

From: David B. Humpton
To: Stokes, Doris
Date: 07/10/2006 8:35:13 AM
Subject: Fwd: Re: Development of the Crown Property Site

Please place in the next package and public record thx dh

>>> Sidney Katz 07/10/2006 8:00 AM >>>

Dear Mr. Baer,

Thank you for your email. I am sending a copy of it to the City Manager and will ask him to include a copy of it in the next Mayor and Council's reading package.

Sincerely,
Sidney Katz

>>> <tllida25@hotmail.com> 7/10/2006 7:52 AM >>>
July 10, 2006

Dear Mayor Katz,

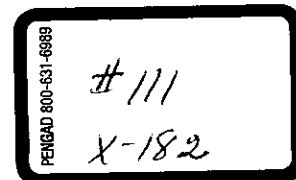
Last March I wrote to you expressing my concerns regarding Crown Village Farm's proposed development at the Crown Property site. These included the project's impacts on traffic congestion, green space, and taxpayer costs. Since that letter, I have learned more about the project and would like to express other ideas and concerns about the development.

Of all my concerns, the two most important relate to green space and traffic congestion. As I understand it, the original Montgomery County Master plan proposed 50,000 square feet of commercial space and 10 acres of parkland. The proposed development significantly departs from these recommendations.

As mentioned in my previous letter, I believe this area already has enough commercial space at the Rio Complex and Kentlands. The proposed development significantly increases commercial space from the proposed amount of 50,000 square feet to 320,000 square feet, resulting in more traffic congestion, air pollution, and noise pollution.

Green Space

I hope the City of Gaithersburg seriously considers the amount of green space in their deliberations. Green space helps recharge groundwater, which helps prevent future droughts and sediments from polluting local area streams. Because Montgomery County has clay soil, it takes longer for rainfall to penetrate the soil and to recharge the groundwater. Therefore, more green space is needed for recharging groundwater in Montgomery County. In contrast, Prince George's County has sandy soil which allows for greater



infiltration of water.

On page 27 of Gaithersburg's Environment Master Plan, it states that "as an absolute minimum, developers shall be required to retain at least five percent of the developable area as open space or parkland suitable for recreation use." I would submit that the proposal to donate only five acres at the Crown Property site is inconsistent with Gaithersburg's Environment Master Plan, since this represents less than five percent of the developable area.

Moreover, at an absolute minimum, I believe that at least 10 acres should be devoted to parkland. Ten acres was recommended in the Montgomery County Master Plan and represents five to six percent of the entire project area. This would be consistent with Gaithersburg's Environment Master Plan.

However, ideally I feel the developer should donate at least 10 percent of the developable area for parkland or open space, since this may represent the last chance for Gaithersburg to provide a significant amount of parkland in the future. I would recommend that more green space could be achieved by building an elementary school instead of a high school on the land donated by the developer, since an elementary school would occupy less green space and is consistent with the recommendation of the Montgomery County Master Plan.

In addition, if more green space cannot be increased by reducing the number of housing units, I would encourage the developer to build more high rises rather than townhouses to achieve the required housing density. Building more high rises reduces the amount of impervious surface on the landscape while increasing housing density for a more profitable project.

Traffic Congestion

More commercial space will exacerbate traffic congestion. Although I applaud Gaithersburg's efforts for increasing public transportation to the Shady Grove Metro through a transit center, these efforts will do little to prevent high traffic congestion because of the traffic associated with 320,000 square feet of commercial space.

Overall, I feel that the proposed plan is unbalanced. More steps should be taken to preserve more green space and reduce traffic congestion. Proper and careful planning of this project will lead to a higher quality of life for all Gaithersburg residents and enhance the city's position as the 17th best place to live (as reported by Money Magazine). I again wish you all the best in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

David Baer
111 Fleece Flower Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

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CC: Ossont, Greg; Sidney Katz