

From: [Hugh Clayton](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#); [Hugh Clayton](#); [Hugh Clayton](#); [Hugh Clayton](#)
Subject: Montgomery County Fair Shuttle Parking at Lakeforest Mall parking lot
Date: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 7:03:17 AM

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With the sale of Lakeforest Mall, is there not going to be parking anymore and school bus staging to form a shuttle during the Montgomery County Fair?

Joint Hearing - MCC & PC
Z-9444-2022
ex 53

From: smith@itecksolutions.com
To: [LakeforestMP](#)
Subject: Track around the lake forest
Date: Friday, January 27, 2023 10:30:43 AM

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I'm asking to replace the circular road surrounding the mall with a bike walking path
Ann Smith

Sent from my iPhone

Joint Hearing - MCC & PC
Z-9444-2022
Ex 54

From: [Susan Bradley](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: Lake forest traffic plans
Date: Saturday, January 28, 2023 7:04:29 PM

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We live between Warfield Road and East Village. To get west of I270 via Montgomery Village avenue or Shady Grove can take more than 40 minutes. Now with more development in the Village and Lakeforest how is the traffic congestion going to be improved? There is little useful commerce here on this side of town, I.e, restaurants, hardwares, and household items, so it is essential to go to Rio or Kentlands, now that Lakeforest has been empty the last few years. Eastern Gaithersburg has been left a desert zone!

Susan Bradley
301 525-6303
Sent from my iPad

Joint Hearing - MCC & PC
Z-9444-2022
Ex 55

From: [Hillary Burgess](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Subject: Proposal for Mall
Date: Sunday, January 29, 2023 7:38:34 PM

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I am glad to see the city is beginning to create a plan that includes a walkable downtown recreation area. There needs to be a lot more outdoor space for recreation and lawn activities, more gardens, opportunities for outdoor concerts.

The businesses should be family-owned restaurants that provide variety and employment opportunities for the community. Family owned businesses tend to keep more of the profits and money in the community.

The plans still include way more residential areas than the schools can accommodate.

Finally, there needs to be a ton more parking both for local visitors to the area and for the residents. The parking should be parking garages. Plan for at least 3-4 spaces for each residential unit, plus extra parking for visitors that come to the area for the shops.

I want to see Rio, only better with fewer chains and more community-oriented shops.

Warmly,
Hillary Burgess
Professor of Law

Sent from my iPhone; please excuse typographical errors.

From: [Maynard Mack](#)
To: [Planning External Mailing](#)
Cc: [CityHall External Mail](#)
Subject: Mall Plans
Date: Thursday, February 2, 2023 9:46:26 AM

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Planning Board Members,

I attended the hearing on plans for Lakeforest Mall by zoom a couple of weeks ago. I've been mulling on why I was frustrated ever since, and I think I have figured out why.

In my view, there are lots of good ideas in the plan, so far, and a couple of desperately important things missing that could undermine the whole effort.

- 1) The idea of "daylighting" the stream through the property was probably dead the moment the current developer was selected. That's too bad. It could have been a nationally-recognized initiative to restore natural features to modern development. As I say, I fear that train left the station months ago.
- 2) Preserving the trees in the north-east corner of the property seems pretty important, not just for the lovely trees, but for the integrity of the development process. A commitment to preserve them was made when the mall was approved. To let them be destroyed undermines the fairness and integrity of the whole approval process.
- 3) But without question, to me, by far the biggest concern is the neighborhood's request for a community center. If the City ignores this expensive but reasonable request, it will, I fear, launch the whole project under a cloud of suspicion and anger. The developer talks about opening the property up to the surrounding areas, but without a desperately-needed community center--mainly for the young and the old--nobody will feel the developer's words are sincere.

This is crucial. We all know that much of old G'Burg is suffering from the decades-long shift of resources west of I-270. I think there was a lot of ignorance, selfishness, deliberate blindness, even racism in the process that let that happen, or even encouraged that white-, money-flight west. *But that is irrelevant, the damage is done*, and we are left with an eastern part of the city feeling neglected and angry.

East, old, G'burg teeters on the edge of serious despair and even violence. If they see their request for a community center pushed aside, they will be even more despairing and angry. And rightly so.

To those who say that to force the developer to build in a community center would be to surrender to the least civil members of our neighborhood, I would say, yes, you are right. And if you want this new project to start off with mistrust and maybe resentment from its neighbors, oppose this "surrender." But if you know enough history to *understand* why these neighbors feel they way they do, you would want to force the developer to deliver on his professed desire to reach out to the project's surroundings.

If this involves tradeoffs, such as allowing higher buildings on some parts of the project, fine. But to build maybe the last major project in G'burg and condemn it to try to thrive amidst deserved suspicion, confusion, and anger would be irresponsible.

I'd love "daylighting" the old stream. I think you have to keep the trees on the northeast corner. But if you ignore the deep desire and need for a community center for a teetering neighborhood, you will, I fear, be dooming this huge project to failure. Angry neighbors can make the whole project fail. Neighbors who have been listened to and their one request included can lead to the kind of connection the developer talks about and needs to be guided to work towards.

The current mall has been in its terrible shape for a long time. It will take a new attitude, not just new buildings, to ensure that this project works productively to help not just the investors but the neighbors as well.

Thanks you for your time.

Maynard Mack, Jr.

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Maynard (Sandy) Mack, Jr.

"Ring the bells that still can ring; forget your perfect offering.

There's a crack in everything: That's how the light gets in."
(Leonard Cohen)



Seneca Creek Watershed Partners

January 19, 2023

Dear Mayor Ashman and City Council,

Seneca Creek watershed covers one-third of Montgomery County and includes about half of Gaithersburg. Lower Great Seneca and Middle Great Seneca with tributaries such as Whetstone Run, Walker's Run and Long Draught Branch constitute the northern portion of Gaithersburg with Lake Forest Mall at a mid-point of Seneca's large watershed.

What you choose to do with the Lake Forest 100+ acre plot will have a direct impact on the water quality, habitat, flood resilience, pollution levels, and even temperature in our watershed.

You have the tremendous opportunity to create a development that is sustainable, functional and beautiful, that will increase in value over time and be the 'vibrant sustainable community' spoken of in the Gaithersburg Master Plan (8/18/2021) on redeveloping Lake Forest Mall.

Our key requests to help the City to achieve this goal are:

- 1. Retain and incorporate the 1.7-acre forest grove at the intersection of Montgomery Village Avenue and Lost Knife Road, and the 0.50-acre pond #3 on Russell Avenue** in the proposed redevelopment. The woods are a "Tree Save" area protected in the original Lake Forest Mall development and includes at least four native species of mature oak, a keystone species. Both the woods and stormwater ponds could be redesigned with humans and wildlife in mind – cleared of invasive plants and planted with attractive native understory trees, shrubs and perennials, particularly at the perimeter with benches in each area and walking paths linked to the housing and commercial areas. Paths in the natural areas should be pervious to maximize stormwater capacity. The pine tree patch on the east side of the property could also be retained as an open space where mature trees are augmented with understory plantings. Retaining mature trees provides the "sense of place" referred to by the developers as being so desirable – and such natural amenities cannot be purchased at any price – a 50 or 75 year old tree requires time to create! Wherever possible throughout the development, mature trees should be incorporated into the design.

The project area has been identified as a non-attainment area for ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter (Gaithersburg West Master Plan). Removing trees will

increase problems of air quality, stormwater runoff, and heat island effects. Retaining trees, especially the 1.7-acre grove, will also buffer new housing units from the lights and sounds of the nearby fire station and the busy 6-lane Montgomery Village Avenue.

Please consider that recent mature tree losses in Gaithersburg include 3 acres of woodland for Solitaire Court stream restoration, 7 acres for Blohm Park stream restoration, 40 acres for Watkins Mill interchange, 44 acres for Watkins Mill Town Center, and 100 trees at 700 Frederick Rd and Montgomery Village Ave – all in the Seneca Creek watershed.

2. **Dedicate at least 40% of the total residential acreage, and 25% of the commercial acreage, as open space, as per the Lake Forest Master Plan.** In addition, the City should also negotiate the acquisition of park land from the developer as was done for Crown Farm Park. The current plan proposes 35% open space but this includes existing stormwater ponds and a potential HOA pool and clubhouse with little public open space or natural areas except stormwater ponds. *No significant new green space is currently planned.* Existing natural areas will be paved and built on, and the small pond will be removed and replaced by the transit center, so open and **green space may actually decrease while 1,600 housing units bring additional population to an already densely developed area with little access to nearby public parks.** Equity in the distribution of green space with its positive physical and mental health benefits is a concern.
3. **We recommend to daylight, not rebury, Walker’s Run and landscape it as an attractive linear park.** Walker’s Run currently flows through a pipe under Odenthal Road and the mall parking lot before reaching the ponds. The plan calls for the pipe to be dug up, the pipe moved, and the stream redirected into the relocated pipe underground. Since asphalt will be removed and the area redesigned, this is an extraordinary opportunity to create a beautiful natural feature. The newly accessible stream would also allow more flexible stormwater management and improved water quality downstream. Paths could connect this linear park, ponds, and woodland areas. Here’s a link to a stream daylighting project in DC’s Rock Creek watershed, as a local example of what can be done: <https://chesapeakestormwater.net/awards/daylighting-of-broad-branch-and-restoration-of-its-linnean-park-tributary/>

We appreciate the enthusiasm shown by the Council, developers and city residents for creating an exceptional amenity for our entire community at Lake Forest. As Mayor Ashman said in the recent public hearing, he wants a “really nice project” not something just meeting the minimal standards. Our recommendations to preserve wooded areas and improve stormwater management will add beauty and create places to walk/run, and be rejuvenated in nature. It will help to make the new Lake Forest a model urban sustainable project.

Merikay Smith
President, Seneca Creek Watershed Partners
www.senecacreekwp.org

From: [Rob Robinson](#)
To: [Rob Robinson](#)
Subject: FW: Lakeforest Mall Redevelopment Plan Needs Work
Date: Friday, February 3, 2023 12:15:18 PM

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

From: **Keith** <gburg@1200tech.com>
Date: Mon, Jan 30, 2023 at 9:50 PM
Subject: Lakeforest Mall Redevelopment Plan Needs Work
To: <planning@gaithersburgmd.gov>, <cityhall@gaithersburgmd.gov>, <Jud.Ashman@gaithersburgmd.gov>, <Lisa.Henderson@gaithersburgmd.gov>, <Neil.Harris@gaithersburgmd.gov>, <Jim.McNulty@gaithersburgmd.gov>, <Ryan.Spiegel@gaithersburgmd.gov>, <Robert.Wu@gaithersburgmd.gov>

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I've published some of my thoughts about Lakeforest Mall here.

<https://1200tech.com/doy/gaithersburgmd/story/20230130-lakeforest-mall-next-steps>

In a nutshell, it's not wise to invest in office space in 2023. Why would anyone want to compete in that market? The amount of slack office space available in Moco has to be at an all-time high.

I want the property to be developed to serve the residents of Gaithersburg, not more office space. What does office space provide the residents of Gaithersburg. I know, they call it "employment" in the plan, but that's bs. It's office space. The majority of the people who work in those offices probably won't even live in Gaithersburg.

We want something built that's for us. For old town, for the residents who pay taxes and want this side of Gaithersburg to be nice too. Office space is a bad idea for many reasons.

Please don't screw this up.

Thanks,
Keith
Realty Park

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