



October 14, 2015

Dear Property Owner or Resident:

You are invited to a community outreach meeting to discuss the proposed annexation of the property located at the northwest corner of Darnestown Road (MD Route 28) and Quince Orchard Road (MD Route 124) in Gaithersburg, Maryland, just to the north of Quince Orchard High School. The property is approximately 23 acres in size, divided into four parcels, some of which are improved currently with various retail uses (gas station, grocery store, bank, pharmacy, etc.) and some of which is unimproved. The location of the property is shown on the attached tax map. The owners are interested in annexing the property from Montgomery County into the City of Gaithersburg. If annexed, the property would be rezoned from the County's NR-0.75, H-45 and R-200 zones to the City's MXD zone. The idea would be to develop and redevelop the property in three general phases beginning with a phase 1 residential development of the westernmost 14 acres. The remaining 9 acres would be redeveloped over the long term as mixed use in two general phases.

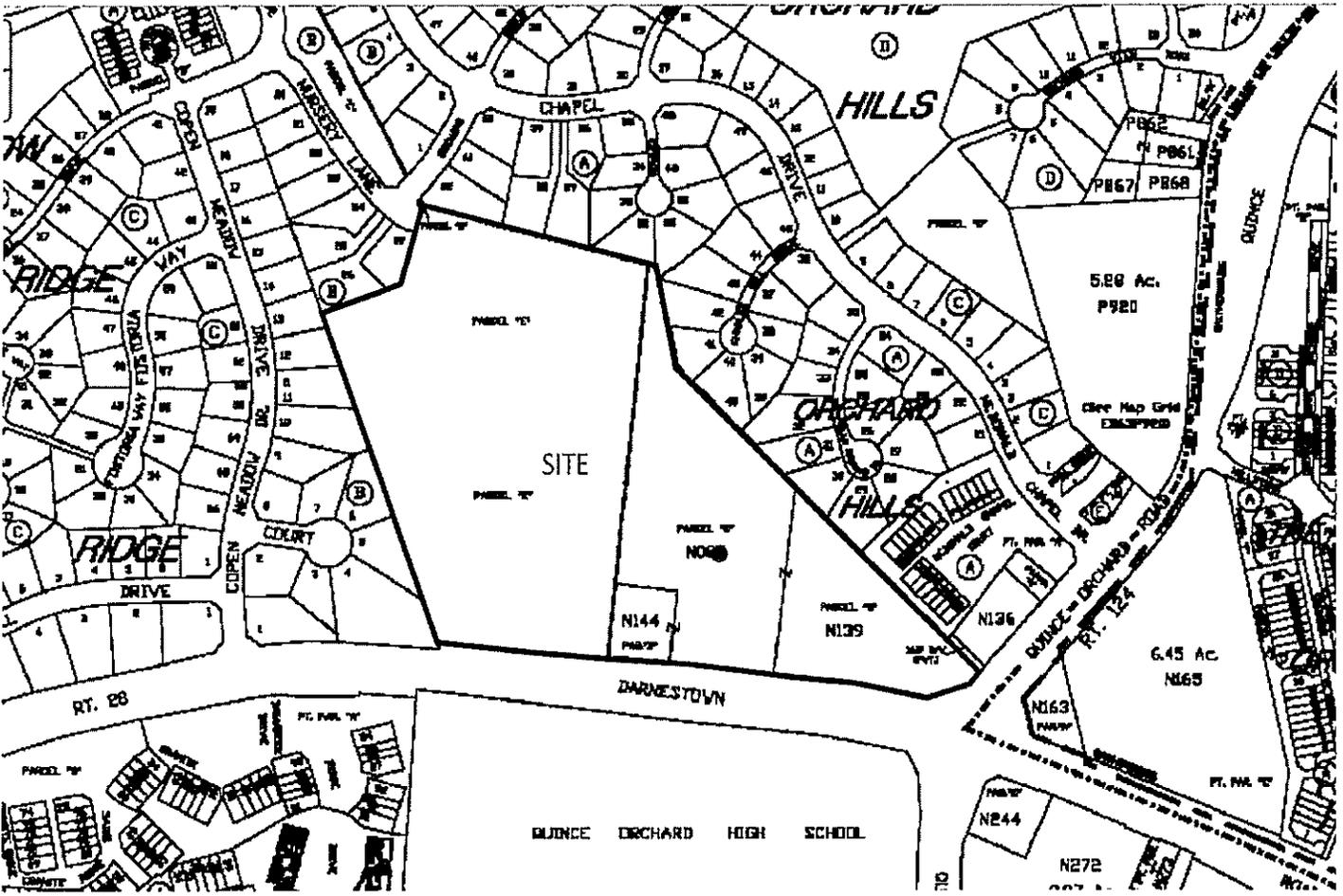
The community meeting will provide you with an opportunity to become aware of the annexation petition. The meeting will be held at the Johnson warehouse building (red block, green roofed building to the left of the Sunoco gas station), 12311 Darnestown Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland, on **Tuesday, October 27, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.** There is no need to RSVP for the meeting. At the meeting the applicant team will provide information and try to answer any questions. If the October 27th date is not convenient for you, and you have questions or would like more information, please contact Stuart Barr at srbarr@lerchearly.com or by phone at 301-961-6095. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Stuart Barr
Lerch Early & Brewer

Mayor and City Council
X-7067-2015
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Attachment: Tax Map



Z:\1000-9999\1940\CADD\SKETCH\1940100_SUPPORT.dwg, ~ Jun 05, 2015 AT 3:46:08 PM



WKA MARYLAND, LLC
 ENGINEERS • PLANNERS • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS •
 SURVEYORS • SUSTAINABLE DESIGN •
 3051 COUNTRY BOULEVARD SUITE 400 N
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PROPERTY TAX MAP

JOHNSON'S PROPERTY
 GAITHERSBURG, MARYLAND
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY

JUNE 4, 2015



From: [John Schlichting](#)
To: [Martin Matsen](#); [Rob Robinson](#)
Subject: Fwd: Potential Large Scale Development around Willow Ridge - Please review carefully - If you can, do try to attend the meeting on Oct 27th at 7:00 PM (See attachment)
Date: Monday, October 26, 2015 9:20:51 PM
Attachments: [Johnson Community Meeting Invitation 10-27-15.pdf](#)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Neil Harris <nharris@gaithersburgmd.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Potential Large Scale Development around Willow Ridge - Please review carefully - If you can, do try to attend the meeting on Oct 27th at 7:00 PM (See attachment)
Date: October 26, 2015 at 8:34:48 PM EDT
To: Mayor and Council <MayorAndCouncil@gaithersburgmd.gov>, Tony Tomasello <TTomasello@gaithersburgmd.gov>, John Schlichting <JSchlichting@gaithersburgmd.gov>

Sharing these comments from a neighboring (County) community to the Johnson property.

Begin forwarded message:

From: <barneygorin@goventures.biz>
Date: October 26, 2015 at 8:26:39 PM EDT
To: Chris Campbell <christopher.g.campbell@gmail.com>, Ty Hardaway <tyhardaway@gmail.com>, Glen Palman <glen.palman@gmail.com>, Robert Randolph <robertrandolph7@gmail.com>, Rob Garretson <rgarretson@gmail.com>
Cc: Neil Harris <misternh@gmail.com>
Subject: Fw: Potential Large Scale Development around Willow Ridge - Please review carefully - If you can, do try to attend the meeting on Oct 27th at 7:00 PM (See attachment)

Hi guys,

FYI ... it appears that there is some push-back on the idea of extending Gaithersburg sort of oddly to the West.

Best regards,

Barney

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Katie Rapp <wookyluvr2002@yahoo.com>
To: "President@kentlandsusa.com" <President@kentlandsusa.com>
Cc: Munish Mehra <mmehra@qbiop.com>
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2015 7:47 PM
Subject: Fw: Potential Large Scale Development around Willow Ridge - Please review carefully - If you can, do try to attend the meeting on Oct 27th at 7:00 PM (See attachment)

Hello,

I wanted to make sure KCA is aware that the City of Gaithersburg is moving forward on annexing the Johnson property, which is located at the intersection of 28 and QO. In their master plan, they are also showing annexation of the other commercial corner and turning the whole area around QOHS into a "gateway" to the city. Thought you all would be interested as it would represent competition to Kentlands commercial district, about a mile away.

Meeting at Johnson property this Tues at 7 PM. See attachment.

Katie Rapp
Willow Ridge Civic Assn

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Munish Mehra <dr.mmehra@gmail.com>
To: 'Munish Mehra' <mmehra@qbiop.com>
Sent: Friday, October 23, 2015 5:55 PM
Subject: Potential Large Scale Development around Willow Ridge - Please review carefully - If you can, do try to attend the meeting on Oct 27th at 7:00 PM (See attachment)

Hello neighbors,

Munish asked me to write up some of the details about the proposed Johnson property annexation, rezoning, and redevelopment. Here goes.

This is a big deal. It includes ALL of the Johnson property, including the Safeway, CVS, bank, as well as the undeveloped land adjacent to Willow Ridge. I suggest that everyone in Willow Ridge and the whole area should take this very seriously. If it goes through, it will profoundly change this area. I'll repeat, this is a big deal. It changes the nature of the land use allowed on the property in a very big way.

Land Use: Here is some history as I understand it. Currently, the ~14 acres closest to Willow Ridge are zoned R-200 which only allows single family homes. The Johnsons could have built homes on this land at any time. They chose not to include it in the land sold to the Hidden Ponds developers. They had other plans (unknown to us).

Current Special Exception: The Johnsons were able to get a "special exception" on that property decades ago with (as far as I know) no community disagreement, because they told Willow Ridge neighbors that they just planned to move a few greenhouses to the land, greenhouses that needed to be relocated when Thurgood Marshall ES was built. However, the special exception allows a number of uses other than single family homes, including a garden center.

Garden Center Proposal: The community was surprised in 2004-2005 to learn that the Johnson's wanted to take advantage of this special exception and develop a very large-scale garden center on the entire 14 acres. This met a great deal of community opposition and the Johnsons came back quickly with a scaled back plan, using just the 6 acres closest to 28 for a new garden center. The rest of the property was going to be undeveloped/storm drainage area.

Garden Center Approved/Not Built: This plan was approved, but the Johnson's chose not to build the garden center. I was told by Russell Johnson that it was because the price of construction materials had gone up too much after Hurricane Katrina. Another neighbor told me it was because the Johnsons were required to make expensive improvements to intersections on 28.

Rezoning to Commercial: About 6 years ago, the Johnson's tried to get the 14 acres adjacent to Willow Ridge rezoned from residential zoning to commercial zoning. This was during the "Science City" zoning discussions about Belward Farm which is in the same planning area as us. This rezoning of the Johnson property met with community opposition and they dropped that plan quickly.

Selling to Parks Dept: They also talked about selling the land to the parks department. This is referenced in the current zoning plan for our area, the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan on p. 61 http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/gaithersburg/documents/GSSCAprovedandAdopted_web.pdf

The parks department did not have the funding to purchase the property at the price the Johnson's were offering it. The end result is that nothing happened at that time. The county did not rezone the land and the parks dept did not purchase it.

Current Zoning/Allowed Uses: The map on p. 62 of the Great Seneca plan shows the current zoning. The 14 acres adjacent to Willow Ridge are zoned for single family home residential development. The commercial properties including the gas station, Safeway, CVS, and bank, are zoned C-1 which is neighborhood convenience. That is, allowed uses are limited to businesses that people need close to home such as groceries, gas, pharmacy, hair salons, doctor offices, etc. It's not supposed to be a "draw" for people

to come from a distance. This keeps it to local traffic... it's not drawing in crowds.

Request for Annexation: After they were not able to get the land rezoned in 2009, the Johnson's went to the city of Gaithersburg and asked for annexation. This is referenced in the 2009 Gaithersburg city Master

Plan: http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/~media/city/documents/government/master_plan/2011/Land_Use.pdf

Creating a Western "Gateway": Note that the Gaithersburg plan calls for annexation and rezoning of the all the corners of 28/QO (except QOHS) and they are calling this a "Gateway" to the city. For reference, the definition of Gaithersburg MXD zoning: [Municode Library](#)

The Gaithersburg city council discussed and agreed to enter into an annexation agreement with the Johnsons this past summer. The documents are here:

<http://sirepub.gaithersburgmd.gov/sirepub/agdocs.aspx?doctype=minutes&itemid=11744>

Here's more info about the Gaithersburg planning process.

<http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/services/planning-services/planning--faq>

My Questions: I have many questions about this proposal, as I am sure most people in Willow Ridge have. Here are some of mine:

1. What is the density of housing allowed on MXD land and what is proposed? I have concerns because we need to keep in mind what they could do down the road, not just what they say they want to do now.
2. Will they have to notify neighbors when they develop/redevelop the land? With the current R-200 zoning, the county requires that they contact adjacent landowners and community associations so we're aware of plans. We have the right to comment on plans. I do not know if this is the case if the land is annexed and rezoned by the city.
3. They are proposing to eventually knock down all the existing commercial buildings on the developed properties (including the Safeway, CVS, bank, restaurants like the new Inferno pizza place). What would they put in its place? Again what is planned and what is allowed. Again, the concern about what they could do down the road. They do not currently have to notify neighbors about C-1 development plans. What is the situation for MXD in city of Gburg?
4. Why are they calling this a Gateway to the city? I have a huge issue with this. The current development plans for Montgomery County call for heaviest development along the I-270 corridor. I understand considering

Rio/Washingtonian/Crown a Gateway into the city of Gaithersburg. People are arriving off the interstate. It is a destination. Who would we be the gateway for? People who live in Darnestown and the agricultural reserve? Darnestown is in the Potomac planning area (from Riffle Ford on) and this is low density development because of distance from I-270. The agricultural reserve has limitations on development. Why would city of Gaithersburg plan a large scale gateway to the city for people coming from the west?

5. Annexing the Johnson land would mean that City of Gaithersburg extends in an odd way into the middle of Willow Ridge and Orchard Hills. Would that mean they would eventually want to annex our communities and what would that mean for us? Taxes, services, etc?
6. Traffic... an obvious huge issue when we already have a great deal of difficulty leaving the neighborhood at certain times of the day. Safety is a huge issue.
7. Widening of 28? If they build this much development, would they need to further widen 28 and/or widen it into Darnestown or beyond to accommodate traffic? It's a bottleneck now as it narrows at Riffle Ford. What would happen if traffic significantly increases? How far would the backups extend at rush hour?
8. Why would they surround a high school with heavy development like this? What are the safety implications for students at QOHS?

These are just a few questions I have off the top of my head. I'm sure everyone will think of more. I want to re-state that this is a huge issue that I urge everyone takes very seriously. Feel free to share this info with people in adjoining communities. The whole area will be deeply affected. I encourage everyone to attend meetings and understand the issues clearly. This is not a done deal. Make sure your voice is heard.

Katie Rapp

From: [Bello, Michael](#)
To: [Rob Robinson](#)
Cc: ["Joshua C. Sloan"](#)
Subject: Johnson Annexation
Date: Monday, November 02, 2015 12:56:47 PM

Hi Rob, Josh,

Please confirm that the annexation file number is X-7067-2015 and there is no "ANX" at the front, that its just X...

Thank you

Mike Bello, RLA, LEED AP BD+C

Planner Coordinator

Area 2 Planning Division

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring MD 20910

301-495-4597

301-495-1303 (fax)

Michael.bello@montgomeryplanning.org

<http://www.MontgomeryPlanning.org>

Mayor and City Council
X-7067-2015

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From: [Linda Green](#)
To: [Rob Robinson](#)
Subject: Proposed Annexation of Johnson's Property to City of Gaithersburg
Date: Friday, October 30, 2015 12:56:44 AM

Dear Mr. Robinson,

My name is Linda Green and I have been a resident of the Willow Ridge Community, adjacent to the Johnson's property, for the past 10 years. I am very concerned about the new proposal for the annexation of this property to the City of Gaithersburg, as it is clear that this proposal will have a HUGE impact on the surrounding neighborhoods in very negative ways.

1. One of the biggest concerns of the community when Johnson's had previously proposed building a large garden center on this space was the effect that this would have on the local traffic. With this new proposal of annexation, which would allow for high density residential units in this space, the traffic impact would be tremendous. Route 28 is not designed to handle this volume, as it is very difficult and dangerous (I have personally witnessed several accidents) to leave our neighborhood during peak hours as it is. We have argued for an additional traffic light to exit our neighborhood, but have been denied due to the proximity of adjacent lights. For the safety of the community, a completely new traffic pattern would be an absolute prerequisite to this annexation. From past experience, I believe that this is unlikely to happen.

2. I am very concerned that this increased congestion directly across the street from Quince Orchard High School will pose a significant threat to the safety of the students who are new drivers and/or walking to school. I would not be comfortable allowing my own children to do either if this annexation is approved.

3. The schools in this area are already overcrowded, causing the need for portables and/or busing children to schools outside of their community. The proposed annexation would certainly worsen this situation as well.

We do not need a Western Gaithersburg cityscape. The Kentlands and Washingtonian Center (which is still growing in its newer sections) offer nearby city "hubs" for higher density housing and plenty of commercial space in this region. The Johnson's Property would be much more suited for single family homes that would fit in well with this community or, better yet, a neighborhood park.

Thank you for your attention on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Linda Green

12559 Carrington Hill Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
phone: (301)-963-1341

e-mail: lindakpgreen@gmail.com

From: [John Schlichting](#)
To: [Mayor and Council](#)
Cc: [Tony Tomasello](#); [Dennis Enslinger](#); [Lynn Board](#); [Britta Monaco](#); [Martin Matsen](#); [Trudy Schwarz](#); [Rob Robinson](#)
Subject: Proposed Johnson Property Annexation
Date: Friday, October 30, 2015 4:26:57 PM
Attachments: [Johnson AnnexTimeline.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)

Mayor and Council,

The following email and attachment will be sent to everyone who inquiries about the status of the proposed Johnson Property annexation:

On August 17, 2015, the Mayor and City Council of Gaithersburg voted to introduce an Ordinance to annex approximately 23.45 acres of land in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Darnestown and Quince Orchard Roads known as the Johnson Property. This action was taken at the request of the property owner. A video of the Mayor and Council's discussion and a package of materials can be found under Ordinances / Resolutions / Regulations at this link:

<http://sirepub.gaithersburgmd.gov/sirepub/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=2356&doctype=AGENDA>

This was the beginning of a lengthy public process which will include many more opportunities for public comment. Attached is a timeline of the process with estimated timeframes. While initiated by the City, the process involves Montgomery County staff and both the County Planning Board and Council. The next step is the County Planning Board's discussion and recommendation which will take place at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission at 8787 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring on Thursday, November 12th from 10:30AM to 3:00PM. The agenda and materials for this meeting are not yet online, but will be posted at this link:

http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings_archive/

A Project Page for the Johnson annexation is being prepared and will be available on the City's website next week. It is important to note that this proposed annexation is one of two that are running almost concurrently at the same intersection. The owners of Potomac Valley Shopping Center are also seeking annexation for the portion of the shopping center not currently in the city in the southeast quadrant. The Mayor and City Council introduced that Ordinance on September 8th.

Both of these properties are within the maximum expansion limit of the City of Gaithersburg, as depicted in the Growth Element of the City's 2003 Master Plan, adopted 2009.

Please don't hesitate to call or email me, Planning Division Chief Martin Matsen (mmatsen@gaitersburgmd.gov), or Long Range Planning Manager Rob Robinson (rrobinson@gaitersburgmd.gov) with questions.



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