

**From:** [Bobbi Fulmer](#)  
**To:** [Rob Robinson](#)  
**Subject:** FW: The City of Gaithersburg 9-19 Meeting and the Johnson Property Annexation (X-7067-2015)  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 4:15:58 PM  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** Steve Lawrence [mailto:20533@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2016 4:14 PM  
**To:** Planning External Mailing  
**Subject:** The City of Gaithersburg 9-19 Meeting and the Johnson Property Annexation (X-7067-2015)  
**Importance:** High

Dear Gaithersburg Planning, Mayer, and City Council Members,

Attached is the text of my 3-minute monologue given at the City's 9-19 meeting regarding the Johnson Property Annexation (X-7067-2015). Also here are some additional requests / comments.

- 1) Now that this property is annexed, please ensure the developer provides adequate tax revenue to help fund desperately needed infrastructure. We are all suffering from over building and its effect on Schools, Roads, and Infrastructure. We are all so desperate for revenues to stabilize the continual drop in quality of life that over development brings. We all know that there is selfish business reason why the property owner wanted to be annexed into the city. I can't blame them and would probably do the same. But now it's time for the owner / developer to do their part and create a good revenue stream for over the next 10 – 30 years plus. It's time they pay their fair share and stop the downward cycle.
- 2) Please send me the link to the posted video of the meeting when available. I want to share it with many others in our community.
- 3) Even though I wasn't in favor of this Annexation I was impressed with the attention to the detail of the Council members and their questions. I think everyone needs to see the Video.
- 4) Attached is the text of my three-minute monologue at the 9-19-16 City of Gaithersburg Meeting regarding Johnson Property (X-7067-2015) Annexation and these notes.

Thank you,



**Steve Lawrence**

30 Year Resident of Willow Ridge, bordering the Johnson Property

Mayor and City Council  
X-7067-2015  
171

And additional 10 year Montgomery County Resident

**From:** [Steve Lawrence](#)  
**To:** [Rob Robinson](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Johnson Comments  
**Date:** Monday, September 26, 2016 12:01:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [Dear Mayor and City Council Members.pdf](#)

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Rob, Strange that my attachment didn't make it to you so here is another PDF attached to this email. Oh and thank you for posting the video of the meeting. I went to copy the link and I think I broke it since it no longer works for some reason? Thanks again,

- Steve

<http://sirepub.gaithersburgmd.gov/sirepub/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=2599&doctype=agenda&itemid=13649>

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**From:** Rob Robinson [mailto:RRobinson@gaitthersburgmd.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 10:09 AM  
**To:** 20533@comcast.net  
**Subject:** Johnson Comments

Mr. Lawrence,

The e-mail sent September 21, attached, included an attachment that did not come through. Please either mail your testimony or e-mail the attachment in either Microsoft word or PDF format. Your original e-mail will be entered into the record as received- with no attachment.

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.

Dear Mayor and City Council Members.

I am here representing the many residents that border the Johnson Property (X-7067-2015) being annexed into the city. This effort has and remains overwhelmingly negative to the people most affected. We have expressed our opinion over the last two years through many discussions which have received token responses.

Our view is based on logic and is very simple.

- 1) This property is a peninsula and barely touches the current city limits, while 95% of the property is surrounded by County residents.
- 2) The only reason we are here is that the property owner saw a more flexible route in changing the zoning and having a more favorable environment to increase densities and impact facilities.
- 3) Lastly we want the record to reflect that the community is not in favor of this annexation and we will be watching closely to see that the binding agreement is adhered to over the development and life of this property. The binding agreement states the following;
  - a. Commercial floor area is limited to no more than an additional 10,000 square feet
  - b. Commercial heights may not exceed those of existing buildings
  - c. **Limited** to 110 dwelling units (28 single family detached units, 82 attached townhome units)
  - d. At least one acre of land for a playing field and park and a parking area for park users

Thank you,



**Steve Lawrence**

30 Year Resident of Willow Ridge, bordering the Johnson Property  
And additional 10 year Montgomery County Resident

Additional Comments:

- 1) Now that this property is annexed, please ensure the developer provides adequate tax revenue to help fund desperately needed infrastructure. We are all suffering from over building and its effect on Schools, Roads, and Infrastructure. We are all so desperate for revenues to stabilize the continual drop in quality of life that over development brings. We all know that there is selfish business reason why the property owner wanted to be annexed into the city. I can't blame them and would probably do the same. But now it's time for the owner / developer to do their part and create a good revenue stream for over the next 10 – 30 years plus. It's time they pay their fair share and stop the downward cycle.
- 2) Please send me the link to the posted video of the meeting when available. I want to share it with many others in our community.
- 3) Even though I wasn't in favor of this Annexation I was impressed with the attention to the detail of the Council members and their questions. I think everyone needs to see the Video.
- 4) Above is the text of my three-minute monologue at the 9-19-16 City of Gaithersburg Meeting regarding Johnson Property (X-7067-2015) Annexation and these notes.

**From:** [John Schlichting](#)  
**To:** [Rob Robinson](#)  
**Cc:** [Trudy Schwarz](#); [Martin Matsen](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Gaithersburg, Annexation - Quince Orchard  
**Date:** Friday, September 30, 2016 4:47:52 PM

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**From:** Jud Ashman  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 7:51 PM  
**To:** The Roseman Family; Michael Sesma; Neil Harris; Henry Marraffa - External; Ryan Spiegel; Robert Wu  
**Cc:** Tony Tomasello; Dennis Enslinger; Lynn Board; John Schlichting  
**Subject:** RE: Gaithersburg, Annexation - Quince Orchard

Dear Sharon and Phil,

Thank you for the message. I have asked staff to include it in our public record on the matter.

Answers to your questions are interspersed below. Staff, please feel free to add to or correct any of it.

Yours,  
- Jud

Jud Ashman  
Mayor, Gaithersburg, MD  
Founder & Chair, Gaithersburg Book Festival  
[www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org](http://www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org)

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**From:** The Roseman Family [rosemanfamily@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 4:42 PM  
**To:** Jud Ashman; Michael Sesma; Neil Harris; Henry Marraffa - External; Henry Marraffa - External; Ryan Spiegel; Robert Wu  
**Subject:** Gaithersburg, Annexation - Quince Orchard

Dear Mayor Ashman, Council Vice President VP Sesma; Mr. Harris; Marraffa, Jr., Mr. Spiegel, and Mr. Wu,

It was an honor for my husband and me to attend our first city hall meeting. It was quite informative and eye opening. We have several comments below about the annexation of the Johnson Property. We live at 16017 Copen Meadow Drive in the Willow Ridge community. We back up to Mr. Johnson's property.

1. We learned about this meeting from a post card that was sent to us. However, the rest of the community had no idea about this meeting and other meetings that Mr. Johnson had. The meeting that had the best turnout was the first one because the surrounding neighborhoods received proper notification.

**\*\*Our ordinances dictate the scope of our mail notifications; we mail to a certain defined radius around the subject property. We also put out legal notices, advertise our agendas and background materials on our website, and include them in our weekly e-newsletter, in Gaithersburg. Since the demise of The Gazette, it has become more and more challenging to disseminate important local news and notifications. I'd recommend that you and your neighbors sign up for our newsletter, the form for which is on our website at [www.gaithersburgmd.gov](http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov).**

2. It really is troubling to us about the impact additional residents will have. My son used to walk to Quince Orchard High School until we got a couple of phone calls warning us that our son would probably be hit by a car. No, our son was not doing anything wrong, and is now 32 and *alive*. **One must remember that there is an abnormally high concentration of new inexperienced drivers** that are absorbed in many different ways.

**All the schools are maxed out in students. Additional development could result in even more families entering an area with already extreme overcrowding in schools (Rachel Carson ES, Thurgood Marshall ES, and QOHS).**

\*\*\*At this moment, the only matter before us is the Annexation Agreement, which is a binding legal document that outlines the general uses and sets the maximum density parameters for any future development proposal. The City has a process for evaluating the traffic and schools, but that process doesn't begin until there's an actual development proposal (called a Schematic Development Plan or SDP) submitted.

3. **The traffic one experiences when trying to get out of Willow Ridge is dreadful.** We see tell tale signs of a great number of traffic accidents almost every day. One day, when my husband and I were coming home we saw an older lady lying on the ground. She had hit someone coming out of our neighborhood, was badly shaken up, and injured. We saw her granddaughter go back to the car and put it in park. The grandmother went to the hospital. I used to see traffic in the morning back up to Copen Meadow Court. Since I am no longer working, I leave my house much later so I cannot attest to the current back up but I cannot believe it is any better. I do see cars in line all the time trying to make a left. **We fear what is going to happen when a right hand easement is easement into the mix.** Trucks will have a hard time making turns and making their Safeway deliveries and cause traffic jams. **The traffic making a left at the light will back up past the Safeway.** Not too long ago, my husband came home and we commented to each other about the line of traffic trying to make a left at the light. It was backed up to the middle of the Safeway store.

We can also attest to the increase in traffic on Copen Meadow Drive when Hidden Ponds was developed.

\*\*\*On an anecdotal level, all of us are aware of the traffic around QO Road & Rte. 28. As I mentioned above, if and when an applicant submits a development proposal (SDP), we will require a traffic study, the result of which could necessitate intersection improvements or other such mitigation. I'll also note that, under the current County zoning, the property owner can, by right, develop significantly more commercial space than they're asking for in this Annexation Agreement - and commercial uses tend to generate more traffic than residential. So, based on the numbers being drafted into the Annexation Agreement, even if a future application were to propose the maximum allowed densities, the higher percentage of residential and lower commercial would theoretically yield less traffic than what they can currently develop by right.

4. We are troubled over the higher density of 10,000 sq. feet of commercial space. Where is this going to be built? This intersection potentially affects public safety for students and residents in the surrounding area.

\*\*\*If the Annexation Agreement is approved by the Council, it will allow someone to \*propose\* up to 10,000 sq ft of additional commercial, but there is no development proposal before us, so what form such a proposal might take is purely hypothetical.

4.) We are Montgomery County Residents surrounding the Johnson property but **not** City of Gaithersburg residents. However, this high density redevelopment will affect us directly and in

potentially numerous negative ways.

\*\*\*You may not live within the City limits, but we're all in this together and we're glad to hear from you and have participate in our process, nonetheless.

5.) We have questions regarding the park which we believe cannot be answered at this time. Does the proposed park have any parking spaces? If so, where? Who will maintain the park? If the annex goes through, will this be the responsibility of the City of Gaithersburg?

\*\*\*Interesting questions. Our staff is working on this matter with the applicant and we will probably resolve 'who would own the park,' and 'who would maintain the park' in the Annexation Agreement.

6.) How will this affect our property value? Will it make it so crowded and create so much traffic congestion that our property value goes down.

\*\*\*First off, we don't know *what* will be proposed, nor *when* it will be proposed. Far too many variables to speculate.

That said, I'm generally bullish on Gaithersburg - including Greater Gaithersburg (i.e., your neighborhood). Probably not a surprise that I'd feel this way, given that I'm the Mayor! But you have to know, this is a desirable place to be - we have a thriving economy, terrific schools, excellent services and cultural programs, great proximity to DC and lots of other places. I'm not a Realtor, but my basic understanding of economics tells me that, as long there's demand, property values should remain strong.

7.) Who will benefit from the plan to build townhouses and single family homes? Who will have the tax benefit?

\*\*\*I'm assuming that this is question is rhetorical. If I'm wrong, however, please let me know and we can discuss.

*If this land is to be developed, we prefer Mr. Johnson to go back to his original plan to build 30 single family homes on this property. The addition of townhouses into the mix will cause overcrowding in schools and create abominable traffic congestion.*

Thank you,

Sharon and Phil Roseman  
16017 Copen Meadow Drive, Willow Ridge Community  
[rosemanfamily@verizon.net](mailto:rosemanfamily@verizon.net)

**From:** [Doris Stokes](#)  
**To:** [Rob Robinson](#)  
**Cc:** [Michelle Coupe](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposition to the Johnson property annexation  
**Date:** Monday, October 17, 2016 4:51:58 PM

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-----Original Message-----

From: Ryan Spiegel  
Sent: Monday, October 17, 2016 2:24 PM  
To: Doris Stokes  
Subject: FW: Opposition to the Johnson property annexation

Ryan Spiegel

Council Member

City of Gaithersburg

[www.GaithersburgMd.gov](http://www.GaithersburgMd.gov)

Twitter: @GburgMD, @GrowGburg, @RySpiegel

President, Md Municipal League - MoCo Chapter

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From: Jason Green [jasonwgreen@gmail.com]  
Sent: Monday, October 17, 2016 11:12 AM  
To: Ryan Spiegel  
Subject: Opposition to the Johnson property annexation

Honorable Council Member Spiegel,

I am writing concerning the Johnson annexation plans for the property on Route 28 across from Quince Orchard High School. I am strongly opposed to these annexation and development plans.

For over ten years, I have lived in the Willow Ridge neighborhood adjacent to the property in question. For a few years prior to that, I lived just down the road in the Lakelands community. I have two teen aged children who have both grown up in the local MCPS schools, specifically Thurgood Marshall ES, Ridgeview MS, and now Quince Orchard HS. My family walks, bikes, and drives around the local neighborhoods every day. I am therefore intimately familiar with local school resources, traffic infrastructure, and population density.

As it is, the neighborhood schools are already over-crowded and use portable classrooms. I'm very concerned about adding such a large concentrated increase in population to the system and the impact it would have on TMES, RMS, and QOHS.

Currently, traffic on local roads, especially Route 28 and Quince Orchard Road, and at the entrance to the Willow Ridge neighborhood is very dense. At morning and evening rush hours and even at mid-day, it is very difficult and often quite dangerous to drive out of Willow Ridge onto Route 28. It often takes quite a long time to get out of the neighborhood because we have to wait for an opportunity to safely cross four lanes of dense traffic with no traffic light. In the mornings, the traffic situation in front of the neighborhood is compounded by many cars making a U-turn to get back to the QOHS entrance. In the evenings, the west-bound traffic is so dense and slow that it often backs up to a crawl all the way down past the fire station.

I'm also very concerned about pedestrian safety as we add more people on foot, on bikes, and in cars to this neighborhood. My children would be walking from Willow Ridge to Quince Orchard HS and crossing those four lanes of traffic during peak traffic hours which are already pretty dangerous. Add a couple of entrances to a high density housing neighborhood and it is going to be much more dangerous for pedestrians.

On a more personal note, I chose to live in this neighborhood specifically because it is a beautiful, quiet, and uncrowded suburban neighborhood of single family homes surrounded by trees, parks, and nature. Annexing a large portion of that neighborhood into the City of Gaithersburg and building multi-story higher density housing is going to radically impact the neighborhood and the community for the worse. We are still reeling from the upcoming destruction of large wooded meadow and addition of a PEPCO substation on the other side of the neighborhood at the corner of Route 28 and Riffle Ford Rd. The county seems to think that every bit of space should become a Rio or a Downtown Rockville, and I think it is ruining our beautiful county one neighborhood at a time.

In closing, I urge you to listen to the strong concerns and protests of myself and the hundreds of neighbors that agree with me. Please do not allow this annexation or re-zoning to move forward. Let the Johnson property be developed in a more conservative way in accordance with its current zoning to protect the neighborhood, the schools, the traffic density, and the safety of the many families and children who love living here.

Thank you for your attention and any assistance you can offer in this urgent matter.

Best Regards,  
Jason W. Green  
301-466-8195

**From:** [Doris Stokes](#)  
**To:** [Rob Robinson](#)  
**Cc:** [Michelle Coupe](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposition to the Johnson property annexation  
**Date:** Monday, October 17, 2016 4:49:54 PM

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**From:** Jud Ashman - External  
**Sent:** Monday, October 17, 2016 11:17 AM  
**To:** Doris Stokes  
**Subject:** Fwd: Opposition to the Johnson property annexation

Hi Doris,

Please add to the record for the Johnson Property Annexation.

Thanks!  
- Jud

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Jason Green <[jasonwgreen@gmail.com](mailto:jasonwgreen@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Oct 17, 2016 at 11:09 AM  
**Subject:** Opposition to the Johnson property annexation  
**To:** [jashman@gaitthersburgmd.gov](mailto:jashman@gaitthersburgmd.gov)

Honorable Mayor Ashman,

I am writing concerning the Johnson annexation plans for the property on Route 28 across from Quince Orchard High School. I am strongly opposed to these annexation and development plans.

For over ten years, I have lived in the Willow Ridge neighborhood adjacent to the property in question. For a few years prior to that, I lived just down the road in the Lakelands community. I have two teen aged children who have both grown up in the local MCPS schools, specifically Thurgood Marshall ES, Ridgeview MS, and now Quince Orchard HS. My family walks, bikes, and drives around the local neighborhoods every day. I am therefore intimately familiar with local school resources, traffic infrastructure, and population density.

As it is, the neighborhood schools are already over-crowded and use portable classrooms. I'm very concerned about adding such a large concentrated increase in population to the system and the impact it would have on TMES, RMS, and QOHS.

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fire station.

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On a more personal note, I chose to live in this neighborhood specifically because it is a beautiful, quiet, and uncrowded suburban neighborhood of single family homes surrounded by trees, parks, and nature. Annexing a large portion of that neighborhood into the City of Gaithersburg and building multi-story higher density housing is going to radically impact the neighborhood and the community for the worse. We are still reeling from the upcoming destruction of large wooded meadow and addition of a PEPCO substation on the other side of the neighborhood at the corner of Route 28 and Riffle Ford Rd. The county seems to think that every bit of space should become a Rio or a Downtown Rockville, and I think it is ruining our beautiful county one neighborhood at a time.

In closing, I urge you to listen to the strong concerns and protests of myself and the hundreds of neighbors that agree with me. Please do not allow this annexation or re-zoning to move forward. Let the Johnson property be developed in a more conservative way in accordance with its current zoning to protect the neighborhood, the schools, the traffic density, and the safety of the many families and children who love living here.

Thank you for your attention and any assistance you can offer in this urgent matter.

Best Regards,  
Jason W. Green  
[301-466-8195](tel:301-466-8195)

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Jud Ashman  
Mayor, Gaithersburg, Maryland  
Founder and Chair, Gaithersburg Book Festival  
[www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org](http://www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org)  
@judashman

**From:** [Doris Stokes](#)  
**To:** [Rob Robinson](#)  
**Cc:** [Michelle Coupe](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Johnson Property annexation  
**Date:** Monday, October 17, 2016 4:50:31 PM

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**From:** Jud Ashman - External  
**Sent:** Monday, October 17, 2016 2:24 PM  
**To:** Doris Stokes  
**Subject:** Fwd: Johnson Property annexation

Hi Doris,

Please add this to the record on the Johnson Property Annexation.

Thanks!  
- Jud

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Kelman, Lori M.** <[Lori.Kelman@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:Lori.Kelman@montgomerycollege.edu)>  
**Date:** Mon, Oct 17, 2016 at 2:12 PM  
**Subject:** Johnson Property annexation  
**To:** "[jashman@gaitthersburgmd.gov](mailto:jashman@gaitthersburgmd.gov)" <[jashman@gaitthersburgmd.gov](mailto:jashman@gaitthersburgmd.gov)>

Dear Mayor Ashman,

Thank you for your service to the City of Gaithersburg. I am writing in opposition to the proposed annexation of the Johnson Property near the intersection of Darnestown and Quince Orchard Roads.

I live in the Westleigh community and work at Montgomery College in Germantown. When I teach at night I take Rt. 28 to Riffle Ford Road into Germantown. Traffic is backed-up on Rt. 28 during the evening rush hour from Alderwood Drive (often from Muddy Branch Road) to Riffle Ford Road (where I turn, so I'm not sure how much farther the traffic continues). In particular, the intersection of Darnestown and Quince Orchard Blvd. is congested with cars as well as, often, pedestrians and people on bicycles.

I oppose the proposed annexation because:

1. Traffic is already terrible at Darnestown Road and Quince Orchard Blvd. Development will only make this intersection more congested and more dangerous. School children use this intersection several times a day.
2. The public schools in the area are already overcrowded.
3. The proposal does not include green space, and was rejected by the county for traffic congestion and school capacity reasons. The county recommended using the property for park space, and I agree. I realize annexation is not the same thing as development, but it seems

clear to me that the annexation is simply the first step in developing the land, with a potential 180 housing units already being mentioned in public meetings.

Since I moved to Westleigh in 2000 I have seen traffic increase to unacceptable levels – the intersections of Muddy Branch Road and Great Seneca Highway, and Darnestown Road and Quince Orchard Blvd., are gridlocked during rush hours – and traffic lights added, without much improvement in traffic flow. The city of Gaithersburg is being overdeveloped, with the effect that quality of life has decreased. The city, which a decade ago was recognized as one of the best places to live, is in decline due to overdevelopment.

Sincerely,

Lorraine M. Kelman  
31 Treworthy Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878-2620

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Jud Ashman  
Mayor, Gaithersburg, Maryland  
Founder and Chair, Gaithersburg Book Festival  
[www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org](http://www.gaithersburgbookfestival.org)  
@judashman