

From: [Mary Gene Martin](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: The Tregoning Property Development (Plat# 220250630-220250660)
Date: Sunday, July 20, 2025 6:09:43 PM
Attachments: [MGs Planning Board Speech.docx](#)

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Hello,

I spoke about this project in February 2023 on Zoom to the then Planning Board Members as a representative of the Sweepstakes HOA. I didn't get to finish my speech; in fact, I was shut down and dismissed. I've attached my speech from then and I think it is still pertinent today as it was two years ago.

Please read and enter into the record the attached file.

Sincerely,

Mary Gene Martin
Sweepstakes HOA Board Member
[REDACTED]
Damascus, Maryland 20872
[REDACTED]

GOOD AFTERNOON.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THE CONCERNS OF OUR HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION REGARDING THE PROPOSED TREGONING PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT. I AM MARY GENE MARTIN. I AM ON THE SWEEPSTAKES HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND I AM SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE SWEEPSTAKES COMMUNITY. OUR COMMUNITY (SWEEPSTAKES) OF GREATER THAN 240 FAMILIES WILL BE THE MOST ADVERSELY IMPACTED NEIGHBORHOOD IF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCEEDS AS WRITTEN. WE WISH TO CONVEY TO THE BOARD OUR MOST PROFOUND CONCERNS AND REQUEST THAT THEY PAUSE FURTHER REVIEW OF THE PLAN UNTIL OUR CONCERNS ARE FULLY ADDRESSED. IN ITS PRESENT FORM, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF A DENSE HOUSING AREA WILL CREATE SIGNIFICANT SAFETY HAZARDS FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

OUR CONCERNS ARE LARGELY CENTERED AROUND THREE FOCAL AREAS:

1. SAFETY

2. IMPACT ON LOCAL RESOURCES; AND

3. IRREVOCABLE EROSION OF THE LOCAL DAMASCUS COMMUNITY IDENTITY AS A RURAL COMMUNITY.

OUR PRINCIPLE CONCERN IS THE UNNECESSARY **SAFETY RISKS** POSED BY THE PROPOSED PLAN ON TRAFFIC ON KINGS VALLEY ROAD, GLADE VALLEY DRIVE, AND PREAKNESS DRIVE. KINGS VALLEY ROAD, WHICH IS CLASSIFIED BY MCDOT AS A COUNTRY ROAD, WAS NOT DESIGNED TO BE A MAJOR THOROUGHFARE TO RTE 27. AT PRESENT, AT LEAST FOUR DEVELOPMENTS (SWEEPSTAKES, GOSHEN OAKS, PREAKNESS, AND PARK OVERLOOK) USE KINGS VALLEY RD AS THEIR ACCESS POINT TO RTE 27. ALTHOUGH THERE IS A TRAFFIC LIGHT AT KINGS VALLEY AND RTE 27 (A QUICK SIGNAL), RUSH HOUR IN THE MORNINGS CAN BACKUP ON KINGS VALLEY ROAD BEYOND GLADE VALLEY DRIVE. DUE TO THE TOPOGRAPHY OF KINGS VALLEY ROAD AND NO EASEMENT OR SHOULDER, DANGEROUSLY SHORT LINE-OF-SIGHT DISTANCES ARE CREATED AT GLADE VALLEY DRIVE AS YOU CREST THE HILL FROM RTE 27. THIS RESULTS IN HAZARDOUS DRIVING CONDITIONS AT PRESENT WITHOUT ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT, AND IT WILL ONLY BE EXACERBATED IF ROAD ACCESS FROM THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IS ALLOWED TO PROCEED UNABATED TO GLADE VALLEY ROAD. THERE ARE NO OBVIOUS MITIGATION

SOLUTIONS THAT WOULD REMEDY THE HAZARD, IE TRAFFIC CIRCLES, STOP SIGNS, ETC.

LIKEWISE, AS ONE APPROACHES PREAKNESS DRIVE FROM THE DAMASCUS RECREATIONAL PARK ANOTHER LINE-OF-SIGHT ROAD HAZARD EXISTS DUE TO THE TOPOGRAPHY AND THE ABSENCE OF AN EASEMENT OR SHOULDER. THESE HAZARDS EXIST NOW WITH MODEST ROAD TRAFFIC AND WILL ONLY BECOME MORE PRONOUNCED IF DEVELOPMENT PROCEEDS.

DUE TO THE RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC ON KINGS VALLEY ROAD IN THE MORNING AND EVENING FROM RTE 27, WE HAVE SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS THAT PREAKNESS DRIVE, THE PRIMARY ARTERY FOR VEHICULAR TRAFFIC FOR SHOA, PREAKNESS HOA, AND PARK OVERLOOK, WILL BECOME A DE FACTO CONDUIT TO THE PROPOSED TREGONING PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT TO AND FROM RTE 27. PREAKNESS DRIVE WAS NOT INTENDED TO SERVE AS AN AUXILIARY OVERFLOW. ANY INCREASED TRAFFIC ON PREAKNESS AS THE RESULT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT POSES A DIRECT SAFETY THREAT TO THE EXISTING COMMUNITIES ALONG THIS ROAD INCREASING THE RISK TO PEDESTRIANS, IN PARTICULAR

SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN; PREAKNESS DRIVE HAS MULTIPLE BUS STOPS FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN. CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS STAND IN THE SWALES BECAUSE **THERE ARE NO SIDEWALKS.**

FOR THE RECORD, IN SWEEPSTAKES, PREAKNESS DRIVE DOES NOT HAVE PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALKS OR CYCLISTS' PATHS. IN FACT, NO SIDEWALKS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD EXIST. THERE ARE WALKING PATHS THAT DO EXIST; HOWEVER, THESE PATHS ARE SHOA COMMUNITY-OWNED AND MAINTAINED. THEY ARE A DISTANCE FROM KINGS VALLEY DRIVE, AND ARE INTENDED FOR USE BY THE CONTIGUOUS COMMUNITY. THEY ARE CERTAINLY NOT A SOLUTION FOR ELM STREET DEVELOPMENT (ESD) TO REQUEST OF THE BOARD TO CREATE PARK ACCESS. DUE TO EASEMENT ISSUES, TOPOGRAPHY, AND A LACK OF PLANS BY MCDOT TO RECLASSIFY OR TO WIDEN KINGS VALLEY DRIVE, ACCESS TO DAMASCUS REGIONAL PARK DOES NOT EXIST. WITHOUT PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALKS OR CYCLISTS' PATHS, AN ELEVATED RISK WOULD EXIST FOR THOSE WHO WOULD RESIDE IN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT. ESD HAS PROPOSED THAT FOOT TRAFFIC AND CYCLISTS COULD ACCESS THE PARK VIA THE FOOTPATHS IN SHOA. **AGAIN, SWEEPSTAKES HAS NO SIDEWALKS.** THE PEDESTRIAN HAZARDS WOULD STILL EXIST. IT ALSO IS NOT LIKELY THAT ESD WOULD RECEIVE AN ENDORSEMENT

FROM THE SWEEPSTAKES COMMUNITY TO USE THESE PATHS FOR ACCESS TO DAMASCUS REGIONAL PARK. THESE PATHS ARE COMMUNITY-OWNED AND MAINTAINED, NOT ADA COMPLIANT (EXISTED BEFORE ADA), AND ARE FOR THE PRINCIPAL USE BY THE CONTIGUOUS COMMUNITIES ADJACENT TO SWEEPSTAKES.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE AN UNKNOWN IMPACT ON LOCAL RESOURCES AS WELL. IT WILL MOST CERTAINLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMUTING DELAYS BEING EXPERIENCED BY DAMASCUS RESIDENTS DURING PEAK TRAFFIC HOURS ON RTE 27, A PROBLEM CREATED IN LARGE PART TO THE OVERDEVELOPMENT OF CLARKSBURG FROM BRINK RD NORTH TO HAWKES RD. UNLESS ADDITIONAL EXPANSION OF RTE 27 IS PLANNED FROM BRINK RD INTO DAMASCUS, TRAFFIC CONGESTATION WILL BECOME WORSE. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, NO ADDITIONAL EXPANSION PLANS OF RTE 27 ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION. HOWEVER, CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES ALONG RTE 27: FOR EXAMPLE, THE HOUSING AT ST. ANNE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ON 27 AND THE CONSTRUCTION NEXT TO DAMASCUS ES ON 27. INCIDENTALLY, THERE WAS **ANOTHER** 3 CAR ACCIDENT TUESDAY NIGHT (FEB 20, 2023) AT THE LIGHT AT

KINGS VALLEY ROAD AND RTE 27. THIS IS THE FOURTH SUCH ACCIDENT **ON RTE 27** BETWEEN KINGS VALLEY ROAD AND SWEEPSTAKES ROAD IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS. HOW IS THE COUNTY GOING TO MITIGATE ALL OF THIS EXTRA TRAFFIC ON RTE 27?

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL ALSO HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE LOCAL SCHOOLS. BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE APPROVED, THE PLANNING BOARD SHOULD COORDINATE WITH MCPS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE AFFECTED SCHOOLS HAVE SUFFICIENT CAPACITY AND RESOURCES TO ACCOMMODATE ADDITIONAL STUDENTS.

FINALLY, RECENT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS (PROJECTS NEAR DAMASCUS ES, LEWIS DRIVE, NORTH RTE 27, AND NORTH 124) WILL IRREVOCABLY ALTER THE DAMASCUS COMMUNITY LANDSCAPE AND IDENTITY AS A SMALL RURAL COMMUNITY. INSTEAD, IT WILL BECOME ANOTHER **AMORPHOUS CONTINUUM** OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS FROM MILESTONE TO DAMASCUS TOWN CENTER. THE ATTRACTION FOR MANY OF OUR RESIDENTS IS THE SMALL-TOWN FEEL. THEY TAKE IMMENSE PRIDE IN THEIR SMALL COMMUNITY. WE ARE AWARE THAT MD SUFFERS FROM A DEARTH OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING; HOWEVER, THE PROPOSED

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TREGONING PROPERTY WILL NOT ALLEVIATE THE CURRENT IMBALANCE. IN FACT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW HOUSING UNITS, ESD MENTIONED THAT THESE HOUSING UNITS WILL BE IN THE UPPER 6-FIGURES. NOT EXACTLY WHAT THE GOVERNOR AND THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE HAD IN MIND.

IN CLOSING, WE WOULD LIKE TO REMIND THE PLANNING BOARD OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO EXISTING COMMUNITIES AND RESIDENTS TO ENSURE THAT THEIR NEEDS ARE NOT SUBORDINATED TO A COMMUNITY THAT AT PRESENT **DOES NOT EXIST**. IN MEDICINE, THE CHARGE TO PHYSICIANS IS TO DO NO HARM. SIMILARLY, OUR CHARGE TO YOU IS TO NOT UNNECESSARILY CREATE ADDITIONAL SAFETY RISKS AND PROBLEMS FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

IT IS ALSO GOOD FORM TO PRESENT POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS. ONE SUCH SOLUTION WOULD BE FOR THE COUNTY TO BUY MOST OF THE TREGONING PROPERTY TO MAKE IT PART OF THE DAMASCUS RECREATIONAL PARK. THIS WOULD ALSO FIT INTO THE GOALS OF THE COUNTY'S THRIVE 2050 OF HAVING GREEN SPACE, PARKS, AND WALKING PATHS WHICH WILL CONNECT OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION.

Mary Gene Martin

Vice President, Sweepstakes HOA Board of Directors



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