

From: McCartin, Bob
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2015 2:38 PM
To: 'planning@gaithersburgmd.gov'
Cc: mindy.mccartin@gmail.com
Subject: Regarding the Johnson property X-7067-2015

Dear Sir:

I am writing to express my concerns about the potential rezoning of the property referred to as X-7067-2015.

I live in Willow Ridge and have since 1987. I am not opposed to development, but I am opposed to treating the Quince Orchard area as a city, making traffic much worse, and reducing my property value.

It makes no sense to me that the Johnson property would become part of the City of Gaithersburg. And any action that might be taken on rezoning, while not adversely affecting that city, would grossly affect those of us in Willow Ridge, all of whom are outside the City. We do not get to vote out of office those who make a bad decision. So we are left with the hope that our concerns will be honored, though we are powerless from the point of view of city elected officials.

Obviously, the City of Gaithersburg has done an excellent job with Kentlands and Crown. So I would hope that the same good judgment will be shown with this smaller project. So I do have some hope.

The proposal that Johnson's is running with will add more than 200 cars to the neighborhood. We already have an impossible traffic situation with Route 28 going into Darnestown. The road becomes 1 lane each way at Riffleford Road. If the road is not widened to 2 lanes on each side, and these additional cars are added, the area will become a parking lot for much longer periods of time every day than it is currently. And clearly the County is not going to go against Darnestown and widen the road. In the end, if the roads are not fixed, this rezoning should not be allowed.

My concern about property values is as follows: when the area around Willow Ridge is converted from a suburban look and feel to a congested city look and feel, my property will be less attractive and when I sell, I will not see a reasonable return on my investment. If the look and feel remains suburban, development of the Johnson property will be good for my property value. This would mean primarily single family homes and a smaller percentage as townhouses. And far fewer cars!

Keep in mind that a few years ago, Johnson's tried to redevelop the property and found that the opposition of the neighborhood was enough that it was not worth it.

We should allow Johnson's to redevelop the area within reason, but not as their current plans describe. Cut the number of units down to one third of what they describe, no

condos, more single family units than townhouses, and much less traffic, all resulting in reasonable property values for current property owners and no radical change to our quality of life.

The city's planning function is quite a big deal. Back in the 60's when my father was on Rockville's planning board, I saw that first hand. It was clear then as it is to me now that developers usually ask for more authority (to maximize their profits) than the local community finds acceptable. And it is only a good planning board that can throttle that back. Please do that in this case.

Thanks,

Bob McCartin
12516 Carrington Hill Drive
Gaithersburg MD 20878
301-990-1154

From: [Katie Rapp](#)
To: [Rob Robinson](#)
Cc: [Councilmember Katz's Office](#); [Lindsay Hoffman](#); councilmember.rice@montgomerycountymd.gov; [Munish Mehra](#)
Subject: Re: Questions re Johnson property
Date: Sunday, November 15, 2015 11:15:14 PM

Hi Rob,

Thank you. That appears to be a legal definition of the term gateway. I wonder what is meant by the term "gateway" in the context of the QO/28 intersection. I'd like to know what you envision for the gateway area as the long range planner for the city of Gaithersburg. For example, the master plan uses this language: "Any proposed redevelopment plans should consider the site's location as a gateway into the city limits." What does that mean?

On the Johnson property concept design, they call a possible 6-story building on the corner of 28 and QO the "gateway" portion of the property. Are there guidelines you give landowners on what the city of Gaithersburg envisions for a gateway? The term is also used for the Magruder property already in the city limits, and also recommends that property for rezoning to MXD.

Here is my concern. The intersection of 28 and QO is now quite complicated. There are different jurisdictions with different zoning, it's in two different planning areas for the county and then the 3rd corner in the city. The two annexations plus rezoning of all 3 corners to MXD simplifies the whole area and makes it welcoming to a developer coming in and seeing all 3 corners now in the City of Gaithersburg and zoned MXD allowing quite a bit more flexibility than what they would now find. That must be your plan, as it is in the master plan. So what is the longterm vision for redevelopment of the area as a gateway?

Another thing I'd like to request is that the city expand the notification area for development and redevelopment. Almost no one lives within 200' of the Magruder property that is being annexed. I would like to see the city do what the county does...

"The applicant also must send written notice to abutting and confronting property owners, and to homeowners associations and civic associations within a one-mile radius." From here:

http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/info/participating_effectively.shtm#FindOut

Thank you,

Katie Rapp

From: Rob Robinson <RRobinson@gaitthersburgmd.gov>
To: Katie Rapp <wookyluvr2002@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2015 11:46 AM
Subject: RE: Questions re Johnson property

Ms. Rapp,

The intersection of the two State arterial roads is a geographic gateway point to the City as

its sited at the current southwestern terminus of the City's incorporated limits.

Rob Robinson III, AICP CEP
FCA Qualified Professional
Long Range Planning Manager
City of Gaithersburg
301-258-6330 Ext. 2122

The opinions expressed in this message are not necessarily those of the City of Gaithersburg Staff, Mayor or Council.

From: Katie Rapp [mailto:wookyluvr2002@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 11, 2015 8:02 PM
To: Rob Robinson
Cc: COUNCILMEMBER.KATZ@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV;
COUNCILMEMBER.RICE@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV; Munish Mehra; Lindsay Hoffman
Subject: Re: Questions re Johnson property

Hi Rob,

Please respond to my question #5 below regarding the gateway concept. I would like to understand what is meant by that and how it applies to the properties on all the corners of the 28/QO intersection surrounding Quince Orchard High School as indicated in the Gburg Master Plan.

Switching gears, I have a question about the Magruder property annexation (X-7089-2015).

Although there is currently no residential component requested by the Magruders for that property, once it is annexed and rezoned MXD can they or someone who purchases the property from them add a residential component? What is the process for that, notifications, hearings, etc?

I see there is a hearing about the Magruder property on Monday, 11/16. Is there a deadline for submitting written comments? What is the process for residents who wish to speak at that hearing?

Thanks,

Katie Rapp

From: Rob Robinson <RRobinson@gaitthersburgmd.gov>
To: Katie Rapp <wookyluvr2002@yahoo.com>
Cc: "COUNCILMEMBER.KATZ@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV"

<COUNCILMEMBER.KATZ@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV>; Martin Matsen
<mmatsen@gaithersburgmd.gov>; "COUNCILMEMBER.RICE@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV"
<COUNCILMEMBER.RICE@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV>

Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2015 1:29 PM

Subject: RE: Questions re Johnson property

Hi Ms. Rapp,
Answers in Red below.

Rob

Rob Robinson III, AICP CEP
FCA Qualified Professional
Long Range Planning Manager
City of Gaithersburg
301-258-6330 Ext. 2122

The opinions expressed in this message are not necessarily those of the City of Gaithersburg Staff, Mayor or Council.

From: Katie Rapp [<mailto:wookyluvr2002@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2015 11:06 PM

To: Rob Robinson

Cc: Munish Mehra; COUNCILMEMBER.KATZ@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV;
COUNCILMEMBER.RICE@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV

Subject: Questions re Johnson property

Hi Mr. Robinson,

Councilmember Katz's office recommended I contact you with questions.

1. If the whole 23 acres is annexed and rezoned MXD is there any requirement that it be developed in phases the way the Johnson's presented it to us Tues evening? That is, is there a requirement that the western 14 acres always be residential? Or would he have the option of doing commercial on the whole 23 acres (mixed with residential)?

The proposed plan, if annexed is a binding Sketch Plan- there would be no option to expand commercial uses beyond what is shown.

2. When MXD property is redeveloped, is there any requirement to inform adjoining property owners and HOAs?

MXD zoned properties have multiple development plan stages. As part of each stage- neighbors within 200' are notified of any meetings or public hearings.

3. Because this would be city property and the surrounding residents are in the county and not Gburg constituents, there is quite a lot of concern about what we perceive will be a lack of interest on the city's part to care about our input. I don't expect you to respond to that, but it's an issue that's creating a great deal of dis-ease

about the annexation. We'll have this little sliver of city in our midst and no say about it and no representatives on our side.

4. Community members are hugely concerned about the impact of high density housing like this on the schools and roads which are both saturated. The Johnson's response was pretty much that those issues don't enter into their plans for annexation and aren't dealt with until much later in the development process. There is a great deal of community concern about the impact of this type of development on the quality of life for the whole Quince Orchard area and especially directly surrounding the high school with it.

The City's Adequate Public Facilities (APFO) Tests are implemented at Schematic Development Plan when preliminary subdivision occurs and final development densities and types are established and not at Annexation/Sketch.

5. On that topic, I saw in the Gburg master plan the interest in annexing and rezoning all the corners surrounding QOHS and the word "gateway" is used for this area. Why? I understand gateway for Rio/Crown since they're near 270 and a lot of people enter the city there. I don't understand it on the western edge, with low density rural development in Darnestown and the ag reserve beyond. Why plan to create a built up "gateway" at QO/28?

6. Are roads really not considered in the plan? The Johnsons said since these are state routes it's not dealt with by the city and as far as they know SHA hasn't been involved yet. Is this a city planning issue to get SHA involved? And how wide could they make 28? The bottleneck at Riffle Ford is so ridiculous now. I live in Willow Ridge and we simply can't use the Copen Meadow exit for left turns at morning or evening rush. The area needs better infrastructure to accommodate current traffic. How can you plan for and approve higher density development when the infrastructure isn't there?

State Agencies such as SHA and other agency stakeholders are notified and solicited for comment at the Schematic Development Plan Stage- this is when actual preliminary subdivision and 80% engineering are completed. Please be aware that annexation/sketch plans are "bubble" plans that provide a basic development framework and limits and are not used for traffic impacts and mitigation or establishing student generation impacts.

7. Back to the Johnson property, if the land is annexed/rezoned, is there a timing requirement for redevelopment of the current commercial properties? That is, could they leave the Safeway as it is for 20 years before they decide to do anything? Or do they submit plans with the rezoning request and have a timeline for implementing them? What's the max commercial development on the whole 23 acres?

There is no specific timetable for the phased development.

8. It sounded like the concept plan was all that was required for the annexation/rezoning. How much is allowed to change from the concept plan to what is eventually built? And how are nearby homeowners and HOAs involved if it is annexed? Are there requirements for informing us of plans and do we have the right to comment at hearings (again an issue for us since we aren't city residents and we

doubt that anyone would listen).

All subsequent development plans submitted must comply with the annexation/sketch plan. Again, each subsequent development plan process includes mailed notification to all property owners within 200' of the application. Anyone may testify on an application.

9. What is the maximum number of residential units that can be built on the whole property? What is the maximum height? Can they be rental units? Is there a cap on the percentage of rentals?

Attached is the proposed phasing exhibit which defines all of your questions.

Thanks for helping us understand a little better what this annexation would mean for our surrounding community. I'm sure I will have more questions and I appreciate your time.

Katie Rapp
Willow Ridge Civic Assn

From: Radengals@aol.com
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: Annexation of Johnson property
Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 2:35:27 PM

I am very concerned about the dense development that has been proposed for the Johnson property along Route 28 in zipcode 20878.

I have been a resident in this area for 36 years so I have watched it change from sleepy exurbia to busy suburbia. I have actively participated in the growth of schools and Quince Orchard library here. I have been a community leader and a scout leader. I appreciated City support to landscape Ridgeview's grounds and to provide bus transport for the first "Every Fifteen Minutes" program here.

I am not a person who opposes change. Yet I feel that the proposed development is too urban to fit into the community. I don't understand how it conforms to Smart Growth when it burdens the area and the existing community in so many ways.

- 1.The proposed development would increase traffic and safety concerns in an area that is already congested.
- 2.The proposed development would increase school enrollment for the elementary, middle and high schools in schools that are already overcrowded.
- 3.The proposed development would increase demand and burden on current utilities, infrastructure, recreation, and the environment.
- 4.Annexation will create an area that is a part of the city of Gaithersburg surrounded on all sides by neighborhoods that are not part of the city of Gaithersburg.
- 5.The R-200 lot is much better suited to include community resources that are already needed in the surrounding area. Possible programmed spaces for recreation could be a part of the proposal and serve to balance the proposed residences. Possible uses of the Site may include: Pocket parks, gardens for education, multi-programmable fields for soccer and baseball, a recreation center, etc.
- 6.The annexation will propose an increase in density that does not comply with the Approved and Adopted 2010 Greater Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan.

Please do not allow this property to become an urban island in a suburban sea.

Thank you,
Linda Raden

From: [Sylvia Greenberg](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: Re: Johnson Annexation X-7067-2015
Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 2:29:56 PM

- > I am against the current development plan for the Johnson property. My concerns regarding the proposed development are as follows:
- > -It would increase traffic and safety concerns in an area that is already congested.
- > -It would increase school enrollment for the elementary, middle and high schools in schools that are already overcrowded.
- > -It would increase demand and burden on current utilities, infrastructure, recreation, and the environment.
- > -Annexation will create an area that is a part of the city of Gaithersburg surrounded on all sides by neighborhoods that are not part of the city of Gaithersburg.
- > -The R-200 lot is much better suited to include community resources that
- > are already needed in the surrounding area.
- > -The annexation will result in an increase in density that does not comply with the
- > Approved and Adopted 2010 Greater Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan.
- >
- > Thank you.
- > Sylvia Greenberg
- >
- > Sent from my iPhone

From: [Binh Do](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: re Johnson property to annex to City of Gaithersburg
Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 10:31:34 PM

To whom it may concern,

This is Tim and Binh Nee and we reside in the Willow Ridge development, one of the properties surrounding the Johnson's property.

We attended the meeting on Tuesday, Oct 27 on the proposed annexation of the Johnson's property to the City of Gaithersburg and we are very concerned. What we learned from the meeting is that if the property gets annexed, it will automatically be rezoned to be a high density residential development. Currently, under the county, the majority of the property (14 acres) is zone R-200, which would allow **about 30 units (either single-family or townhouse)**. **We have no problem with that. What we were being told is that if this property gets annexed, Phase I of the development could include up to 180 residential units on 14 acres of the 23-acre property, with Phase II and III on the remaining 9 acres being residential/commercial mixed development.**

This high density development will

- 1. significantly impact the already congested traffic condition we have in the surrounding areas especially west bound on Rt 28.** This increase in traffic will also cause safety concerns for the students at Quince Orchard High School as the school is on the corner of Quince Orchard Rd and Rt. 28.
- 2. significantly impact the overcapacity problems we currently have with surrounding schools (e.g Thurgood Marshall ES, Ridgeview MS, and Quince Orchard HS)**
- 3. have significant impact on current infrastructure**
- 4. change the scenery of the surrounding neighborhoods as they are of low to medium density developments**

Please consider our concerns before making any decisions on the annexation.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,
Tim and Binh Nee
12547 Carrington Hill Dr

From: [J Shen](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: Johnson development concerns
Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 11:35:58 PM

To whom it my concern,

I live in Willow Ridge subdivision which is adjacent to the Johnson's property. It just came to my attention that the Johson's property which is currently zoned for R-200 are planning to be annexed to the City of Gaithersburg and be re-zoned. I am very concerned about this annexation and rezoning. I am very much against the re-zoning. This area is supposed to be a suburban neighborhood, not a city. The neighborhood is already crowded as it is. The traffic on rt-28 especially when rt-28 narrows to single lane past Quince Orchard is already terrible as it is now can't possibly handle the extra load. Developing a city environment in 14 acres of land surrounded by suburban neighborhood is just a bad idea, it will greatly disturb the current residents. The Johnson property is currently zoned for R-200 and it should be developed according to its zoning like the rest of the neighborhood. This is a good neighborhood, please allow the residents continue to enjoy living here. Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Best Regards,

Jenny Shen
16008 Shady Stone Way
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Email: chunling1976@gmail.com