

Jasmine Forbes

From: Jasmine Forbes
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 11:26 AM
To: 'mmitchell@mitchellbest.com'
Subject: RE: No to Proposed DeVol application SP-8415-2020

Good Morning,

Thank you for your correspondence related to Concept Site Plan application SP-8415-2020. Your correspondence will be included in the Council's record for their consideration. For information about the application, please visit the project page: <https://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/government/projects-in-the-city/10-and-14-east-deer-park-drive> .

Regards,
Jasmine Forbes



Jasmine Forbes, Planner I
Planning and Code Administration

City of Gaithersburg | 31 South Summit Avenue | Gaithersburg, MD, 20877
Direct: 240-805-1069 | Main: 301-258-6330 | www.gaithersburgmd.gov
Jasmine.Forbes@gaithersburgmd.gov

From: Marty Mitchell <mmitchell@mitchellbest.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 10:32 AM
To: CityHall External Mail <cityhall@gaithersburgmd.gov>
Subject: No to Proposed DeVol application SP-8415-2020

This email is from an EXTERNAL source. Please use caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers and Planner,

We currently own eight (8) lots on E. Deer Park and Central Avenue. I am concerned that the DeVol Application will introduce an industrial use with the Crematorium into a residential area. The emissions from the Crematorium contains dangerous chemicals and is detrimental to the health of the people living, working and going to school in the area.

I ask that you reject the proposal to keep the Crematorium out of the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Mitchell
CEO
Mitchell & Best Homes.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: **IN GOO P KIM** <ingoopkim9@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 9, 2020 at 1:09 PM
Subject: No "SP- 8415- 2030"
To: <Jud.Ashman@gaitthersburgmd.gov>

No DeVol Crematorium
Application SP- 8415- 2020

not to have
toxic pollution
to our residential area.

From: **Shana Newman Fajardo** <shanafajardo@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 7, 2020 at 2:43 PM
Subject: Crematorium Application.
To: <Jud.Ashman@gaithersburgmd.gov>
Cc: Oliver Fajardo <oliver.r.fajardo@gmail.com>

Dear Mayor,

I am a 12 year resident of the City of Gaithersburg. I've come to love my community and city resources. However, I am writing to express my concern over the proposed De Vol Crematorium.

It has no place in a residential area. The current funeral home is an eyesore and should be moved to an industrial area.

The interests of thousands of residents should take precedent over one small business.

Thank you in advance for hearing our concerns.

Best,
Shana Newman Fajardo
301 Summit Hall Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

From: Sara Cervantes <s.cervantes1230@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 12:11 PM

To: Jud Ashman; Laurie-Anne Sayles; Neil Harris; Michael Sesma; Ryan Spiegel; Robert Wu

Subject: "NO" to DeVol Crematorium application SP-8415-2020.

Good morning Mayor and City Council,

As a very soon homeowner in the neighborhood, I am deeply concerned about the proposal of a crematorium being built in my future residential neighborhood. I am concerned about the mercury toxicity and air pollution it may cause to our community. What I am even more concerned about is my property value declining due to the expansion of this facility.

I am asking for you to keep our residential community, environment, and property wealth under top consideration when voting. Please vote no to moving forward with this proposal.

Thanks Kindly,
Vianka Aloras

Jasmine Forbes

From: Jasmine Forbes
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2020 1:01 PM
To: 'Loretta Rivers'
Subject: RE: Comments on Proposed Devol Expansion to 14 East Deer Park Road -- SP-8415-2020

Good Afternoon,

Thank you for your letter. It will be included in the Council's record for their consideration.

Regards,
Jasmine Forbes



Jasmine Forbes, Planner I
Planning and Code Administration

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Direct: 240-805-1069 | Main: 301-258-6330 | www.gaithersburgmd.gov
Jasmine.Forbes@gaithersburgmd.gov

From: Loretta Rivers <riversl@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 11:42 PM
To: Planning External Mailing <Planning@gaithersburgmd.gov>
Subject: Comments on Proposed Devol Expansion to 14 East Deer Park Road -- SP-8415-2020

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Ms. Forbes - can you please add the attached letter to the comments on SP-8415-2020.

Thank you -

Loretta Rivers

September 10, 2020

Mayor Ashman
Gaithersburg City Council
Planning Commission Members –

RE: SP-8415-2020: 10 and 14 East Deer Park Drive

I am writing to express my concerns about and objections to the proposed changes to the property at 14 East Deer Park Road, specifically the inclusion of a crematorium.

The Mayor and City Council has received over 150 submissions from citizens expressing their concerns about the inclusion of the crematorium in the plans for 14 East Deer Park (the last time I looked there were four submissions in favor, the rest against). There are a number of facts about pollution/dangerous emissions included in these submissions. I'll repeat only a few here:

1. Cremations were responsible for 5.5% of the nation's mercury emissions in 2017, according to the EPA—mostly from dental fillings, which are vaporized but not consumed during the 1,800-degree cremation process. During the cremation process, the mercury in the body becomes vaporized into a colorless, odorless gas. Mercury is especially dangerous in this heated vaporized form because when it is inhaled, it is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream and carried to the brain and other organs. PLEASE NOTE: Many of us still have metal fillings and bridge-work.
2. Other pollutants can be plutonium (from pacemakers if they haven't been removed) and PVC/Methylene Chloride and other chemicals from silicone breast implants; and organohalogenes (dioxins, furans, etc.) and other toxics accumulated through diet and other exposures
3. In the EPA's 2000 Inventory of Dioxin Emissions in the U.S. (published March 2005), they estimate that crematoria emit 410 ng of dioxin TEQ (Toxic Equivalent) per body. This equates to as much dioxin as burning:
 - 3,205 pounds of tires;
 - 320 pounds of trash in a trash incinerator; or
 - 426 pounds of hazardous waste in a hazardous waste incinerator
4. A 2003 study Canadian study showed that the risk of stillbirth was 4% higher and the risk of the life threatening brain abnormality anencephalus was 5% higher among babies whose mothers lived near to crematoria. In addition, Canada's Interior Health Authority did a literature review and "concluded that fumes from crematoriums are potentially harmful and that they should not be located close to a residential area." It also "found that particulate matter, which can be inhaled deep into lung tissue, is the chief threat."

There is a clear disagreement between what Mr. DeVol and his representatives think is an acceptable level of pollution/emissions for a residential neighborhood and what the citizens who live in and nearby the proposed crematorium find acceptable.

In the virtual meeting hosted by Mr. DeVol on September 9th, some numbers were presented about pollution by other means (such as diesel trash trucks, gas leaf blowers). Also presented was an email from Suna Yi Sariscak of the Air Quality Permits Program, Air and Radiation Administration, Maryland Department of the Environment (Exhibit 136), which said:

From a federally regulated criteria pollutant standpoint, crematories emit a minor amount of emissions. Here is a summary of criteria pollutant emissions from an average crematory with one retort (the federal major source thresholds applicable in Montgomery County for each pollutant are listed in parentheses next to each pollutant):

NOx: 4.5 tons per year (25 tons per year)

VOC: 1.6 tons per year (25 tons per year)

SO2: 1.0 tons per year (250 tons per year)

CO: 3.8 tons per year (250 tons per year)

Particulate Matter: 0.8 tons per year (250 tons per year)

Total HAP: Less than 1.0 tons per year (25 tons per year)

Single Most Emitted HAP: Less than 0.5 tons per year (10 tons per year)

What I believe is missing when considering the numbers is that the proposed crematorium is still adding pollutants – many very dangerous, like mercury – that were not there previously AND are being added VERY CLOSE to a heavily residential area that includes schools, parks, and recreational facilities.

And, everyone keeps saying the emissions won't be visible – but that doesn't mean they won't be there - and that they won't endanger the health of existing residents and those not yet born (see above #4). Personally, I find the thought of invisible harm much more frightening than that which is visible (just look at the current situation with COVID-19 – you can't see it, but it is causing great harm).

Another way to look at this – In a 10/4/19 CNN segment, it was reported that the FDA allows one or more rodent hairs and 30 or so insect fragments for every 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of peanut butter. You can't see them, but that doesn't mean they are not there. However, unlike a jar of peanut butter, which you can elect to not purchase, you are pretty much stuck with whatever comes out of the crematorium because it is not as easy to relocate your home/life.

Also in the September 9th session, if I recall correctly, Mr. DeVol said he had performed (at the outside facility in Virginia) about 40 viewed cremations over the past year. If I am recalling that number correctly, then I can only conclude that the main reason for installing a cremation incinerator is more related to the day-to-day cremations, which is a far greater number – and most likely to grow significantly. A CNN online report from January of this year said: "According to statistics from the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), more than half of all Americans who die this year will be cremated. In 20 years, the association predicts, nearly 80% of us will opt to have our bodies turned into ash." During the virtual session, Mr. DeVol was asked if he would guarantee in writing that he would not expand cremations beyond his own business (meaning he would not perform cremations for other funeral homes). Mr. DeVol said he didn't intend to do outside cremations because of liability issues. However, by approving the crematorium in this particular location, the Mayor and Council will be handing Mr. DeVol a blank check to change his mind at some point in the future and offer

crematory services to other funeral homes (which quite frankly I could understand him wanting to do to expand his revenue stream); thereby generating even more emissions -- and at the expense of citizen health, well-being and the peaceful enjoyment of their homes/life in Gaithersburg.

Another issue is the uncertain appearance of the crematorium smokestack. At the initial meeting in August, I believe one of Mr. DeVol's representatives mentioned that he didn't expect the smokestack to be much higher than the current chimney (one of the Council members even commented that they thought the existing chimney seemed big for a residence...). The latest site plan shows an 8 foot smokestack -- and it could be significantly higher depending on review by the State and what they say it has to be. There is no way an 8 foot smokestack -- regardless of how you try to make it look like a chimney -- is not going to be noticeable, and stick out and scream "industrial." The site plan showed a tree being planted, but it will not be mature at planting and will take years to grow enough to try and disguise an industrial-sized smokestack in a residential neighborhood.

I do not have an issue with funeral homes or cremation. Both of my parents were cremated (DeVol handled those arrangements). I've had all of my pets cremated when they passed (at a facility that IS NOT located in a residential area); and I plan to be cremated. This is not an issue about being squeamish about death or the cremation process -- this is about the quiet and healthy enjoyment of my home, my neighborhood and the beautiful city green spaces nearby.

Lastly, to add to my concerns about the proposed crematorium, this afternoon, when I was drafting this letter, I watched Mayor Ashman's interview with Fox5 News. He characterized some of the concerns expressed by citizens as "over blown." Let me just say, **THESE ARE REAL CONCERNS**, whether you (the Major, Council and Planning Commission members) agree with them or not. They are being expressed by the citizens who elected the Mayor and Council members to represent them. It is insulting, and the height of ego, to disparage the concerns of your constituents. It is your job to listen and represent and act on what we want for our City. It is clear from the interview where the elected officials are leaning; and it makes me think, like the Wawa decision, that this deal was done way before the citizens were even notified of the proposed project; and now you want to mitigate anything that goes out to the public. It is very discouraging to think this is how business is done in Gaithersburg.

Please consider the overwhelming wishes of your citizens and vote "no" to the addition of a crematorium at 14 East Deer Park Road.

Loretta Rivers