

May 6, 2020

Aspen Hill Civic Association  
Sam Nasios, Chair of the Community Relations & Senior Issues Committee  
[snasios@yahoo.com](mailto:snasios@yahoo.com)

Ballard Spahr, LLP  
Attn: Emily Vaias

Sent Via E-mail: [vaiase@ballardspahr.com](mailto:vaiase@ballardspahr.com)

Dear Emily;

Thank you for keeping me and the Aspen Hill Civic Association (AHCA) in the loop regarding plans for the Kaiser Permanente complex near the corners of Connecticut Avenue and Aspen Hill Road. I appreciate your candor and efforts in this regard. As our new neighbors, we are well aware of Kaiser Permanente's desire to be a positive addition to our Aspen Hill community.

I have routinely relayed the essence of our conversations to my committee and also the AHCA Board of Directors. That said, I apologize for not reaching out to you more promptly given our critical Aspen Hill traffic concerns and the ensuing congestion resulting from the projected number of Kaiser Permanente employees using the exit/entrance on Aspen Hill Road.

We fully understand that the Kaiser Permanente complex will increase traffic as well as pedestrian hazards in our community. However, given that Aspen Hill Road hosts access to 3 shopping centers and the largest Home Depot on the east coast, this is one of the most vulnerable roads/intersections in our community.

In the brief distance between Connecticut Avenue and Frankfort and Grenoble Drives, there are 16 driveways and turning opportunities. As you know, Aspen Hill Road narrows to 2 lanes just past the Kaiser Permanente Aspen Hill Road entrance. Aspen Hill is constantly congested with school buses, pedestrians, and drivers who routinely ignore traffic signs, traffic lights, and posted speed limits.

As you know, during our AHCA May 2019 Membership Meeting, we surveyed those in attendance. The results of the survey were telling. The participants overwhelmingly felt positive about Kaiser Permanente as a neighbor except approximately 73-85% were extremely concerned about the resulting Aspen Hill traffic impact now and in the future. It is clear the problem is far beyond and outside the scope of the CLV numbers required in your traffic studies.

Our Civic Association is aware of the following:

- Phase 1: 300-350 employees;
- Phase 2: Combined employee population = approximately 700 employees;
- Kaiser Permanente has requested additional on-site parking from the Planning Board;
- We've not been given any information about future phase development beyond Phases 1 & 2 on the approximate 10-12-acre parcel Kaiser Permanente purchased;
- Additional access and traffic due to patients, service providers, etc. are a certainty and are not included in your numbers. Can we correctly assume these visitors/members to your facility will be required to use the Connecticut Avenue entrance/exit;

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- The proposed “gated, right in/right out entrance/exit” will certainly result in significant delays on Aspen Hill Road that will dramatically increase the bottlenecks and congestion on this already burdened roadway. “Right out” at the end of the day will require a huge number of employees to utilize residential roads to access main arteries, e.g. MD-200, Aspen Hill Road, Connecticut Avenue and Georgia Avenue.

My committee would like your response to the following:

- Is there absolute certainty that the Kensington Kaiser Permanente facility and services will not be phased out in the next 5-10 years;
- What is the anticipated number of patients expected when the Aspen Hill Kaiser Permanente opens for business? Expected number of patients in the next 5-10 years;
- What are the daily hours of services;
- Is the facility open to patients 7-days per week;
- How many shifts of employees are there? How many shifts daily? What is the hourly length of each shift?
- Will the Aspen Hill Road entrance/exit gate be operated by a FOB, key card or automatically for those given access? The concern is any entrance delay will add to the bottlenecks and congestion on Aspen Hill Road;
- Will you ensure any “overflow” parking will not impact the surrounding residential streets?

Kaiser Permanente’s volume of traffic, patients, deliveries, staff etc. are significant community-wide concerns and a clear hazard to our residents’ quality of life and safety. We fully understand this is a grave concern for both Kaiser and the Civic Association and are happy to work with you to find an acceptable solution to this issue. Clearly, we are looking forward to a revised Aspen Hill Road plan that will resolve this problem amicably without compromising our neighborhoods or the success of your facility and services. The potentiality of 300-700 employees (even half that amount) using the Aspen Hill entrance/exit is simply unacceptable and dangerous.

Please permit me to clarify. You have often mentioned that our agreement with Lindsay Ford included employees’ Aspen Hill Road access. Actually, this exit was to be used only for emergency vehicles and for the employees to purchase gas for Lindsay Ford’s new and used cars. Lindsay Ford estimated a total of 82 on-site employees, all would use the Home Depot entrance/exit.

Our committee will meet again next week. I look forward to the opportunity to report good news to all. Please feel free to contact me or I can arrange a meeting if you think that will be helpful. Thank you for your consideration and continuing efforts on our behalf.

Warmly,  
Sam Nasios

Aspen Hill Advocates  
 Rockville, Maryland  
 June 10, 2020

The Aspen Hill Advocates (AHA) wholeheartedly welcome the Kaiser Permanente Medical Center (KP) to our Aspen Hill community, and are acutely aware the KP provides essential medical services to many Montgomery County residents including at least 17,000 living in the Aspen Hill area.

We hope the KP and our Aspen Hill community will coexist as good neighbors and complementary community members. As our committee's requests are implemented, a harmonious, integrated relationship between our residents and the presence of the new KP complex will be ensured.

- We are all aware the new facility will be located on a 10-acre site at the approximate corner of Connecticut Avenue and Aspen Hill Road. This area is primarily residential. Although the KP facility is bordered by a Home Depot on Connecticut Avenue (a State highway), Aspen Hill Road is a County street occupied by a church and single-family homes. Some of these residences will overlook the facility.
  - We request all signage for Kaiser Permanente be confined to Connecticut Avenue except as Attorney Vaias indicated in our telephone conference, a small sign on Aspen Hill Road identifying this entrance/exit only for employees' use.
  - The KP site has an Aspen Hill "historic marker" in the parking lot area. We request this marker be preserved.
- Clearly, KP and we are fully aware of serious traffic concerns due to this new facility and the traffic it will generate. When the area is not impacted by coronavirus limitations, Aspen Hill Road is already severely clogged with vehicles. In the short distance between Connecticut Avenue and Frankfort Drive, there are 16 driveways. Residents already endure substantial dangers and frustrations when attempting to enter/exit their driveways. After the Kaiser facility opens, the extensive increase in cars, delivery and service vehicles will worsen significantly the situation.
  - The Wells and Associates Traffic Study lists the present peak morning vehicle trips from the site as 276; the present peak evening trips as 450. The estimate of peak morning trips when phase I is completed is 282; peak afternoon trips is 288 yielding an increase of 6 additional in the morning and 162 in the evening. This is a specious statement as this office building has been unoccupied for 11-years. Currently, there is no morning or evening traffic. Additionally, according to Emily Vaias, Kaiser Permanente Attorney, the estimated number of employees and patients daily is:
    - 780 patients (Phase I & II) and 380 employees (Phase II) estimated per day is a total of 1,160 round trips to/from the facility daily. When adding the inevitable daily numerous supplies deliveries and service vehicles, and those KP patients requiring the on-site pharmacy, we have traffic, traffic and more traffic!
    - It is our understanding that all patients, deliveries, service and waste disposal vehicles will use the Connecticut Avenue entrance. However, many of these visitors originate from and return to Veirs Mill Road and will use Aspen Hill Road to reach Connecticut Avenue. Again, just cars, cars and more cars galore.
- We have been informed some KP employees will be given passes to enter and exit the property through the Aspen Hill Road gate. Kaiser Permanente estimates that only 15% of employees will use the Aspen Hill gate.
  - We request that given the expected astronomical increase in additional traffic on Aspen Hill Road, KP employee passes should be limited to 15%. The total number of passes given should be divided

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equally among the 4 employee shifts.

- We understand that entering and exiting through the Aspen Hill gate will require a right turn only. We request that SIGNAGE ONLY enforce this requirement and no physical barriers be used. Physical barriers, sometimes known as Pork Chops, are extremely unattractive in a residential neighborhood and are hazardous to Aspen Hill Road's many pedestrians.
- Another significant traffic concern is the intersection of Aspen Hill Road and Frankfort Drive. It is probable the drivers leaving Kaiser Permanente who are seeking main arteries away from the KP site will want to use Bauer Drive, Georgia Avenue, and Norbeck Road. Unfortunately, Frankfort Drive is the perfect cut through for these drivers.
  - Currently, there is an almost constantly ignored "No Right Turn 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm" sign on Aspen Hill Road just before Frankfort Drive. Frankfort Drive is a narrow street with cars parked along each side. Our preference is to keep "right turn traffic" completely off this residential street. We request the Planning Board Staff resolve this issue.
  - An additional concern for this intersection is its hazard to pedestrians crossing Frankfurt Drive. The crosswalk will need some modification such as pedestrian activated flashing lights.
- Also, of concern for pedestrians is cars turning right from Connecticut Avenue to Aspen Hill Road. The cars do not stop as required by law; but speed up to quickly make this turn, and many vehicles change lanes there to make the right turn. Both of these maneuvers are dangerous and many Aspen Hill walkers have been injured.
  - We recommend not permitting right turns on red at the Connecticut Avenue/Aspen Hill Road intersection.
- Given the soon to increase traffic, the already dangerous pedestrian passage along the hazardous curve from Georgia Avenue to Connecticut Avenue will greatly increase. Many bus riders sprint across the area hurrying to catch their bus.
  - Again, flashing lights or other driver warnings that pedestrians will be crossing the street at that location will certainly save lives.
  - We also request that from Georgia Avenue to the intersection with Aspen Hill Road (on Connecticut Avenue) be limited to those vehicles making right turns only either at the entrance to Home Depot/Kaiser Permanente or onto Aspen Hill Road.
- We have been informed Kaiser Permanente will be holding Health Fairs on the site, and at other facilities KP offers the use of their property to community groups for their activities.
  - We understand the workers setting up for these events may need to use the Aspen Hill Road gate; but we request all patrons enter and exit through the Connecticut Avenue approach.
  - We request reconsideration of on-site community activities given the critical, imposing impact of the resulting traffic, noise and congestion on our residential neighbors.
- Historically, the KP property was a 1960's style campus that blended well with surrounding homes by incorporating flowering trees, shade trees and shrubs. It did not visually intrude on the community. Given the hundreds of parking spaces KP's business model requires, we are facing a sea of cars from Aspen Hill

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Road to the back of the property.

- We request KP screen the length of Aspen Hill Road and the side of the parcel bordering the church property so the huge parking area is not evident from Aspen Hill Road.
- To preserve the residential character of Aspen Hill Road and hide the sea of parked vehicles, we request adequate landscaping, e.g. 6' to 8'ft. tall evergreens. There are many landscape options that top out at a specific height and require limited maintenance and trimming. In front of the screen, we request the planting of mid-sized shrubs.
- Michael Lindsey, former owner of the proposed KP site, had a wonderful landscaping plan which was approved by the Planning Board. He also planned for a lovely fence and lighting that did not “spill” over to the nearby homes and the neighborhood. The Planning Board approved all these enhancements.
- We request you duplicate these items as is feasible. We understand the footprints of the buildings are different; however, the type of fence, the type of lighting and landscaping can be easily duplicated. These inclusions will certainly make KP good neighbors.

We appreciate Kaiser Permanente’s staff’s efforts to reach out to our community as we become neighbors. We especially want to share kudos for Troy Leftwich, Planner Coordinator of the Area 2 Planning Division, Montgomery County Planning Department. He has been responsive to our members’ inquiries, patient and provided us with worthwhile, cogent information about Kaiser Permanente’s plans. Mr. Leftwich is an effective, committed asset to your organization and our community.

We are very much looking forward to working together to ensure Aspen Hill remains as residential as possible and also meets Kaiser Permanente’s business requirements.

Respectfully Submitted,

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