To: Suzanne Ludlow <suzannel@takomaparkmd.gov>

Suzy,

I tried searching the City website and Junction development documents and didn't find anything relating to circulation in the lot. Is it possible to send me the relevant document or study?

Mike Houston  
General Manager  
tpss.coop  
TPSS CO-OP 301-891-2667  
Fax: (301)891-2695

[Quoted text hidden]



Mike Houston <mhouston@tpss.coop>

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## TPSS Letter Re: Fact Sheet

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**Suzanne Ludlow** <suzannel@takomaparkmd.gov>  
To: Mike Houston <mhouston@tpss.coop>

Fri, Mar 19, 2021 at 3:44 PM

Yes. We will find them. We have SO much on the website things are getting difficult to locate.

Best,

Suzie

[Quoted text hidden]



TPSS Co-op

March 17, 2021

Ms. Suzanne Ludlow, City Manager  
City of Takoma Park  
7500 Maple Avenue  
Takoma Park MD 20912

RE: Fact Sheet re Takoma Junction Site Conditions and Limitation

Dear Ms. Ludlow:

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numbers of food-insecure individuals and families. We will now use other spaces for those activities. By opening the Sycamore lot, we will free up more parking space on the City-owned parking lot, thereby giving delivery trucks more room to maneuver. In effect, we will return the City-owned parking lot to its pre-pandemic role of providing overflow parking for the Co-op and parking for patrons of other Takoma Junction businesses.

In addition, I would be pleased to work with the City and the State Highway Administration to seek installation of appropriate signage and other enforcement measures in order to prohibit left turns upon entering or exiting the City-owned parking lot on Md Route 410. Please contact me at your earliest convenience about this matter.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working with you to address any concerns you may have about the safety of our deliveries.

Sincerely,

Mike Houston  
General Manager

Cc: Mayor Stewart  
All City Councilmembers



*TPSS Co-op*

March 31, 2021

Ms. Suzanne Ludlow, City Manager  
City of Takoma Park  
7500 Maple Avenue  
Takoma Park MD 20912

RE: Letter to Mike Houston 03172021

Dear Ms. Ludlow,

I am writing to follow up on your March 17 letter in response to my March 17 letter addressing the City's Fact Sheet.

In my letter, I offered to install signage and work with the City and SHA to address the issue of left-hand turns into and out of the Junction lot from Carroll Avenue by all vehicles, which the Fact Sheet described as illegal. We have been unable to find any prohibition against turning movements across a double yellow line. We ask that the Fact Sheet be corrected on this point and reposted on the City's website. Of course, the Co-op remains willing to work with the City and the SHA to address any legitimate safety concerns.

Both the Fact Sheet and your letter make other statements for which I still need additional information or clarification in order to address them. For instance, I have been unable to find anyone at the store who recalls seeing a delivery truck exit the Junction lot by backing into 410. If you could provide any information you can about when this was observed, date, day of the week, time of day or any information about the truck it would be helpful.

In addition, both your March 17 letter and the Fact Sheet state that the Junction parking lot has been deemed too small to meet "transportation design standards for deliveries," but I've been unable to find these standards. You referenced the City having studies from prior years that include this information. If you could pass along both the studies themselves and the underlying standards, it would help me to understand what specifically needed to be addressed about our current use of the lot.

In recent email communications with both State Highway Administration (SHA) and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), I inquired whether either of those agencies had any safety or circulation concerns about our current use of the Junction lot, but they did not respond with any information raising a concern. Therefore,

additional clarification from the City would help me greatly to understand the issues presented in the Fact Sheet and your March 17 letter.

As you know, I have responded proactively to concerns raised by the City as soon as I was informed of them. Since we last communicated, I opened up the Co-op's Sycamore Avenue-side parking lot for customer parking, to help improve circulation in the Junction parking lot during busy times, and thereby address the concerns raised in the Fact Sheet. While Small Things Matter had been using the Sycamore Avenue-side lot for food distributions, we moved these distribution activities to the location behind the store where they were carried out pre-Covid. We remain committed to working actively and responsively with the City on your concerns, and therefore we appreciate getting as much information as possible from you about the legal and factual bases for those concerns.

Lastly, I continue to request the City to post my March 17 letter, your March 17 letter, and this follow up letter to the City website in any location where the Fact Sheet is posted. I also continue to request you to update the Fact Sheet by correcting its now-apparent errors about our compliance with legal requirements and by providing any new and relevant information that results from our communication.

Sincerely,

Mike Houston  
General Manager

Cc: Mayor Stewart  
All City Councilmembers