

From: [Ralph K](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: SK-7503-2017 & SDP-7362-2016
Date: Thursday, May 25, 2017 6:39:01 PM

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to tell you my thoughts and concerns with the recent proposals to build in the Kentlands. I believe the relevant projects are Kentlands Apartments, SDP-7362-2016 and Kentlands Square, SK-7503-2017.

Please note that I am not a new urbanist. I purchased my condo in the Kentlands in 1995 because it was suburban, had nearby lakes and trees, was near shopping and roadways to work. However, the narrow roadways and other traffic-calming methods prevalent in the Kentlands have not been conducive to bringing consumers from other areas into the Kentlands for shopping and dining. Rather they rattle drivers enough that they just want to get out of here and not come back. Symptoms – not observing stop signs or right of way at stop signs. Also try observing the traffic on Lake Street and Main between 8 and 8:30 AM. You will be amazed at the contortions the residents go through to get out of Lake Street to drive to school and work. On Kentlands Boulevard, the shrubbery in the traffic circles is too high for drivers to readily see pedestrians and the lighting near pedestrian walkways on Kentlands Boulevard is either habitually out or dim. Perhaps waist-level shielded lighting at pedestrian walkways will illuminate people without shining into the eyes of motorists. Booth Street between Kentlands Boulevard has been so narrowed that the centerline is rarely adhered to.

I am against all plans to build high-rise apartment buildings above the existing four stories that we currently have. The increase in population density will further overburden the existing infrastructure and make every day as bad as 'Kentlands Day' traffic. The Saul Center presentation placed emphasis on shops and restaurants available to both new residents as well as the old residents on the SW side of Kentlands Boulevard. For a really scary experience, try crossing Kentlands Boulevard on foot during evening rush hour. I do it multiple times during the week, but it is always unpleasant and unsafe. Any increase in traffic will surely lead to tragedy, especially if there are any sort of amusements to draw teenagers to cross.

Several years back, Target declined building in Kentlands because we already had Kmart. If Kmart closes, we will have no large variety department store in the neighborhood at all. Kentlands lost Crown Books many years ago and no bookstore has replaced it. With Kmart gone, there will be no place to buy small appliances, T-shirts or even a pair of socks.

Please do the right thing and not increase the problems that we currently have in the Kentlands. The streets are too narrow for existing traffic and need to be widened. A proliferation of narrow streets will turn away consumers rather than attract them. The high-rise apartment buildings will destroy the small town suburban feeling that made residents move to Kentlands in the first place. The failure of mom and pop shops combined with the closing of Kmart will negatively impact the local Kentlands shopping experience.

Thank you,
Ralph Kantrowitz
400 Kentlands Blvd
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

From: [Geoff tinkham](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: Kentlands Square SK-7503-2017.
Date: Thursday, May 25, 2017 8:18:15 PM

Hello –

As a resident and property owner in the Kentlands/Lakelands neighborhood I am very much in favor of density increases in the current Kentlands commercial area. We need more housing density in the downtown area to support a more robust and updated town center. I don't know of anyone who doesn't support this effort which Kimco and Saul Centers is developing.

Thank you for allowing my opinion to be heard.

Geoff Tinkham
934 Rockborn Street
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
301-233-5244



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From: nathanbeck@gmail.com on behalf of [Nathan Beck](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: Kentlands Square SK-7503-2017
Date: Friday, May 26, 2017 8:30:07 AM

I support the sketch plan for the redevelopment of Kentlands Square.

This is responsible growth: higher density, walkable, mixed use. It takes an existing underutilized parking lot and turns it into a usable, enjoyable, tax generating entity. I encourage the city to continue involving the Kentlands/Lakelands community and those who fully understand the principles of the community's design: Duany Plater-Zyberk (DPZ) and Michael Watkins Architect LLC.

Let's keep Kentlands the model of growth for the local area and the region.

-Nathan Beck
Gaithersburg, MD

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ADMINISTRATION

465 Golden Ash Mews
Gaithersburg, MD 20878-5642
May 21, 2017

City of Gaithersburg Planning Commission
City Hall
31 South Summit Avenue
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-2038

Re: Kentlands Square sketch plan SK-7503-2017

Dear Sirs:

While I am the President of the Kentlands Citizens Assembly, I write only for myself as a citizen of Gaithersburg and resident of the Kentlands since December 13, 1991.

The Kentlands Square sketch plan is but one of three planned efforts immediately adjacent to the Kentlands with Kimco and S&T Kentlands, LLC being the other two. In addition, the "Kentlands Downtown" of live-work units lining Main Street south of Kentlands Boulevard is undergoing significant challenges.

It is my firm belief that all three of the planned redevelopment efforts and the needed live-work adjustments should be addressed together, rather than independently, using a new urbanist perspective. The City administration is uniquely positioned to encourage this kind of cooperative effort through the kind of concerted effort that brought the original Kentlands development to life from 1988 through 1998.

Developing a workable solution to the increased auto traffic must be a major consideration. While the Bus Rapid Transit station may mitigate some of my concerns, the automobile traffic issue is very real.

The S&T, or Diya, site is shown with one additional entrance from/ exit to Great Seneca Highway that appears to work well for leaving the area eastbound on Great Seneca and arriving either southbound on Quince Orchard or eastbound on Great Seneca. Any other direction of travel will probably result in looking for other routes. These will be Booth Street, which is already heavily used, and Kentlands Boulevard.

If the Kentlands Square infill adds a significant number of residences in an area where the only direct entrance to/ exit from Great Seneca Highway is also for Great Seneca's eastbound lanes, it will add to the pressure the proposed apartments will put on Kentlands Boulevard and Booth Street.

In addition to automobile traffic, pedestrian and bicycle traffic are critical in new urban areas.

Pedestrian traffic planning for the Saul proposal must be integrated with the S&T site, the Colonnade, Beacon Square, and the Kentlands Manor to maximize the potential benefits for all concerned. This will be challenging and require a creative approach to locating service roads and alleys so that they channel foot traffic past the businesses that depend on it.

It is important to note that dedicated bicycle travel lanes are critical. While one thinks of Kentlands' streets as safe with multiple traffic calming features, their dangers have driven many cyclists, adults as well as children, onto our sidewalks. This creates new hazards at the same time it mitigates old ones.

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I believe that planning for the commercial centers should begin with a single market analysis for the entire area that includes Main Street as well as Kentlands Square and Kentlands Market Square. While the Kimco presentations have impressed me as extremely knowledgeable of how retail areas work and well thought out, this study should be performed by an independent organization specializing in new urbanist town planning in general and retail in particular. Together, all three areas can prosper. Separately, the disadvantages the live-work units along Main Street face may be insurmountable.

I would hope that the resulting integrated plan would include an update to the master plan, a mix of uses beyond retail, and creative uses of green space such as a bandshell as was once proposed for Kentlands. A strong connection to Kentlands' arts center at the Barn and Mansion, whether by foot (the distance from the Saul site is approximately 0.6 miles) or some form of people mover would be extremely desirable.

My feeling is that creating an integrated plan would best be achieved with an integrated set of design standards. While many design features in existing buildings will probably be retained, an integrated plan, such as was used at Crown, that provides a graceful transition from the residential architecture in Kentlands to that of the Medimmune complex across Great Seneca Highway can provide real benefits for all concerned and I hope that the City will encourage one.

In addition to the above general comments, I should like to add the following on the SK-7503-2017 application.

New Urban neighborhoods need green space to mitigate the impact of high-density construction. While the current master plan only calls for one-half block of green space, and the Saul proposal meets that standard, I hope that the green space allocation can be increased.

Crown's handling of street-by-street building height seems very effective and I would suggest that it be used as an example for the proposed infill. The tall Medimmune buildings on the northeast side of Great Seneca Highway, combined with the Bus Rapid Transit station plans indicate to me that concentrating the taller buildings nearer Great Seneca Highway would make for the most graceful transition.

Best Regards,



Barney Gorin

Cc: Crier, Courier

From: [Shihoko Goto](#)
To: [CityHall External Mail](#)
Cc: [Jud Ashman](#); [Neil Harris](#); [Yvette Monroe](#); [Michael Sesma](#); [Ryan Spiegel](#); [Robert Wu](#)
Subject: support for development of Kentlands commercial area: SK-7503-2017
Date: Thursday, May 25, 2017 9:54:42 PM

I would like to express my support for the redevelopment of Kentlands' commercial district as proposed by the Saul group.

Having lived in Gaithersburg for the past 17 years, and as a mother of two school age children, I am fully committed to the continued growth of the city and Kentlands in particular.

Recently, however, I have been concerned about the decline of the Kentlands community since the opening of the Crown Farm development. Every meal eaten by Kentlands/Lakelands residents at Crown Farm is hurting Kentlands' future. Restaurants such as Hakuba, Star Diner, Luna Italia, and Le Palais have undoubtedly suffered from competition from the neighboring development, and I fear that the trend will continue unless Kentlands can compete head-on with its rival communities.

Right now, the commercial area anchored by Kmart is doing poorly. Kmart itself is facing financial difficulties and its future is looking bleak. We need to be proactive to revitalize this area around Kentlands Boulevard and Great Seneca Highway. The proposal to add more commercial as well as residential units will undoubtedly help reinvigorate the area, and give Kentlands the chance to remain the most alluring development project in Gaithersburg, and indeed in Montgomery County.

The plan by the developers will make the commercial area more appealing not just to residents, but also to those working nearby such as at MedImmune and driving by, because it will be facing Great Seneca Highway- a major route. Currently, stores and restaurants are tucked away and not very visible except to those in the know- i.e., the people who live nearby.

There is, of course, concern about the pressure an increased population will put on public services as well as on the public school system. I hope, however, that this will actually be an opportunity to address the issue of overcrowding at Rachel Carson Elementary School head on and allow a strategic rethink of boosting attendance at Dufief Elementary, in addition to redistributing the student population that attend both Rachel Carson Elementary and Lakelands Park Middle School.

I also believe that this would give greater impetus to make the vision of an more comprehensive transportation network a reality, including the development of the proposed railway line into Kentlands. I should add that I commute into downtown Washington DC daily, and often use the 76 bus to get to Shady Grove. A more convenient public transportation system would certainly increase the attractiveness of Kentlands/Lakelands to those of us who work in Washington.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward very much to making the proposed plan a reality that will breathe new life into Gaithersburg's leading new urbanist community.

Best regards,
Shihoko Goto
102 Kent Square Road, Gaithersburg