
November 28, 2022

Ms. Katie Wagner
Gorove/ Slade Associates, Inc.
1140 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC, 20036

Dear Ms. Wagner:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) prepared by Gorove/ Slade Associates, Inc, dated May 9, 2022, for the (St. Angela Hall– SHA Tracking #21-AP-MO-011-xx) in Montgomery County, Maryland. The Supplemental Analysis dated November 7, 2022 was also reviewed for purposes associated with the State Highway Administration (SHA) access review. The State Highway Administration (SHA) review is complete and we are pleased to respond.

- Proposed access to the 10 single-family detached homes, 115 townhomes, and an assisted living facility with a maximum of 150 beds is via three (3) existing curb cuts along Strathmore Avenue (MD 547).
- The following intersections were analyzed under existing, background and future conditions:
 - MD 355 (Rockville Pike) and MD 547 (Strathmore Avenue)
 - MD 547 (Strathmore Avenue) and Stillwater Avenue/ School Driveway
 - MD 547 (Strathmore Avenue) and Center Site Driveway
 - MD 547 (Strathmore Avenue) and East Side Driveway
 - MD 547 (Strathmore Avenue) and Kenilworth Avenue
 - MD 355 (Rockville Pike) and Flanders Avenue/ Wickshire Way
- The report concludes that the study intersections will continue to operate at acceptable levels of service under future conditions.

Based on the information provided, please address the following comments in a point-by-point response:

Ms. Wagner
SHA Tracking No.: 21-AP-MO-011-xx
Page 2 of 2
November 28, 2022

Travel Forecasting and Analysis Division (TFAD) Comments (By: Scott Holcomb):

TFAD's previous comments have been responded to and we have no further comments on the Supplemental Analyses.

Traffic Development & Support Division (TDSD) Comments (By: Yeshitla Argaw):

All our previous comments including comment initially raised by TFAD has been addressed and we do have no further comment.

The SHA concurs with the report findings for this project as currently proposed and will not require the submission of any additional traffic analyses. However, an access permit will be required for all construction within the SHA right of way. Please submit one (1) set of the proposed improvement plans (including a set of hydraulic plans and computations) and all supporting documentation to our online submission page <https://mdotsha.force.com/accesspermit>. Please reference the SHA tracking number on any future submissions. Please keep in mind that you can view the reviewer and project status via SHA Access Management Division web page at <http://www.roads.maryland.gov/pages/amd.aspx>. Please note, if this project has not obtained an SHA access permit and begun construction of the required improvements within five (5) years of this approval, extension of the permit shall be subject to the submission of an updated traffic impact analysis in order for SHA to determine whether the proposed improvements remain valid or if additional improvements will be required of the development. If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact Mr. Kwesi Woodroffe at 301-513-7347, by using our toll free number (in Maryland only) at 1-800-749-0737 (x7347), or via email at KWoodroffe@mdot.maryland.gov.

Sincerely,


for Derek Gunn,

Acting District Engineer, District 3, SHA

DG/ts

cc: Obianuju Ani, SHA – TDSD
Scott Holcomb, SHA – TFAD
Tamika Graham, Montgomery Planning (tamika.graham@montgomeryplanning.org)
Matt Folden, Montgomery Planning (matthew.folden@montgomeryplanning.org)

From: davemur@mac.com
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Written Testimony Concerning 4910-4920 Strathmore
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022 5:46:34 PM
Attachments: [2022.12.12 - Stathmore.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Good evening,

Please include the attached testimony on 4910-4920 Strathmore in the record for the hearing scheduled for 15 December 2022. Please confirm receipt.

Regards,
David Murray

12 December 2022

To: Montgomery County Planning Board
From: David Murray, Garrett Park
Subject: 4910-4920 Strathmore
Preliminary Plan No. 120220160 A
Site Plan No. 820220220

To the Chair and Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Preliminary Plan No. 120220160 A and Site Plan No. 820220220. The Planning Board should condition approval of these plans on the reduction of entrances from the development onto Strathmore Avenue from three to two.

I strongly support transit-oriented development at the former Saint Angela Hall site, because we urgently need more housing. Unfortunately, transit-oriented development is not what this applicant's site plan delivers. Instead, the plans are unequivocally oriented toward automobile travel at the expense of pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The applicant fails to capitalize on nearby transit and instead promises nearly 300 parking spaces — more than the baseline maximum — and three automobile entrances onto Strathmore Avenue, which would threaten pedestrian and cyclist safety.

When the previous Planning Board recommended approving the Local Map Amendment in December, the Board clearly stated that it preferred consolidating the proposed entrances from the development onto Strathmore Avenue from three to two and directed Staff to amend the letter to the hearing examiner expressing this preference. In reviewing the preliminary plan and the site plan and recommending that the Board approve three entrances, Staff has ignored the previous Board's clear intentions.

The Staff did not just ignore the previous Board. It also ignored the Bicycle Master Plan and the North Bethesda Master Plan. Staff took its cues from the wrong existing development, and it failed to think creatively about how to provide fire department access to the site without endangering pedestrians.

Limit the site to two entrances from Strathmore Avenue

The staff memo mistakenly relies on the existing site condition to justify its endorsement of three access points. Because the site's use is changing, the Planning Board should review the site's access to Strathmore Avenue *de novo*, based on the site's proposed new use, on the site's needs, and on modern safety and design principles, while taking into account master plans adopted since the existing structures and access were approved.

- The Bicycle Master Plan calls for “greater consolidation of driveways as part of facility planning and development approvals along master-planned bikeways.” The Bicycle Master Plan rightly notes that “Driveways create a conflict area between bicyclists and motorists, and stronger policies are needed to require

greater driveway consolidation.” Strathmore Avenue has a master planned bikeway. Thus, the proposal for three entrances from Strathmore Avenue is inconsistent with the Bicycle Master Plan as well as common sense.

- The North Bethesda Master Plan called on planners to reduce conflict between cars and pedestrians. The North Bethesda Master Plan was written three decades ago, but it is still more forward thinking than Staff’s approach to this project.
- The staff memo’s reliance on fire department requirements to justify three access points deserves further examination of alternatives. Symphony Park, which has a similar number of units, has just one access point from Strathmore Avenue. If more than one fire department entrance is required for 4910-4920, the site could provide two access points for the public and one additional access point for fire department use only. Such approaches would provide functionally equivalent fire department access while prioritizing pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- The staff memo’s characterization of the existing site condition is misleading. Two of the three current entrances serve a circular driveway, effectively acting as one entrance divided by a large median, with one end serving inbound traffic and the other end serving outbound traffic at nearly all times. Furthermore, the building on the site is abandoned, so the vehicular entrances to that building are no threat to pedestrian or cyclist safety.
- Finally, the developer told the zoning hearing examiner that it preferred just one entrance to the development. Staff insisted on three entrances, in part because Staff claimed that an additional automobile connection would better connect the new development to existing communities. Appropriate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure connecting the development to others nearby would be more neighborly, not to mention safer.

Fulfill commitments to pedestrians and cyclists

If Montgomery County is to achieve its climate and economic development goals, transit orientation must be an ideal that imbues site plans, especially for sites that are as close to Metrorail stations as this site is. Planning Staff has excused this site plan’s shortcomings by noting that the site plan is consistent with existing structures in the area. But much of the existing housing in this area was built decades ago, when mobility choices focused on Ford and Chevrolet, and Buick instead of transit, bicycles, and feet.

This Planning Board has a choice: Do we mean what we say about pedestrian and bicyclist safety or are our master plans empty words? If developers continue to build in a manner similar to existing structures, the County will continue to put the car at the center of the built environment. To change the County’s car orientation, the Planning Board should insist on infrastructure that prioritizes cyclist and pedestrian safety, even when it inconveniences people driving cars.

From: [Cindy Kratz](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue (Preliminary Plan 120220160 & 820220220) Dec 15, 2022 hearing)
Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 11:58:35 AM

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Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reddie Drive
Wheaton, MD 20902

RE: 4910-4920 Strathmore
Preliminary Plan No: 120220160
Preliminary Plan No. 820220220

To the Montgomery County Planning Board:

As a resident of the town of Garrett Park, I am concerned about the currently proposed development plans for 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue.

I request that any decision on this matter be delayed until a month-long traffic count is conducted along Strathmore and the major intersections. State Route 547 is a two lane east/west arterial State road and the first east/west road north of the Beltway, connecting Rockville Pike and Connecticut Avenue. The traffic impact assessment provided to the Board minimizes the number of trips generated by the proposed use. The Planning Board should require a current traffic count for a one-month period to provide a baseline during this post-Covid pandemic time period to assess what is occurring daily in real time. The Board should not be making this decision without knowing what this traffic count would reveal.

Moreover, consideration of the traffic impact from in-fill development in the North Bethesda area (Grosvenor and White Flint metro developments) must be factored into the projected traffic impact on Strathmore Avenue. Without such an actual count, the Planning Board is acting blindly. Delaying the Board's decision will allow for a month-long traffic count at all the nearby intersections of Strathmore Avenue to assess what can be accommodated on this two-lane road.

Second, the December 5, 2022 Montgomery County Department of Transportation letter of record indicates that applicant is required to install a bicycle/pedestrian path along the south side of Strathmore from their property to the Town of Garrett Park. The letter recognizes that there is a deficient ROW along the south side of Strathmore and that the applicant does not own the property to the east (4900 Strathmore Ave, site of Holy Cross Church and School) and would not have authority to build without securing a property right from the owner. Yet, the planned 10' bicycle/pedestrian way shown on the Revised Site plan sits completely on private property.

The State of Maryland owns a buffer of property on the north side of Strathmore running from the 4800 block through the 5200 block on the north side of Strathmore (across Strathmore from the proposed development, church and school). There is currently a marked bicycle route on the service road along the north side of Strathmore, which brings the bike path to a wider sidewalk entering Garrett Park. The current bike path allows travel to the town center, post office and Marc train station, all located on the north side of Garrett Park. Aligning the bike path to the north side of Strathmore allows access to Beach Drive paths. In addition, this

state-owned land could be used to shift the roadway to mitigate traffic speed and flow, and provide the bike path and still allow for a landscape shield to neighbors with a buffer of trees and shrubbery.

Finally, the proposed planned community does not offer sufficient recreational space within its boundaries for community of this size, given the small lot sizes. The buffer at the creek site is not usable as a recreation space. North Bethesda area is deficient in public property dedicated to public parks given the growth that is being planned. The Planning Board should insist on more parks and recreational space within the proposed community.

Maryland Planning Commission should adhere to its mission of looking at the big picture by studying the entire surrounding neighborhood and allow for growth without severe impact on our neighborhood. Reasonable deferral of a final decision of the Planning Board would be appropriate to consider the questions and unresolved issues that the proposed development has raised.

Thank you for your consideration of the above-mentioned concerns.

/Cynthia Kratz/
Cynthia Kratz
10704 Clermont Avenue
Garrett Park, MD 20896

From: [Barbara Matthews](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Town of Garrett Park Testimony - 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue: Preliminary Plan No. 120220160 - December 15, 2022 Planning Board Agenda
Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 11:12:42 AM
Attachments: [Town of Garrett Park 12.14.22 Testimony - 4910 - 4920 Strathmore Avenue Preliminary Plan.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Good morning –

Please accept the attached testimony from Mayor Joanna Welch on behalf of the Town of Garrett Park, Maryland in the matter of 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue: Preliminary Plan 120220160, which will be considered by the Planning Board on December 15, 2022.

Sincerely,

Barbara B. Matthews
Town Manager / Clerk-Treasurer
[Town of Garrett Park](#)
Office: 301-933-7488



Town of Garrett Park

Incorporated 1898

December 14, 2022

Dear Planning Board

Please accept the below written testimony on behalf of the Town of Garrett Park in the matter of 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue: Preliminary Plan No. 120220160 for the December 15, 2022 Planning Board agenda.

Sincerely,

Joanna Welch, Mayor
Town of Garrett Park

Testimony

Greetings, Planning Board Commissioners. I am Joanna Welch, Mayor of Garrett Park. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Town of Garrett Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for this Preliminary Plan review. This development is of great interest to the Town of Garrett Park and our residents. The Town limits are less than 1/4 mile away along Strathmore Avenue and within the staff-defined neighborhood. The development is in close proximity to the Town-owned Community Center, which houses a preschool and playground, and is adjacent to the Holy Cross church and school property as well as Garrett Park Elementary School.

It is the Town of Garrett Parks' **position that the Planning Board should require additional conditions for this preliminary plan to proceed**. We would like to take this opportunity to summarize our feedback and concerns, as well as share our recommended conditions after reviewing the detailed plan materials made available for public review.

We appreciate that the County and State departments of transportation have recommended that the developer be required to provide pedestrian facilities to meet up with the existing sidewalk at Kenilworth Avenue. During the Local Map Amendment

review process, the Town of Garrett Park highlighted the need for safe pedestrian access from the development to Garrett Park Elementary School and the two pre-schools located within the school complex. **The Town supports the placement of a condition for the completion of a pedestrian pathway** ensuring a safe route to the schools. We strongly encourage expeditious, good faith negotiation with the neighboring property owner to acquire the requisite right-of-way, even if accommodations are necessary.

We continue to be concerned about the **automobile orientation** of the site plan despite the development's proximity to the Grosvenor Metro, and the resulting impact of additional traffic flowing in and out of the already highly congested stretch of Strathmore Avenue. With three school complexes along this same stretch of Strathmore, we are very concerned that this development will add even more congestion to this heavily travelled thoroughfare.

Our first additional recommendation is to **consolidate the entrance/exits of the development, consistent with 2.11 of the Bicycle Master Plan**, which calls for driveways/curb cuts to be consolidated along master planned bikeway facilities. Strathmore Avenue has a master-planned sidepath, which is a type of bikeway facility. The Planning staff has indicated that the existing three driveways for the Academy and the much smaller St. Angela Hall justify the construction of two full roadways and an additional service truck entrance — three separate, major curb cuts for what is billed as a comprehensive, multi-generational, housing development. The Town of Garrett Park believes that the inclusion of three new roadway entrances/exits may serve to undermine the effectiveness of the signal and turn lane measures at the Main entrance.

This development will result in an off-street, shared used pathway, rather than the existing on-road shared use for bicycles and automobiles along this stretch of Strathmore Avenue. This new shared use, off- street sidepath will be far less safe (and inconsistent with the Bicycle Master Plan) with three roadway curb-cuts cutting through it in short succession. **It is not safe for children walking to school** to have to cross the main entrance to the Care Facility and the Academy **as well as the back truck entrance** to the Care Facility as they walk towards the schools to the east. The development circulation plan can easily be modified to support access to the rear via the **signaled** main intersection, **which is the more appropriate entrance for trucks**. To this point, EYA has presented this application as a comprehensive housing development and stressed that the Care Facility is a residential building. As such, the Care Facility's service entrance should be accessed from within the comprehensive housing development and not directly from Strathmore Avenue.

Secondly, the Town of Garrett Park requests a condition to **add an eastbound left-turn lane on Strathmore Avenue onto Stillwater Avenue to facilitate eastbound traffic flow**. This could benefit the existing residents in Garrett Park Estates, White Flint Park, and the Towns of Garrett Park and Kensington as well as the residents of the new development by facilitating eastbound traffic flow. The developer could provide the additional right-of-way on the south side of Strathmore to enable the additional turn lane. Design of this intersection should consider both traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

We are disappointed that the preliminary plan does not include a more direct pedestrian pathway from the development to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro complex. Additionally, we encourage discussions with the neighboring property owners to consider addition of a back pathway to the Garrett Park Elementary School complex and playground areas to ease access for children.

We note that this development feeds into **Garrett Park Elementary School (GPES), which has a history of overcrowding** and portable classrooms. New developments at Strathmore Square, Harwood Flats, and the White Flint area all feed into GPES. The chart in the staff report appears to consider only the addition of 21 students from this development without consideration of all the surrounding development that feeds into GPES. It is unacceptable for the County to approve the Preliminary Plan for this property without a clear, funded **MCPS plan for another elementary school in this cluster**.

Finally, a housing development of this size, designed for families of all ages, should also provide **adequate recreational facilities for its residents**. We appreciate the inclusion of the public nature trail along the creek side of the western edge of the development. However, it is inadequate to provide a single small playground area along a roadway and away from the residential portion of the development. Doing so will force families with children to cross a busy State Road and overcrowd existing playgrounds in the surrounding areas. The communities that built and support the existing play spaces did so thoughtfully. The new development should likewise be required to be thoughtful in their inclusion of outdoor play space, located fully within their residential area.

We also agree with our neighbor, Holy Cross Church, that the truck loading area of the new Brandywine Care Facility requires additional landscape screening in order to maintain the view for residents traversing Strathmore Avenue as well as the view from the church property. A truck loading zone area for a Care Facility so close to Strathmore Avenue is a significant deviation from the current streetview character of our neighborhood.

In Summary, we recommend the following Conditions be added to approval of the Preliminary Plan:

- 1) Reduce the number of entrance/exits directly on Strathmore Avenue to no more than two to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and minimize the visual impact of the commercial nature of the Care Facility loading area, which can be accessed easily from the new main entrance.
- 2) Consider adding an additional eastbound left-hand turn lane from Strathmore Avenue onto Stillwater Avenue to facilitate eastbound traffic flow, with design considerations for pedestrian safety, to benefit the community as a whole.
- 3) Support the Department of Transportation condition that the developer provide adequate pedestrian facilities along Strathmore Avenue eastbound to meet up with

the existing sidewalk at Kenilworth Avenue. We encourage expeditious good faith negotiation with the neighboring property owners for acquisition of the requisite right-of-way.

- 4) Ensure there is planned expansion of MCPS elementary school space within the cluster to support this additional housing.
- 5) Ensure the playground facility is both adequately sized and placed within the new residential area to support the single family and townhomes.
- 6) Support the request of Holy Cross Church for additional landscape screening of the Care Facility truck loading zone area that abuts Strathmore Avenue and the Church property.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations and concerns.

Sincerely,

Joanna Welch, Mayor
Town of Garrett Park

From: [Gerilee Bennett](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Comments on Preliminary Plan 120220160 for 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue
Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 8:57:37 AM
Attachments: [Bennett comments 4910 4920 Strathmore 12142022.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Planning Board Members,

Please find my comments on the Preliminary Plan 120220160 for 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue attached. This is in reference to your hearing agenda for December 15, 2022. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,
Gerilee Bennett
10806 Keswick Street
PO Box 436
Garrett Park, MD 20896

Gerilee Bennett
PO Box 436
10806 Keswick Street
Garrett Park, MD 20896

December 14, 2022

Dear Planning Board,

Please accept the below written comments/testimony in the matter of 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue: Preliminary Plan No. 120220160 for the December 15, 2022 Planning Board agenda.

Sincerely,

Gerilee Bennett

Dear Planning Board Commissioners,

I live in Garrett Park, adjacent to the new development planned for 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue, Preliminary Plan No. 120220160. As a neighbor to this new development, I submit the follow comments on the preliminary plan under consideration.

I believe the Planning Board should require additional conditions for this preliminary plan.

I am pleased to see the Planning Staff and County and State DOT's support the placement of a condition for the completion of a bikeway/pedestrian pathway ensuring a safe route to the schools. I think the extension of this pathway to ensure a sidewalk/bikeway from Route 355 to connect with Kenilworth Avenue in Garrett Park is critical for this development to be considered to have adequate infrastructure and facilities to support it.

This development plan is still very automobile orientated despite the nearness to Grosvenor Metro. This plan is getting all the benefits the County bestows on transit-oriented development without embodying those principles. I am concerned about the day-to-day impact of additional traffic flowing in and out of the already highly congested stretch of Strathmore Avenue.

Please consider directing the developer to consolidate the entrance/exits. This would be more consistent with 2.11 of Bicycle Master Plan, which calls for driveways/curbcuts to be consolidated along master planned bikeway facilities. Strathmore Avenue has a master-planned sidepath, which is a type of bikeway facility. The existing three driveways for the Academy and the much smaller St. Angela Hall are just that, driveways. This plan includes two private roads and a truck loading entrance—all anticipated to get much more use and traffic than the circular drive that supported St. Angela Hall before. If this is truly a comprehensive,

multi-generational, housing development, it should not require three separate, major curbcuts. The inclusion of three roadway entrances/exits will make it less safe for bicycles and pedestrians to travel along Strathmore Avenue. It is not safe for children walking to school to have to cross the main entrance to the care facility and the Academy as well as the back truck entrance to the Care Facility as they walk towards the schools to the east. The development circulation plan can easily be modified to support access to the rear via the signaled main intersection, which is the more appropriate entrance for trucks. The care facility's service entrance should be accessed from within the comprehensive housing development and not directly from Strathmore Avenue.

Also, I find it frustrating that the developer and County seem to only be addressing traffic concerns with measures that will primarily facilitate entry and exit from the development rather than traffic flow and entry/exit to existing neighborhoods. Please consider adding a short eastbound left turn lane located on Strathmore Avenue eastbound at Stillwater Avenue. This could benefit both the existing residents in Garrett Park Estates and White Flint Park as well as the residents of the new development and the Towns of Garrett Park and Kensington by facilitating eastbound traffic flow. The developer could provide the additional right of way on the south side of Strathmore to enable the additional turn lane. Design of this intersection should consider both traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

Thank you for your consideration of my recommendations and concerns.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gerilee W. Bennett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gerilee" being more prominent than the last name "Bennett".

Gerilee Bennett

10806 Keswick Street
PO Box 436
Garrett Park, MD 20896

From: [Vanessa Lide](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Vanessa Lide](#); [Arthur Ribeiro](#)
Subject: 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue: Preliminary Plan/Site Plan objections, for Dec. 15 Planning Board meeting
Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 11:12:32 AM
Attachments: [V. Lide public testimony, 4910-4920 STRATHMORE AVENUE, Dec 15, 2022.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns about the 4910-4820 Strathmore Avenue plans. I attach my written comments and objections, to be shared with the Planning Board meeting on December 15 to address this matter. Please confirm receipt of this email and the attached written concerns.

I have signed up to testify on December 15 as well, but have not received a confirmation email. Please advise how to access the hearing online, and let me know an estimated time frame.

I look forward to addressing the Montgomery Planning Board.

Thank you,

Vanessa Lide
5013 Strathmore Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895
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202-656-5692

Vanessa Lide
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To: Montgomery Planning Board members
Date: December 14, 2022
RE: **Objections to 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue: Preliminary Plan
No. 120220160 and Site Plan No. 820220220**

I live on the north side of Strathmore Avenue, on the narrow access road that parallels the main roadway, across from the proposed 4910-4920 Strathmore Avenue development.

My neighbors and I are concerned that the proposed development will worsen existing traffic problems, and believe the proposed reconfiguration of the main Strathmore Avenue roadway creates an undue burden on the existing community.

1) **Too much traffic** – the county seems to ignore multiple, repeated testimonials by people in the neighborhood about the heavy traffic on Strathmore Avenue, and the difficulty and safety concerns when exiting our neighborhood. Please see attached photos of what typical backups look like, morning and afternoon, with general rush hour congestion and school traffic as buses and parents drop off/pick up students at the three schools in the neighborhood.

When traffic backs up, frustrated drivers jump the queue by zipping up the narrow Strathmore Avenue access road on the north side, essentially a 1-lane road with cars parked on the north side. Or drivers turn onto Flanders Avenue or Stillwater Avenue to cut through our neighborhood — again, moving at unsafe speeds as neighborhood families bike/walk to school and the Metro.

2) **Please preserve the Strathmore Avenue green buffer**/landscaped median that separates the homes on the north side from the traffic and the Strathmore access road from the main roadway. Despite numerous conversations, assurances, and testimony by the developers and County planners that there will be zero impact to this buffer/median, the proposed plan will in fact carve away some of the green buffer/median strip that separates our homes from the main Strathmore Avenue roadway. Adding a traffic light/left turn lane into the new development, on the proposed plan, means pushing westbound traffic a full lane closer to our homes — by taking away some of the green buffer/median and eliminating the shoulder of the main roadway.

This is not an acceptable or wise solution, for several reasons: 1) homes on the north side of Strathmore, built 70 years ago, will now have to deal with more road noise and pollution; 2) the dozens of neighbors and school children who walk daily along the access road and the median strip will now be much closer to traffic, pollution, and road noise; 3) the proposed plan

Vanessa Lide
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Kensington, MD 20895
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eliminates the existing shoulder altogether — that leaves cars nowhere to pull over for the fire, police, and other emergency vehicles that frequently use Strathmore Avenue; 4) the proposed plan does not preserve the existing right of way, and creates a scenario where any future roadwork, like widening Strathmore Avenue later on to rectify the lack of a shoulder zone, for instance, could only be achieved by cutting further into the grass buffer/median strip on the north side.

The traffic discussion/proposals fail to address the impact of more cars for those of us who live in the existing community. The proposed road adjustments place an unfair burden on long-time residents, in addition to the emergency vehicle access concerns. We're requesting further review and community consultations — and want the developer to accommodate any changes to the main Strathmore Avenue roadway by increasing the setbacks on the south side of the road, not by cutting into the north side right of way or the green buffer zone.

3) Adding a turn lane and a traffic light will create further problems for long-time residents in the surrounding neighborhood. Both measures facilitate access into the new development — and purport to reduce queuing on Strathmore Avenue. But residents who live north, east, and west of the proposed development won't see any relief from the traffic light or turn lane, or find it any easier to get in and out of our neighborhood. More cars using Strathmore Avenue will make it harder for us to get in and out of our neighborhood safely, whether we're walking, biking, or driving. Will the SHA/County at the very least install Don't Block the Box signage/painted indications to keep these intersections clear?

4) Pedestrian safety at the Strathmore and Stillwater crosswalk/walking route to Metro/Strathmore Music Center. The proposed development plan creates a new 4-way intersection at Strathmore and Stillwater, which is the main walking route/crossing point to the Metro, bus stops, and the Music Center at Strathmore. The 4-way intersection will likely encourage cars leaving the new development to try to zip across Strathmore Avenue — but cars are also exiting the Strathmore access road and pedestrians are trying to cross. Can SHA and the County address solutions — including retaining the pedestrian safety island, and installing a flashing pedestrian light at the main crosswalk — to make this frequently used walking/biking route safer, not more dangerous?

Thank you.

Attachments: photos of Strathmore Avenue traffic back-ups. Photos taken late January 2022.

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Nearside lane shows cars heading east on Strathmore Avenue, at 8 am. Picture taken at the non-signalized pedestrian crossing at Strathmore and Stillwater – this is the traffic Garrett Park Estates residents face daily, whether they attempt to walk to the Metro or exit the neighborhood via Strathmore Avenue. Cars trying to enter or exit Symphony Park and the neighborhood at the top of the picture also face great difficulty accessing Strathmore Avenue safely.

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Traffic viewed from the north side of Strathmore Avenue, looking west towards Rockville Pike, 8 am. [This is where pedestrians must cross Strathmore Avenue to access the walking path to the Grosvenor/Strathmore Metro, and the Strathmore Music Center.]

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View from mid-way up the block at 8 am, across from the proposed new central drive for the new development/new traffic light. Exiting from Stillwater Avenue, the entrance by the pedestrian crosswalk, is particularly difficult.

Vanessa Lide
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Kensington, MD 20895
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202-656-5692



Strathmore Avenue, nearside lane looking west – photo taken Friday afternoon 3 pm. Again, exiting from Stillwater Avenue (on the right hand side) is extremely difficult, particularly for cars trying to turn left.

From: [George Martin](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Brandon Fritz](#); [George Martin](#); [David fitz-Patrick](#)
Subject: Fwd: 4910/4920 Strathmore 120220160 820220220
Date: Sunday, December 4, 2022 5:36:27 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

In response to your PUBLIC NOTICE to us of the December 15th deadline for comments on the proposed development adjoining our property (Church of the Holy Cross, 4900 Strathmore Avenue), we need the immediate attention of the County to address the intrusive impact that this project will have on us. My name is George C. Martin, Jr., and I have been representing interest of the parish for over ten years where our primary concern was with the flooding of our property by the State of Maryland (SHA). With the flooding issue with the State still unresolved, unless we have the oversight of the County, we will have yet another government agency failing to protect our interest.

As you are aware, the primary structural element of this development is the Brandywine Senior Living, which will loom over our property unless serious attention is paid to the scale of this building in relationship to our structures and ground conditions. Granted, to soften the impact of the proposed structure will be a challenge, but that is the burden of the developer. Unless the fundamental element of scale is examined, simply planting an assortment of trees and plants, does not begin to address the problem.

It is our position that the applicant for the pending zoning approval has not only failed to take this matter seriously, but seems to have gone out of their way to avoid showing the scale of the Brandywine retaining wall and structure, in proposing their screening solution. It would seem that the counsel for the developer is hoping that the clock will run out for comment on this issue as their minimal effort to really deal with our concerns, go unaddressed. To prove my point, I have included below a note to our engineer (KIM Engineering) of this apparent impasse, and by reference, my son's comment on the inadequacies of the developer's presentation to deal with the screening.

George C. Martin Jr.
Managing Member

Martin Industrial LLC
P.O. Box 565
Garrett Park, MD 20896
301-946-8811
georgecmartinjr@verizon.net

Begin forwarded message:

From: George Martin <georgecmartinjr@verizon.net>
Subject: Re: 4910/4920 Strathmore 120220160 820220220
Date: December 2, 2022 at 5:36:00 PM EST

To: Brandon Fritz <BrandonFritz@kimengineering.com>
Cc: Karen Carpenter <karencarpenter@kimengineering.com>, David fitz-Patrick <frfitzpat@gmail.com>, George Martin <marting@me.com>

Brandon,

I met with Fr. Fitz-Patrick yesterday primarily on the ADW/SHA matter, and while I did not have sufficient time to go into detail on the screening issue, it was his desire, and mine, to hand over to his successor, this matter. However, in saying that, and in order to accommodate Erin's schedule, I do wish to comment on the attachments sent to us. It was for that reason that I asked my son to visit the site in order to exam what was presented to us as to serving the purpose intended.

We found that the attachments which you sent to us today were utterly inadequate for representing a realistic view of what we at HC may have to endure. You have seen earlier today my son's report on what has been presented to us. George taught at CUA's School of Architecture for many years, and is a registered architect, and design builder.

As you may recall, I have on three occasions asked you to have the developer(s) provide to us a overlay of the screening/structures in support for the adequacy of what they propose. Even an east elevation of Brandywine (HC west viewing) and Strathmore line drawings would also help to serve this purpose. The developer should be embarrassed to have thought that such a presentation would support their argument as to the adequacy of screening HC. We do not wish to refer this matter to MC, so please advise Erin how this can be resolved.

George

From: [Graham, Tamika](#)
To: georgecmartinjr@verizon.net
Cc: bjfritz@gmail.com; [George Martin](#); frfritzpat@gmail.com; [MCP-Chair](#); [Sanders, Carrie](#); [Folden, Matthew](#); [Etheridge, Mark](#); [Jill Lemke \(SHA\)](#); [Girard, Erin E.](#)
Subject: RE: 4910/4920 Strathmore 120220160 820220220 - Public Comment
Date: Monday, December 5, 2022 5:59:44 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

Good afternoon, Mr. Martin:

Thank you for your comments which will be included in the public record for the project. I tried to reach you earlier by telephone but was unsuccessful and left a message. I will be available tomorrow should you want to reach me with additional questions.

Section 59.4.1.8 of the County's Zoning Ordinance outlines requirements for setback and height compatibility, generally for abutting residential or agriculture properties that are impacted. The Holy Cross Church and school are considered institutional uses. Therefore, the Zoning Ordinance does not impose additional setback requirements for the proposed residential use.

Per Section 59.5.3.5.B for development standards for Commercial/Residential Floating Zones, setbacks from the site boundary and maximum height are established by the floating zone plan. Under the CRN-F zone, the proposed building could be up to 150 feet. However, it was conditioned in the floating zone plan not to exceed 50 feet in order to be in line with the other buildings on the remainder of the Academy at Holy Cross and surrounding institutional uses. The setback from the Site boundary to the front building line is 10 feet. The setback from the Site boundary to the side yard abutting the Holy Cross Church property is 50 ft.

The development's proposed stormwater management concept was deemed acceptable which includes various techniques to address water on-site. Also, during the Local Map Amendment process an additional analysis was conducted at the request of nearby residents concerned about stormwater. The Applicant calculated that there are approximately 1.5 acres that currently sheet flow into Strathmore Avenue. With the stormwater management improvements, this flow will be captured and managed on-site after development of the Project and will substantially reduce the amount of stormwater the community has reported to observe flowing.

Copied by reference, you can reach out to Mark Etheridge from the Water Resources Section of the Department of Permitting Services and Jill Lemke from the State Highway Administration, both who can put you in contact with the appropriate staff in their departments for additional follow-up regarding flooding on your property.

You can sign-up to testify during the hearing using this link:

<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/sign-testify-form/>.

Best regards,

Tamika



Tamika Graham, AICP

Planner III, Midcounty Planning Division

Montgomery County Planning Department
2425 Reddie Dr., 14th Flr., Wheaton, MD 20902
tamika.graham@montgomeryplanning.org
o: 301.495.4551 | f: 301.495.1313



From: George Martin <georgecmartinjr@verizon.net>

Sent: Sunday, December 4, 2022 5:36 PM

To: MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>

Cc: Brandon Fritz <bjfritz@gmail.com>; George Martin <marting@me.com>; David fitz-Patrick <frfitzpat@gmail.com>

Subject: Fwd: 4910/4920 Strathmore 120220160 820220220

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