



PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, October 28, 2020

7:00 PM

Meeting No. 19-2020

AGENDA

Charles Littlefield, Chair

Anne Goodman
Sarah Miller
John Tyner, II

Don Hadley
Suzan Pitman
Rev. Jane E. Wood

Jim Wasilak, Staff Liaison
Nicholas Dumais, Assistant City Attorney

Virtual Meeting Via WebEx

- 1. Worksession**
 - A. Work Session 1: Planning Commission's Draft Comprehensive Plan, Volume II: Planning Areas**

 - 2. Commission Items**
 - A. Staff Liaison Report**

 - B. Old Business**
 - 1. Comments on Boards and Commissions Task Force Report**

 - 2. Planning Commission Recommendation on Trees per Lot Text Amendment**

 - C. New Business**

 - D. Minutes Approval**
-

1. **September 23, 2020**

2. **October 14, 2020**

E. FYI/Correspondence

3. **Adjourn**

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR STAKEHOLDERS AND APPLICANTS

I. GENERAL ORDER OF SESSION FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

1. Staff presentation
2. City Board or Commission comment
3. Applicant presentation (10 min.)
4. Public comment (3 min, or 5 min for the representative of an association)
5. Planning Commission Discussion and Deliberation
6. Decision or recommendation by vote

The Commission may ask questions of any party at any time during the proceedings.

II. PLANNING COMMISSION BROADCAST

- Watch LIVE on Comcast Cable Rockville Channel 11 and online at: www.rockvillemd.gov
- Replay on Comcast Cable Channel 11:
 - Wednesdays at 7:00 pm (if no live meeting)
 - Sundays at 7:00 pm
 - Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 1:00 pm
 - Saturdays and Sundays at 12:00 am (midnight)
- Video on Demand (within 48 hours of meeting) at: www.rockvillemd.gov/VideoOnDemand.

III. NEW DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

- For a complete list of all applications on file, visit: www.rockvillemd.gov/DevelopmentWatch.

VI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Additional resources are available to anyone who would like more information about the planning and development review process on the City’s web site at: www.rockvillemd.gov/cpds.

Maryland law and the Planning Commission's Rules of Procedure regarding ex parte (extra-record) communications require all discussion, review, and consideration of the Commission's business take place only during the Commission's consideration of the item at a scheduled meeting. Telephone calls and meetings with Commission members in advance of the meeting are not permitted. Written communications will be directed to appropriate staff members for response and included in briefing materials for all members of the Commission.



Agenda Item #:	A
Meeting Date:	October 28, 2020
Responsible Staff:	Clark Larson

SUBJECT: Work Session 1: Planning Commission's Draft Comprehensive Plan, Volume II: Planning Areas

RECOMMENDATION
(Include change in law or Policy if appropriate in this section):

Hold a work session to review testimony received on the Planning Commission's Draft Comprehensive Plan, Volume II: Planning Areas, and provide direction to staff.



Planning Commission Staff Report

MEETING DATE: October 28, 2020

REPORT DATE: October 21, 2020

RESPONSIBLE STAFF: Clark Larson, AICP
Principal Planner, Comprehensive Planning Division
Planning and Development Services Department
240.314.8225 or clarson@rockvillemd.gov

SUBJECT: Work Session to Review and Discuss Testimony on the Planning Commission's Draft Comprehensive Plan, Volume II: Planning Areas

BACKGROUND:

On February 12, 2020, the Planning Commission approved the release of, and opened the public record to accept testimony on, the second volume to its draft Comprehensive Plan update. This volume is formally called Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Volume II: Planning Areas for Planning Commission Public Hearing Draft. It covers each of the proposed seventeen neighborhood-scale planning areas. Written testimony was accepted from February 13 until October 7, 2020, and the Planning Commission held a virtual public hearing over the course of two regular meeting dates, September 9 and 23, 2020.

The draft Plan, and all testimony submitted to the Planning Commission during the public comment period, may be found online at <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040>. Following the public hearing dates and close of the public record, the Planning Commission scheduled three work sessions to review, discuss testimony and provide direction to staff on any changes to the draft that the Commission wishes to make. Such changes could affect Volumes I and II. The work session dates are October 28, November 18, and December 9. The Planning Commission also acknowledged that additional dates could be needed to complete its overall Comprehensive Plan for recommendation to the Mayor and Council. No additional public testimony will be taken at the work sessions.

Written Testimony Overview

A summary of written testimony submitted to the Planning Commission during the public comment period, including staff comments and recommendations, is included with this report as **Attachment A**. Please note that Attachment A for this report includes only *Planning Areas 12-17*, for the purposes of discussion on October 28. Starting with these Planning Areas will allow staff additional time to prepare fully considered responses to the greater number of comments received for other Planning Areas.

The complete record of original testimony is online at <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040>. In total, sixty-two (62) individual items of written testimony were submitted, with some items grouped by the same exhibit number if they were received together. Forty-eight (48) unique individuals or groups submitted written testimony on the draft Plan, with some submitters providing multiple items of testimony over the course of the public comment period.

Oral Testimony Overview

The oral testimony received at the public hearing dates on September 9 and 23, 2020, including staff comments and recommendations, is summarized and attached with this report as **Attachment B**. As with Attachment A, please note that Attachment B for this report includes only *Planning Areas 12-17* for the purposes of discussion on October 28.

The full record of oral testimony for the two public hearings is provided in text transcripts, as **Attachments C and D**. A total of thirty-one (31) individuals provided oral testimony during the Planning Commission public hearing, twenty-two (22) of whom also submitted written testimony.

Summary of Draft Plan Contents

The first volume of the Planning Commission's Draft Comprehensive Plan contains an Introduction and ten Elements, or citywide topic areas. The Planning Commission accepted and reviewed public testimony on the Elements draft volume in 2019 and revised the draft Plan during work sessions. This second volume contains policies and recommendations for each of the city's seventeen neighborhood-scale Planning Areas. Testimony received on the Planning Areas Draft Volume II is the primary subject of these work sessions, though some testimony received during this most recent public comment period is relevant to the Elements volume, as well.

The latest drafts of both volumes of the Planning Commission's Draft Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan can be found at <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040>. Together, they constitute the Planning Commission's proposed update to the existing Comprehensive Master Plan, which was adopted by the Mayor and Council of Rockville on November 12, 2002.

DISCUSSION:

Staff proposes to review the submitted testimony according to each planning area's number, starting with planning areas 12 through 17. These Planning Areas include the Tower Oaks planned development, neighborhoods and business districts west of I-270, the King Farm neighborhood, the Southlawn light industrial district and RedGate. Testimony that is not covered during the first work session will be carried over to the next scheduled work session, which will also cover new areas. All areas will be reviewed.

Staff requests that the Planning Commission provide direction on any revisions to the Draft Plan that it wishes to make as the testimony is discussed.

Review of Testimony

A summary of the major questions or issues raised by the testimony for Planning Areas 12-17 is discussed below. These are topics that staff believes warrant further discussion and direction from the Planning Commission to determine whether revisions to the draft Plan should be made. Any testimony not summarized below is included in the full record online and **Attachments C and D**. During the work sessions, the Planning Commission may raise questions for further discussion about any of the other comments included in the attachments or on any other matter related to the draft. Revisions or responses to testimony not discussed specifically below and/or at the work sessions will be made according to staff's recommendation in the testimony matrix of **Attachment A**.

Planning Area 12 (Tower Oaks)

1. Exhibit 31 (written): William Kominers (Lerch, Early & Brewer Chtd.) on behalf of Tower-Dawson, LLC
 - a) Testimony requests ORRM (Office Residential Retail Mix) for the original Tower Oaks Concept Plan development areas 4 and 3 (see letter exhibits). Currently, the draft Plan assigns the O (Office) to two parcels in this area with the rest designated ORRM.

Staff Response:

The properties in question are either undeveloped or currently developed as office uses and the testimony has indicated that they could be successful as other uses in the future. The vision for Tower Oaks was developed in the 1980s, when the most robust market for office space and development was in suburban settings. The vision was endorsed at that time through the approval of both a neighborhood plan and a Comprehensive Planned

Development (CPD). During the more than 30 years since, only pieces of the vision have been implemented; and none has been implemented in recent years as the demand for suburban office space has weakened greatly. Staff does not anticipate that this location will be in demand for office development in the foreseeable future. At the same time, however, the demand for housing is strong.

As a result, staff finds that ORRM is an appropriate designation for these properties. That designation would permit a potential change to the CPD to accommodate non-office development but leave open the possibility of office development should the market return. Staff recommends a change to ORRM, but also recognizes that the Planning Commission will wish to discuss this change.

- b) Testimony requests that Vol. II (Planning Areas) incorporate the following direction from Vol. I (Elements):
- Allow offices in isolated areas to convert to other uses;
 - Simplify and shorten the process for amending an approved Planned Development;
 - Support a reduction in minimum parking requirements for office uses to support economic development and more efficient use of land.

Staff Response:

In order to avoid confusion and repetition, staff does not support copying language or policies that apply citywide from Vol. I into specific planning areas in Vol. II, especially when such policies are not directed at specific sites or properties. Doing so would require adding these (and other) policies to all relevant planning areas, which would greatly expand the size of the overall document.

- c) Testimony requests that the proposed land use recommendations be used to provide suggested direction for the equivalent zones that the zoning ordinance refers to for the Planned Development (PD) zones, which applies to this area.

Staff Response:

Staff believes that the testimony has merit and believes that additional language would help in providing guidance for the future evolution of the area from the original concept. Staff recommends the following language:

“If the Tower Oaks area continues to evolve away from the 1980s vision of a suburban highway-oriented office park with hotels, and more towards a residential district, care must be given to seek cohesion among the various projects. Open space, infrastructure and other community amenities and features should be incorporated into new projects, helping to serve the entire area as was envisioned with the CPD. Though the CPD remains in force as the zoning designation, adjustments may be made to the original plan that would be consistent with an equivalent zone of MXCD.”

Planning Area 14 (Rockshire and Fallsmead)

2. Exhibits 6, 14, 50, 50a (written) and Oral Testimony Speaker 3: Randy Alton

- a) Testimony recommends that the Comprehensive Plan adoption timeline be "permanently tabled" and that an addendum be added to each Planning Area regarding COVID-19. Requests a re-evaluation of the concept of a 20-year plan; says the city should invest in data analytics and mathematical models in order to analyze immediate changes and forecast for the future.

Staff Response:

Staff does not support delaying the Comprehensive Plan update process due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Further delay would not serve the interests of the Rockville public, who have spent many hours engaging in the process and providing feedback and are counting on various elements of the draft Plan to be adopted and implemented in the near term. Additionally, there is an established process by which the Comprehensive Plan may be amended in the future as circumstances or interests change.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider Comprehensive Plan policies and actions that address preparing and responding to public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. One example is the addition of a policy in the Environment Element, under Goal 4: Healthy Communities, that establishes the ways in which the city can be more prepared and responsive to natural and "human-centered" emergencies. Staff will bring forward, in a future work session, a set of recommendations in this regard for potential inclusion in Vol. 1.

- b) Testimony requests that the Plan recommend maintaining the current restriction on the Rockshire Village Shopping Center property to exclusive retail use, as established by the Rockshire Comprehensive Planned Development. If the proposal to allow residential uses is retained, the testimony requests that the word "substantial" be defined in the phrase "if the proposed residential development includes a substantial amount of community-serving retail and/or community amenity space."

Staff Response:

Staff does not believe that retaining the restriction on the site that it may only be retail is in the best interests of the community or the property owner. The shopping center has been vacant for more than four years, with the anchor Giant Foods having closed eight years ago. The increase in nearby competition and the change in the retail market makes this location difficult for that exclusive purpose.

The recommendations for Rockshire Village Shopping Center, its land use designation of RRM (Residential Retail Mix) and recommended amendment of the planned development zone for the site, stem from an extensive public outreach effort to find a solution that works for the surrounding community, as well as the property owners. The process was initiated in reaction to the vacancy of the existing shopping center building and the

difficulty in attracting any viable retail tenants to the site. The draft language as presented attempts to strike a balance between the strongly expressed desire of many people in the surrounding community to have either retail or a significant community amenity on the site, and the desire of the property owner and their prospective partners to develop new housing. The language does not require retail; instead, it offers multiple pathways for some portion of the property to be a place for community gathering.

Nonetheless, as is discussed in items 3, 4, and 5, below, staff recommends consideration of changes to the land use designation and draft Plan language for the Rockshire Village site that address the provision of retail uses on the site as part of any future redevelopment.

3. Exhibit 21 (written) and Oral Testimony Speaker 11: Robert Harris (Lerch, Early, Brewer)

- a) Testimony states that, in the current retail market, Rockshire Village Shopping Center cannot support the type of retail uses desired by some in the Rockshire neighborhood, and the site is best suited for residential housing. It further explains that previous studies and analysis by the city do not support the need for a major recreational use on the site but suggests that a landscaped community gathering space at Wootton Parkway and Hurley Avenue might be most appropriate.

Staff Response:

Staff accepts the premise that, because of increased nearby competition and the changing nature of retail, major or solely retail uses on that site is unlikely to be supportable by the market. The language as presented in the draft Plan attempts to strike a balance between the wants of the community and the market realities as outlined by the property owner.

Staff suggests that the Planning Commission could consider changing the land use designation from RRM to RF, which would have the effect of reducing the reliance on retail as part of a residential development project. The RF is intended to allow small scale retail as part of a residential project, while the RRM relies more on retail as a main component of a mixed-use development.

The full definitions of the RRM and RF land use policy designations in the draft Plan are included below:

Residential Flexible (RF) allows a mix of row house and apartment buildings, as well as detached houses. It is applied to sites where the mix of allowed residential types is flexible and to be finalized during development review. Small scale retail is an allowed option if integrated into the residential development.

Retail and Residential Mix (RRM) expresses the city's interest in retaining and introducing retail in specific locations mixed with multiple unit residential and/or

residential attached types. The mix can be horizontal, with stand-alone retail next to apartment buildings on a development site; or the mix can be vertical, with retail on the ground floor and apartments above. In some locations, the plan indicates where retail is strongly preferred along a street front.

Staff believes that there is merit in discussing whether the plan should retain the concept of "substantial amount" of retail and recommends (in response to the next set of testimony) altered language to this section. However, staff also believes that the plan would not be sufficiently responsive to community concerns unless it retains the concept that any community amenity provided as part of redevelopment should be more than a small open space area.

4. Exhibits 27, 49 (written) and Oral Testimony Speaker 10: Bob Youngentob (EYA, LLC)

- a) Testimony states that retail is not viable at Rockshire Village Center. Explains that the proposed EYA residential development at the site would include moderately priced dwelling units, community space at Hurley Avenue and Wootton Parkway. Requests rezoning as recommended in the draft Plan with a change in wording of the requirement for any redevelopment with a residential component to require, "substantial retail or a community gathering space," instead of the "and/or" as the draft Plan reads.

Staff Response:

Staff appreciates the concern that retail is no longer viable as it once was on this site and, based on the community process and significant study of the site, recommends that housing should be permitted on the site. However, staff believes that the plan would not be sufficiently responsive to community concerns unless it retains the concept that there should be a significant amenity that would be an asset to the broader community. Staff recommends that the existing language in the document be retained, with the removal of the term "substantial" as a modifier of retail. As such, the language would read:

"Any housing development must include community-serving retail space and/or provide a significant amenity that would be an asset to the broader community. A neighborhood retail center is allowed on the site as a primary or single use."

The Planning Commission also has the option to remove reference to retail uses, if it judges the retail market not to be viable at all at that location. In that case, the language could be shortened to simply say:

"Any housing development must provide a significant amenity that would be an asset to the broader community."

An amenity could include retail or community space, but neither would be identified explicitly.

Staff notes that there is a discrepancy in the language used for this topic in the paragraph within the Land Use Policy Map section and in the Zoning Recommendation section. Staff recommends that whichever language is selected by the Planning Commission be used in both locations in the document.

5. Exhibit 36 (written): John Rhoad (RMJ Development Group, LLC)

- a) Testimony requests that no retail space be required in the redevelopment of Rockshire Village Center. Includes a letter from the retail consulting firm, Streetsense, reiterating their findings that retail is not a viable land use at the site due to surrounding competition, limited visibility and vehicle traffic from Wootton Parkway.

Staff Response:

[See response to item 4. above.]

6. Oral Testimony Speakers: Catherine Contreras (15), Lauren Povich (21), Jaimie Morris (22), Nick Jones (24), Rhoda Ndjoukouo (26) and Hyun Kim (29)

- a) Each speaker listed above, by the order in which they spoke at the Planning Commission public hearing, spoke about the use of the parking lot at the Rockshire Village Shopping Center. Speakers 15-26 spoke in favor of maintaining the parking agreement at the shopping center for students at Thomas S. Wootton High School. Speaker 29 requested that the existing parking agreement stay in place between the owners of the shopping center site and the adjacent Korean Presbyterian Church of Rockville.

Staff Response:

Parking has been a significant point of discussion in the community engagement regarding this site. There are three non-retail parking uses at that site:

- 1) Deeded requirement for a fixed amount of on-site space for parking to serve the Rockshire community swimming pool.
- 2) A long-term agreement between the property owners and the adjacent church to permit church congregants to park on the site.
- 3) Agreement between the property owners and the high school permitting students to use certain areas of the site for parking.

The current language in the draft states “In conjunction with any redevelopment proposal for the site, it will be important to determine how parking these other functions will be accomplished.” Staff recommends retaining that language.

Planning Area 15 (Falls Grove and Research Boulevard)

7. Exhibit 23 (written): James Policaro (Lerner Corporation)

- a) Testimony concerns the site at the southwest quadrant of West Gude Drive and Research Boulevard (1800 Research Blvd, or Parcel 37), that is currently proposed for multi-family development. Mr. Policaro concurs with the proposed ORRM designation but does not agree with the designation for Retail (R) frontage due to the stated 'weak' retail market, especially in this location, and the presence of a regional gas transmission pipe and easement running under a corner of the parcel.

Staff Response:

Staff recognizes the challenges of developing the portion of the subject property at the southwest corner of the intersection of Research Blvd and West Gude Drive. In light of the concerns raised by Mr. Policaro, staff revisited the use of the mapped Retail frontage designations on the Land Use Policy map and determined that they would introduce unnecessary confusion to development review applicants, development review staff, and the public's expectations for where future retail might be located.

Staff recommends removing the Retail frontage at that site. At this and other equivalent sites throughout the city, which will be covered when viewing other planning areas, staff recommends that, instead of mapping the location of planned Retail frontage areas at key intersection 'nodes' in the city, descriptive text should instead be added to Focus Areas in each planning area where Retail frontage is currently proposed that describes the general location and character where commercial, amenitized, pedestrian-oriented, and visually-appealing development is desired. In addition, the text could be written to require such frontage characteristics, "only where feasible."

Planning Area 16 (King Farm and Shady Grove)

8. Exhibit 34 (written): Francoise Carrier (BBS&G Attorneys) on behalf of Lidl USA

- a) Testimony requests that the current RM (Residential Multi-Unit) designation at 15931 Frederick Road be revised to a land use designation consistent with the MXTD (Mixed Use Transit District) Zone.

Staff Response:

Staff supports this request. The land use designation of RM was assigned on the land use map, given the exclusively multi-unit residential development (Silverwood) that had been approved for the site. That approval has expired. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider changing the land use designation to ORRM (Office Residential Retail Mix), which would expand options at this prominent location in the vicinity of the Shady Grove Metro Station. The land use ORRM is also more consistent with the existing zoning, MXTD (Mixed-Use Transit District), as requested by the testimony.

Planning Area 17 (Southlawn and Redgate)

9. Exhibit 12 (written): Andrew Martin

- a) Testimony suggests that RedGate should be developed in partnership with the County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to expand the Model Learning Center.

Staff Response:

Staff does not support this recommendation. On March 30, 2020, the Mayor and Council discussed the process for determining the future of the RedGate Park property. The Mayor and Council unanimously voted to retain the entire property as a park, with elements of both active and passive recreation, including natural open areas. City staff is currently working to kick off a RedGate planning process before the end of the year, and community participation will be a primary focus of the process.

Additional Discussion

Planning Commissioners may wish to raise other topics related to Planning Areas 12-17, especially from the submitted testimony. Staff recommends that the Commission review Attachments A and C to determine whether any of the staff commentary and recommendations merit discussion.

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

After the draft Planning Areas volume was released on February 13, 2020, staff initiated a public information program to inform the Rockville community about the contents of the Planning Areas draft and its availability for review and comment. Notification of the draft's release and scheduled public hearing was sent to the State Clearinghouse within the Maryland Department of Planning, relevant public agencies, and adjoining jurisdictions. Staff held virtual informational meetings prior to the public hearing to assist the public in understanding both the draft Plan and the methods by which written and oral testimony may be provided.

In addition, staff worked with the city's Public Information and Community Engagement (PICE) office to provide information through Rockville Reports, Rockville 11, social media, and city-maintained email distribution lists to provide information on the draft Plan content, public hearing dates, methods to provide testimony, and to keep the public updated on the process. Staff will continue to work with the PICE office to provide information and reminders to the Rockville public about the Rockville 2040 process as it proceeds.

At a broader level, the Planning Areas draft is the result of extensive community input that was gathered over a multi-year period, and continues to the present, in a process known as "Rockville 2040." That process is summarized in the Introduction chapter of the Public Hearing Draft for Volume I: Elements, but includes a kick-off meeting, thirty-five Listening Sessions, four City-wide Forums, three Open Houses, four Information Sessions, and many meetings with community members, community organizations, and other stakeholders as warranted. Staff has

been available to talk and meet with any member of the broader Rockville community, including but not limited to residents, business owners, employees, representatives of non-profit organizations, and representative of governmental and quasi-governmental agencies.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

City boards and commissions participated in many of the community meetings held during the Rockville 2040 process; and city staff have attended various meetings of boards, commissions and other organizations (e.g. Rockville Economic Development, Inc., Rockville Housing Enterprises, etc.) to obtain input for the Planning Areas draft. Staff will continue to meet with and provide briefings, as requested. In addition, the Planning Commission may choose to include members of certain boards and commissions in post-hearing work sessions, on specific topic areas.

NEXT STEPS:

Following this work session, the Planning Commission has scheduled two additional work sessions on November 18 and December 9, 2020 to complete review of the received testimony. Determination of whether additional work sessions will be necessary can be made during the last of these scheduled work sessions.

After the conclusion of work sessions, staff will prepare the entire draft Comprehensive Plan, incorporating direction received, for the Planning Commission to provide its formal approval of the recommended plan to the Mayor and Council.

Attachments

Attachment 1.A.a: Excerpts of Vol. II Written Testimony Staff Response Matrix - PA 12-17 (PDF)

Attachment 1.A.b: Excerpts of Vol. II Oral Testimony Staff Response Matrix - PA 12-17 (PDF)

Attachment 1.A.c: Complete Vol. II Oral Testimony - September 9 Public Hearing (PDF)

Attachment 1.A.d: Complete Vol. II Oral Testimony - Sept. 23 Public Hearing (PDF)

Jim Wasilak

Jim Wasilak, Zoning and Development Manager

10/21/2020

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Planning Commission Public Hearing Draft, Volume II
Excerpts from the Summary of Written Testimony for Planning Area 12 - 17, received between February 13 and October 7, 2020

Exhibit No.	Testimony Source	General Comment	Planning Area(s)	Summary of Testimony	Staff Comments	Staff Recommendations
5a	Charles Boyd, AICP Maryland Department of Planning	X	1,5,8,9,17	<p>Compliments Vol. II organization, informative and focused analysis of planning areas, public engagement and accessibility.</p> <p>Recommends ensuring that plan is in conformance with HB-1045 (Housing Element), which requires inclusion of a Housing Element in the Comprehensive Plan that includes a housing needs analysis for low-income and workforce housing.</p> <p>Recommends clarifying "the authority that the planning areas will have in the decision-making process," such as in development review, including zoning and subdivision review, by explaining the relationship between the volumes if the planning area is not a master plan, neighborhood plan, or similar. Consider discussing such intent of each planning area section. Also commends the city for incorporating planning area policies into the citywide Comprehensive Plan, but "cautions the city in holding its planning area plans to this higher level of legislative review and expectation of plan consistency."</p> <p>Recommends clarification of The Role of the Neighborhood Plan by, "clearly indicating that the neighborhood plan is a small area master plan and refinement of the comprehensive plan, and with an explanation of the local adoption process." Suggests clarifying that the I-270 Neighborhood Plan would be superseded by the Tower Oaks planning area (#12). Indicates that the discussion of the five neighborhood plans that are adopted by reference, except for conflicts that are superseded by the new plan, only mentions that these policies supersede previous policies; however, there is other valuable information including goals, strategies, and recommendations that could be carried forward.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: Testimony includes several suggested edits and additions to Volume II. See original testimony for complete list under "Referral Comments". Some of the more significant comments are listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Include more detailed transportation policies and recommendations in each planning area to assist in future coordination with governmental partners. * To help guide the plan implementation, consider specifying timeframes, priorities, and responsible entities or funding sources for these land use and transportation recommendations that help promote TOD and walkability. * Suggests enhancing affordable housing recommendations for all TOD areas. * PA 1 - Recommends a transit wayfinding recommendation to depict transit routes/stops and nearby popular destinations in the town center area. * PA 8&9 - Include a recommendation to address congestion at the Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) and First Street intersection as a major issue to help coordination with the state. * PA 17 - Recommends addressing the need to preserve industrial land as a valuable freight and economic development resource while mitigating impacts on surrounding communities. * Recommends estimating the amount of residential dwelling units based on the future zoning may provide a better understanding of public services and infrastructure needed to accommodate future growth within each planning area. 	<p>A Housing Element is included in the draft Comprehensive Plan, Volume I: Elements. The policies and actions proposed in the draft Housing Element were crafted in response to the findings and recommendations of the city's Housing Market Needs and Assessment report, completed in December 2016 by Lisa Sturtevant & Associates. The assessment recommended housing strategies for the full range of household incomes, including low-income and workforce housing, and is referenced in the Housing Element. Staff believes that the Comprehensive Plan, in its current draft form, complies with the requirements of the Housing Element, including the required analysis.</p> <p>Staff agrees that additional clarification should be added to both Comprehensive Plan volumes to explain the authority that various aspects of the planning areas will have in the city's decision-making process, as well as that of adopted neighborhood plans. Since the policies of the Planning Areas volume carry the same weight and authority as that of the citywide Elements, staff does not believe there would be confusion between them in the future. Any recommendations adopted as part of the Planning Areas volume would not carry the force of law, but would serve as guidance for future projects, studies, or zoning regulations.</p> <p>Staff agrees with the remaining Referral Comments, with the following exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The draft Comprehensive Plan includes recommended transportation projects or studies in most planning areas, though without great detail or specific designs. More detailed transportation policies and recommendations were intentionally not included in the draft Plan, since staff believes they should each be studied in detail after plan adoption, rather than specifically described in the Plan itself. * Staff does not believe that adding implementation details for draft transportation (or other) policies (such as priority, timing, cost, funding sources, etc.) is necessary for the Comprehensive Plan. Implementation details should be developed soon after the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan update is ultimately approved and adopted by the Mayor and Council. * Regarding enhancing affordable housing recommendations for all TOD areas, staff believes the draft Plan accomplishes this suggestion by identifying properties near the Rockville and Twinbrook Metro Stations that are currently occupied by single-unit residential dwellings for a zone that allows small-scale attached housing (i.e., the RA designation); housing that is expected to allow more people to afford living near transit stations. Furthermore, the greatest potential for redevelopment projects with a residential component is near the city's two transit stations: Rockville, and Twinbrook; projects that would have to meet the city's moderate-priced housing ratios. Housing Element policies address further affordability goals throughout the city. * Chapter 1 of Volume 1 includes citywide forecasts and estimates of the current number of residential dwelling units; and each Planning Area includes such current estimates. The draft does not project growth of those areas because there is so much variability in what could happen in these mixed-use areas. 	<p>Add language to Elements and Planning Areas volumes providing greater clarification for the relationship between them, the regulatory authority of planning area policies, and the role of the neighborhood plan.</p> <p>Incorporate all suggested detailed edits and additions to improve the readability of the document</p> <p>Do not include more detailed transportation policies in each planning area than already exists.</p> <p>Defer establishment of implementation details for Comprehensive Plan policies to follow-up effort once the Plan is approved and adopted.</p>
5b	Heather Murphy Maryland Department of Transportation	X	All, except 5,10,11,17	<p>Testimony includes general recommendations and edits, as well as specific transportation recommendations for almost all planning areas. See April 13, 2020 testimony letter for details. Some of the more substantial recommendations are included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * PA 2 - Focus Area A4 (pg 23) – Under Public Realm Improvements, consider changing "sharrows" to protected bike lanes on North Stonestreet Ave. * PA 6 - Key Issues (pg 67-68) – Regarding spill-over parking on residential streets from the Rockville Transit Station and future infill redevelopment, could this be addressed by implementing a residential parking permit system and increase transit or other mobility options to access the station? * PA 12 - (pg 110) - Include the consideration of the expansion of bicycle lanes throughout the entire Planning Area. 	<p>Most suggestions are for elaboration or greater explanation of existing policies or actions, which staff supports and is willing to undertake.</p> <p>A discussion of substantial recommendations called out in the summary is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Detailed planned bicycle infrastructure is not included in either Volumes I or II because the Bikeway Master Plan establishes the plan for future bicycle and pedestrian improvements and, as discussed in the Transportation Element, is adopted by reference into this updated plan. Regarding N. Stonestreet Ave., the Mayor and Council just recently adopted an updated plan for that area, which is also incorporated into this updated plan. The Stonestreet amendment includes a preferred cross-section for N. Stonestreet. Staff therefore does not support changing the current recommendation, which has so recently gone through an intensive community process. However, the Bikeway Master Plan should reflect all updates to bicycle infrastructure through more-recently adopted plans, such as that for Stonestreet. * Adding a call to study a new residential parking permit system in the East Rockville and Lincoln Park neighborhood, in consultation with neighborhood residents and businesses, would be most appropriate in the Comprehensive Plan, rather than a firm policy to enact such a program. * The expansion of bike lanes in PA 12 (Tower Oaks) should be recommended for study, but deferred to a future update to the Bikeway Master Plan. 	<p>Incorporate the text edits suggested by the testimony</p> <p>Do not include a call for protected bike lanes on N. Stonestreet Avenue or in the Tower Oaks PA at this time. Instead, include a recommendation to consider expanding the bikeway network in Planning Area 6 and 12 in the Other Recommendations - Transportation section of each planning area.</p> <p>The Plan currently includes a recommendation to study a new Residential Parking Permit program in Lincoln Park and East Rockville, in coordination with the neighborhoods.</p>

Attachment 1.A.a: Excerpts of Vol. II Written Testimony Staff Response Matrix - PA 12-17 (3258 : Work Session 1: Draft Comprehensive Plan,

Exhibit No.	Testimony Source	General Comment	Planning Area(s)	Summary of Testimony	Staff Comments	Staff Recommendations
6	Randy Alton 2309 Glenmore Terrace, Rockville, MD		14	<p>Recommends that the Comprehensive Plan adoption timeline be "permanently tabled" and that an addendum be added to each planning area regarding COVID-19. Re-evaluate concept of a 20-year plan; the city should invest in data analytics and mathematical models in order to analyze immediate changes and forecast for the future.</p> <p>Requests specific attention to the Rockshire Village Shopping Center including retaining the current zoning (instead of proposed change). If zoning change is retained, define "substantial" retail.</p> <p>Asks city to address APFO, parking, ADA, safety and fire lane impacts before changes to land use or zoning; seek opportunities to recruit new retail to shopping center and parking conditions, and purchase or lease of the property by the city for community amenities.</p> <p>Recommends sidewalk feasibility study near Wootton High School (Scott Drive); add public facility & bike enhancements to Wootton Mill Park and Watts Branch Stream (per BayLands report); support a farmer's market west of I-270; conduct safety study along Wootton Parkway Corridor; requests that City rotate the holding events geographically throughout the City; build a shelter/pavilion as a staging area for events on Karma property to promote east Rockville residents to visit west Rockville and leverage I-270 bike/ped bridge.</p>	<p>Staff does not support delaying the Comprehensive Plan update process due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Further delay would not serve the interests of the Rockville public, who have spent many hours engaging in the process and providing feedback and are counting on various elements of the draft Plan to be adopted and implemented in the near term. Additionally, there is an established process by which the Comprehensive Plan may be amended in the future as circumstances or interests change.</p> <p>Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider Comprehensive Plan policies and actions that address preparing and responding to public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. One example is the addition of a policy in the Environment Element, under Goal 4: Healthy Communities, that establishes the ways in which the city can be more prepared and responsive to natural and "human-centered" emergencies. Staff will bring forward, in a future work session, recommendations in this regard for potential inclusion in Vol. 1.</p> <p>Staff has utilized advanced data analytics and forecasts to develop some of the policies and actions in the draft plan. There may be opportunities to explore additional techniques to "analyze immediate changes and forecasts for the future," in subsequent Plan updates, yet they should not serve as a reason to delay or "re-evaluate" the current draft Plan.</p> <p>While a more 'nimble' or 'responsive' Comprehensive Plan sounds reasonable, staff believes that the policies and projects adopted in the Comprehensive Plan should take a longer view than those that would respond to rapidly changing circumstances. The Rockville community should be able to expect a level of stability and consistency as the city grows and changes. Though the city has established a typical twenty-year planning horizon for its previous Comprehensive Plans, a ten-year review is required under the Maryland Land Use Article and Plan amendments can occur more frequently than that.</p> <p>The recommendations for Rockshire Village Shopping Center, its land use designation and recommended zoning, stem from an extensive public outreach effort to find a solution that works both for the surrounding community and the property owners. Staff believes that the recommended land use is appropriate in that it reaches a compromise between differing views. However, greater clarification may be necessary.</p> <p>Addressing site-specific APFO, ADA, safety, and fire lane impacts is not within the scope of the Comprehensive Plan, though broad policies support all of these goals. Similarly, staff does not believe recruiting new retail to the shopping center should be the purview of this Plan.</p> <p>Staff supports the addition of a recommended sidewalk feasibility study on Scott Drive, though portions of the roadway are beyond the city limits and such a study should be coordinated with Montgomery County DOT. The remainder of the recommended additions are appropriate for the Planning Areas, as well.</p>	<p>Do not postpone the Comprehensive Plan update process in response to the coronavirus pandemic or to re-evaluate the Plan through additional data analytics and mathematical models.</p> <p>Add a policy in the Environment Element, under Goal 4: Healthy Communities, that establishes the ways in which the city can be more prepared and responsive to natural and "human-centered" emergencies. Bring forward, in a future work session, a set of recommendations in this regard for potential inclusion in Vol. 1.</p> <p>Retain the PD zoning in the approved planned development for the Rockshire Village Shopping Center, but support an amendment that would permit, in addition to retail uses allowed by the current PD, residential uses (preferably single-unit detached housing or townhouses) if the proposed residential development includes community-serving retail and/or community amenity space. A discussion regarding the precise language is presented in the staff report and awaits Planning Commission decision. The Planning Commission should consider how to discuss the amount or significance of retail use and community amenity space as a part of residential redevelopment at the Rockshire Village Shopping Center.</p> <p>Incorporate the recommended bike and pedestrian safety and facility improvements into the appropriate location of the Planning Areas draft. Some may be best included as part of the citywide Elements, such as the support for a farmer's market west of I-270 and rotating city events geographically throughout the city.</p>
12	Andrew Martin 722 Mapleton Road, Rockville, MD	X	2,8,9,17	<p>Recommends that zoning reform be more comprehensive and should guide more of the City's development; should be planning for the next 100 years. Asserts that, based on census data, Rockville isn't meeting the needs of Rockville's African-American community; the city needs to avoid potential red-lining through zoning. Consider the racial make up of neighborhoods to encourage more diversity; avoid targeting areas for change with predominantly minority residents, including Hispanic residents. Recommends the city consider creating zoning classifications that utilized rental control (price controls) through a Rental Overlay Zone and enforce policies that require minorities first access rights to any housing for sale.</p> <p>PA 2, Area 12: Opposes the proposed RA designation and rezoning near the proposed BRT station at Veirs Mill and First Street. Recommends a historic zone there.</p> <p>PA 8, Area 5: Recommends any development of First Street Park be only for transitional housing for the incarcerated.</p> <p>PA 8, Area 1: Supports rezoning but concerned about affordability after redevelopment and prefers commercial mixed-use projects that exclude national franchise businesses. Suggests small business restrictions and economic assistance to ensure small, minority-owned businesses are established to serve the community</p> <p>PA 9: Redevelopment should be encouraged here before PA 2, A12 and PA 8, A1. City should encourage the County to build BRT on Rockville Pike before Veirs Mill.</p> <p>PA 17: RedGate should be developed in partnership with the County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to expand the Model Learning Center.</p>	<p>PA 17: Staff does not support the testimony's recommendation. On March 30, 2020, the Mayor and Council discussed the process for determining the future of the RedGate Park property. The Mayor and Council unanimously voted to retain the entire property as a park, with elements of both active and passive recreation, including natural open areas. City staff is currently working to kick-off a RedGate planning process before the end of the year, and community participation will be a primary focus of the process.</p> <p>[additional comments will be added here prior to upcoming work sessions to discuss the other Planning Areas discussed by the testimony]</p>	<p>Do not recommend that RedGate be developed as suggested by the testimony.</p>
14	Randy Alton 2309 Glenmore Terrace, Rockville, MD		14	<p>[This emailed testimony to Planning Commission and others reiterates Mr. Alton's oral testimony on Sept. 9 and previous written testimony (Exhibit 6)]</p> <p>Additional discussion includes a call for a Neighborhood Plan for Planning Area 14 (Rockshire & Fallsmead)</p>	<p>Staff does not believe that a Neighborhood Plan is necessary for Planning Area 14. Issues related to the Rockshire Village shopping center site and other topics within the planning area can be addressed through the Comprehensive Plan's Volume II planning area recommendations. If issues emerge after Plan adoption, an amendment to this Plan can be pursued.</p>	<p>Do not recommend a new neighborhood plan for Planning Area 14</p>

Attachment 1.A.a: Excerpts of Vol. II Written Testimony Staff Response Matrix - PA 12-17 (3258 : Work Session 1: Draft Comprehensive Plan,

Exhibit No.	Testimony Source	General Comment	Planning Area(s)	Summary of Testimony	Staff Comments	Staff Recommendations
21	Robert Harris Lerch, Early, Brewer		14	<p>States that, in the current retail market, Rockshire Shopping Center cannot support the type of retail uses desired by some in the Rockshire neighborhood and should be redeveloped for housing.</p> <p>Explains that previous studies and analysis by the city do not support the need for a major recreation use on the site, but suggests a landscaped community gathering space at Wootton Parkway and Hurley Avenue might be most appropriate.</p> <p>States that the owners of the site will continue to provide existing pool parking</p>	<p>Staff accepts the premise that, because of increased nearby competition and the changing nature of retail, major or solely retail uses on that site is unlikely to be supportable by the market. The language as presented in the draft Plan attempts to strike a balance between the wants of the community and the market realities as outlined by the property owner.</p> <p>Staff suggests that the Planning Commission could consider changing the land use designation from RRM to RF, which would have the effect of reducing the reliance on retail as part of a residential development project. The RF is intended to allow small scale retail as part of a residential project, while the RRM relies more on retail as a main component of a mixed-use development.</p>	<p>Discuss changing the land use designation of Rockshire Village from RRM to RF.</p> <p>Retain the language to require retail and/or a community amenity use as part of any residential development.</p> <p>Staff is open to amendments in the terms "substantial" amount of retail, but believes that the plan should retain the concept that any community amenity provided as part of residential redevelopment should be more than small area of open space.</p> <p>A longer discussion is provided in the body of the staff report.</p>
23	James Policaro Lerner Corporation		15	<p>Testimony concerns the site at the southwest quadrant of West Gude Drive and Research Boulevard (1800 Research Blvd, or Parcel 37), that is currently proposed for multi-family development. They concur with proposed ORRM designation but do not agree with the requirement for retail (R) frontage designation due to stated 'weak' retail market, especially in this location, and the presence of a regional gas transmission pipe and easement running under a corner or the parcel.</p>	<p>Staff recognizes the challenges of developing the portion of the subject property at the southwest corner of the intersection of Research Blvd and W. Gude Drive. In light of the concerns raised by Mr. Policaro, staff revisited the use of the mapped Retail frontage designations on the Land Use Policy map and determined that they would introduce unnecessary confusion to development review applicants, development review staff, and the public's expectations for where future retail might be located.</p> <p>Staff recommends removing the Retail frontage at that site; and recommends revisiting this concept at other similar sites throughout the city, which will be covered when viewing other planning areas. Staff will recommend that, instead of mapping the location of planned Retail frontage areas at key intersection 'nodes' in the city, descriptive text should instead be added to Focus Areas in each planning area where Retail frontage is currently proposed that describes the general location and character where commercial, amenitized, pedestrian-oriented, and visually appealing development is desired. In addition, the text could be written to require such frontage characteristics, "only where feasible."</p>	<p>Replace the mapped Retail (R) frontage at the subject property with descriptive text added that describes the general location and character where commercial, amenitized, pedestrian-oriented, and visually appealing development is desired.</p>
27	Bob Youngentob EYA, LLC		14	<p>Testimony consists of slides shown during Sept. 9 public hearing concerning preference for residential townhome development at former Rockshire Shopping Center rather than retail</p>	<p>Staff appreciates the concern that retail is no longer viable as it once was on this site and, based on the community process and significant study of the site, recommends that housing should be permitted on the site. However, staff believes that the plan would not be sufficiently responsive to community concerns unless it retains the concept that there should be a significant amenity that would be an asset to the broader community.</p>	<p>Staff recommends that the existing language in the document be retained, with the removal of the term "substantial" as a modifier of retail.</p>
31	William Kominers Lerch, Early & Brewer		12	<p>Land use recommendation of ORRM is consistent with the Concept Plan for Tower Oaks and the PD-TO zone.</p> <p>Requests ORRM for the development areas 4 & 3 (see letter exhibits). Currently, the draft Plan assigns the O (Office) to the northern and southern parcels of development area 4 (ORRM in the middle) and ORRM on development area 3.</p> <p>Testimony supports RF for development area 1 (see letter exhibits), Vol. II Focus Area 1 recommendation.</p> <p>Requests that Vol II incorporate policy statements from Vol I:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Allow offices in isolated areas to convert to other uses * Simplify and shorten the process for amending an approved Planned Development * Support a reduction in minimum parking requirements for office use to support economic development and more efficient use of land <p>Requests that new land use designations be used to provide suggested direction for the equivalent zones in a Planned Development (PD) overlay zone and that Volume II promote voluntary evolution of PDs and serve as additional guidance for PD zones instead of more restrictive policy.</p>	<p>The properties in question are either undeveloped or currently developed as office uses and the testimony has indicated that they could be successful as other uses in the future. The vision for Tower Oaks was developed in the 1980s, when the most robust market for office space and development was in suburban settings. The vision was endorsed at that time through the approval of both a neighborhood plan and a Comprehensive Planned Development (CPD). During the more than 30 years since, only pieces of the vision have been implemented; and none has been implemented in recent years as the demand for suburban office space has weakened greatly. Staff does not anticipate that this location will be in demand for office development in the foreseeable future. At the same time, however, the demand for housing is strong. Staff supports the change in designation of these properties from the O (Office) designation to ORRM (Office Residential Retail Mix).</p> <p>In order to avoid confusion and repetition, staff does not support copying language or policies that apply citywide from Vol. I into particular planning areas in Vol. II, especially when such policies are not directed at particular sites or properties.</p> <p>Staff understands that the Planning Commission is concerned with the conversion of approved office uses to residential uses in the Tower Oaks planned development area. However, staff believes that the testimony concerning direction for equivalent zones under the Tower Oaks PD has merit and believes that additional language would help in providing guidance for the future evolution of the area from the original concept.</p>	<p>Change the land use designation of the properties identified by the testimony as "development area 4", 2000 and 2600 Tower Oaks Blvd, from O to ORRM.</p> <p>Staff recommends the following language as direction for equivalent zones under the Tower Oaks Planned Development (PD):</p> <p>"If the Tower Oaks area continues to evolve away from the 1980s vision of a suburban highway-oriented office park with hotels, and more towards a residential district, care must be given to seek cohesion among the various projects. Open space, infrastructure and other community amenities and features should be incorporated into new projects, helping to serve the entire area as was envisioned with the CPD. Though the CPD remains in force as the zoning designation, adjustments may be made to the original plan that would be consistent with an equivalent zone of MXCD."</p>
34	Francoise Carrier BBS&G Attorneys		16	<p>Lidl USA plans to file for mixed use project at 15931 Frederick Rd, consisting of a grocery store and 200-250 affordable apartment units.</p> <p>Requests that the RM (Residential Multi-Unit) designation be revised to one with which MXTD would remain consistent</p>	<p>Staff supports this request. The land use designation of RM was assigned on the land use map, given the exclusively multi-unit residential development (Silverwood) that had been approved for the site. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider changing the land use designation to ORRM (Office Residential Retail Mix), which would expand options at this prominent location in the vicinity of the Shady Grove Metro Station. The land use ORRM is also more consistent with the existing zoning, MXTD (Mixed-Use Transit District), as requested by the testimony.</p>	<p>Staff recommends that the land use designation be changed from RM (Residential Medium Density) to ORRM (Office Residential Retail Mix).</p>

Attachment 1.A.a: Excerpts of Vol. II Written Testimony Staff Response Matrix - PA 12-17 (3258) : Work Session 1: Draft Comprehensive Plan,

Exhibit No.	Testimony Source	General Comment	Planning Area(s)	Summary of Testimony	Staff Comments	Staff Recommendations
35	Nina Albert Real Estate & Parking, WMATA		1,9,16	<p>PA 8 (Twinbrook) - One of the properties on the west side of Twinbrook Metro that is designated as P (Public Parks) is owned by WMATA and under consideration for a joint development project. They ask that, instead of Park, it be changed to ORRM (Office Residential Retail Mix). While WMATA values open space, they suggest it instead in front of station as part of redevelopment of the site and potentially as a linear park along the west side of Chapman Ave.</p> <p>PA 8 - Request that PA 9, Project P3, discuss the need for a park in the area without designating a specific site</p> <p>PA 1 (Rockville Town Center) - Supports the designation of ORRM for the west side of the Rockville Station property.</p> <p>PA 16 (King Farm) - Requests that Project P4 be revised to include an enhanced at-grade crossing in addition to any bridge or tunnel solutions.</p> <p>Additional comments: Requests a clarification that ORRM include life science industry uses.</p>	<p>PA 16 (King Farm) - Staff supports this recommendation and recommends an adjustment in accordance with the testimony.</p> <p>[additional comments will be added here prior to upcoming work sessions to discuss the other Planning Areas discussed by the testimony]</p>	PA 16 - Incorporate recommendation about at-grade crossing at King Farm Blvd
36	John Rhoad RMJ Development Group, LLC		14	Requests that no retail space be required in the redevelopment of Rockshire Village Center. Includes a letter from the retail consulting firm, Streetsense, reiterating their findings that retail is not a viable land use at the site due to surrounding competition, limited visibility and vehicle traffic from Wootton Parkway	See staff comments to Written Testimony Exhibit 21 and 49	See staff recommendations to Written Testimony Exhibit 21. A longer discussion is provided in the staff report.
49	Bob Youngentob EYA, LLC		14	EYA is the contract purchaser of the Rockshire Giant, want to redevelop it as a residential townhome community, believe retail is not viable at this location, development would include MPDUs, community space at Hurley and Wootton Parkway, request rezoning to facilitate site redevelopment	Staff appreciates the concern that retail is no longer viable as it once was on this site and, based on the community process and significant study of the site, recommends that housing should be permitted on the site. However, staff believes that the plan would not be sufficiently responsive to community concerns unless it retains the concept that there should be a significant amenity that would be an asset to the broader community.	See staff recommendations to Written Testimony Exhibit 21. A longer discussion is provided in the staff report.
50	Randy Alton 2309 Glenmore Terrace, Rockville, MD		14	<p>Recommends a review of the 2018 Eureka Study in addressing the need for a civic amenity in Rockville, west of I-270</p> <p>Requests that the Planning Commission review the 2019 Rhodeside and Hartwell Summary Report for Rockshire Village.</p> <p>Asks that the existing Rockshire PRU zoning remain; that the draft Plan define the word 'substantial retail' in its zoning recommendation for the site; and that all of raised issues be resolved before draft Plan is forwarded to the Mayor and Council.</p> <p>States that Planning Area 14 needs a new neighborhood plan and the draft Plan should recommend funding the Scott Drive sidewalk project, from Hurley to Greenplace Terrace.</p>	See staff comments to Written Testimony Exhibit 6	See staff recommendations to Written Testimony Exhibit 6
50a			14	Attachment to Exhibit 50: Eureka Community Interest Survey	See staff comments to Written Testimony Exhibit 6	See staff recommendations to Written Testimony Exhibit 6

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Planning Commission Public Hearing Draft, Volume II

Excerpts from the Summary of Oral Testimony from the Planning Commission Public Hearing on September 9 and 23, 2020

Speaker No.	Hearing Date	Testimony Source	General Comment	Planning Area(s)	Summary of Testimony	Submitted Written Testimony	Staff Comments	Staff Recommendations
3	9-Sep	Randy Alton		14	Requests that the Plan define "substantial" when discussing a required retail component as part of any redevelopment of the Rockshire Village Shopping Center and to address safety concerns for Thomas Wootton high school students parking in the Center parking lot. Requests no zoning changes to the Rockshire Village Shopping Center that would allow anything other than retail uses.	Yes	See staff comments to Written Testimony Exhibit 6	See staff recommendation to Written Testimony Exhibit 6
10	23-Sep	Bob Youngentob		14	Requests a change in wording of the requirement for any redevelopment of the Rockshire Village Shopping Center to read "substantial retail or a community gathering space" instead of the "and/or" as the draft Plan reads. Believes retail is not feasible on the site due to surrounding competition in the area.	Yes	See staff comments to Written Testimony Exhibit 21	See staff recommendations to Written Testimony Exhibit 21
11	23-Sep	Robert Harris		14	Supports principles of the draft Plan. Concerned with retail requirement for Rockshire Village Shopping Center. An outdoor community space is more appropriate for the site since the new Thomas Farm Community Center is so close and serves the west side of the city across I-270. Stated that property owners intend to honor the parking agreements of the Rockshire Community Pool, but not much more than that.	Yes	See staff comments to Written Testimony Exhibit 21	See staff recommendations to Written Testimony Exhibit 21
14	23-Sep	Jim Policaro		15	Supports ORRM (Office Residential Retail Mix) at Parcel 37, SE corner of W. Gude Dr and Research Blvd. Requests removal of the Retail frontage area at the property's corner due to difficulty of retail market and underground gas line easement at the location.	Yes	See staff comments to Written Testimony Exhibit 23	See staff recommendations to Written Testimony Exhibit 23
15	23-Sep	Catherine Contreras		14	Advocates for parking to be available to Wootton HS students at Rockshire Village Shopping Center parking lot	No	The current language in the draft states "In conjunction with any redevelopment proposal for the site, it will be important to determine how parking these other functions will be accomplished." Staff recommends retaining that language.	Retain the existing language in the draft Plan on parking at the Rockshire Village site.
21	23-Sep	Lauren Povich		14	Advocates for parking to be available to Wootton HS students at Rockshire Village Shopping Center parking lot	No	See staff comments to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15	See staff recommendations to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15
22	23-Sep	Jaimie Morris		14	Advocates for parking to be available to Wootton HS students at Rockshire Village Shopping Center parking lot	No	See staff comments to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15	See staff recommendations to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15
24	23-Sep	Nick Jones		14	Advocates for parking to be available to Wootton HS students at Rockshire Village Shopping Center parking lot	No	See staff comments to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15	See staff recommendations to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15
26	23-Sep	Rhoda Ndjoukouo		14	Advocates for parking to be available to Wootton HS students at Rockshire Village Shopping Center parking lot	No	See staff comments to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15	See staff recommendations to Oral Testimony Exhibit 15
29	23-Sep	Hyun Kim		14	Viability of Korean Presbyterian Church of Rockville depends on preservation of shared parking for the church as part of redevelopment on Rockshire Village Shopping Center	No	The current language in the draft states "In conjunction with any redevelopment proposal for the site, it will be important to determine how parking these other functions will be accomplished." Staff recommends retaining that language.	Retain the existing language in the draft Plan on parking at the Rockshire Village site.

CITY OF ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

MEETING NO. 16-2020

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1A
PUBLIC HEARING ON VOLUME II: PLANNING AREAS, OF
THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S DRAFT ROCKVILLE 2040
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Wednesday, September 9, 2020

1 PARTICIPANTS:

2 Planning Commission:

3 CHARLES LITTLEFIELD, Chair

4 ANNE GOODMAN, Commissioner

5 SARAH MILLER, Commissioner

6 DON HADLEY, Commissioner

7 SUSAN PITMAN, Commissioner

8 JOHN TYNER, II, Commissioner

9 REV. JANE E. WOOD, Commissioner

10 Staff:

11 CLARK LARSON, Principal Planner

12 DAVID LEVY, Assistant Director of Planning

13 JIM WASILAK, Staff Liaison

14 ANDREA GILLES, Principal Planner

15 NICHOLAS DUMAIS, Assistant City
16 Attorney

17 Speakers:

18 JAIME ESPINOSA

19 STEVEN VANGRACK

20 RANDY ALTON

21 KAP KAPASTIN

22 CHRISTOPHER M. RUHLEN

Attachment 1.A.c: Complete Vol. II Oral Testimony - September 9 Public Hearing (3258 : Work Session 1: Draft Comprehensive Plan, Vol. II:

1 PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

2 JOE MCCLANE

3 GEORGE LIECHTI

4 MEERA MURGAI

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Attachment 1.A.c: Complete Vol. II Oral Testimony - September 9 Public Hearing (3258 : Work Session 1: Draft Comprehensive Plan, Vol. II:

P R O C E E D I N G S

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2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Good evening and
3 welcome everybody to the city of Rockville
4 Planning Commission meeting. This is the 16th,
5 our 16th meeting of the year 2020. And as many
6 know by now, Rockville City Hall is still closed
7 due to the coronavirus pandemic and we are thus
8 conducting all of our meetings virtually via
9 WebEx. And apologies for starting a little bit
10 late, it was due to some technical difficulties
11 with WebEx and getting us all on.

12 I believe we have most commissioners
13 present this evening; I believe one commissioner
14 is absent. And there are two items on our agenda.

15 The first item and the main item really.
16 Is a virtual Public Hearing on Volume II: Planning
17 Areas, of the Planning Commission's Draft
18 Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update. And the
19 purpose of this public hearing is to receive
20 testimony about that draft version that we are
21 circulating and making available. There will also
22 be another similar opportunity at our next

1 meeting. I think we will have staff start us off
2 before we get into that with our participants.

3 But before we do, I'll just go very
4 briefly over our ground rules. These ground rules
5 we put together last month. They're based on our
6 normal ground rules but we just took a different
7 look at it. Because it's not normal for us to
8 have meetings virtually, so we had to think it
9 through and knowing that the topic is just as
10 important as always. And unfortunately, we cannot
11 do it in person. We still wanted still to do our
12 best and do it right and by that, I mean be as
13 fair as we can. Receive public testimony but be as
14 fair as we can in terms of process.

15 So, with that, these rules are also
16 available on the city's website, it's three or
17 four pages on describing the whole process. We
18 allow one speaking opportunity, which would be
19 virtually at our virtual meetings. If you are a
20 private individual you will be granted 3 minutes
21 for that opportunity. And if you are representing
22 an organization, by that civic association,

1 homeowner's association, or chamber of commerce,
2 that sort of thing then we will grant you 5
3 minutes. We are not granting extensions of time.
4 We have in the past in different circumstances but
5 it's difficult this way. So, we're going to stick
6 to those limits I'll be a little bit lenient as
7 chair this evening in terms of how things wrap up
8 so that people are able to get across their final
9 thought during their testimony.

10 I should also add that, one of the
11 ground rules we initiated was a pre-registration
12 mainly for technical reasons but just to keep it
13 organized. And as such, I believe we have seven
14 or eight participants who have already
15 pre-registered and, on our list, and will be
16 taking their turn here virtually to provide their
17 testimony. And also, in this current context we
18 are really encouraging written testimony more than
19 ever. That can be in addition to the virtual
20 testimony. And it can be multiple submissions of
21 written testimony at any time as long as our
22 public record is open, and it is tonight and will

1 be through at least our next meeting.

2 So that's a brief summary for our ground
3 rules as we are going to proceed this evening on
4 this topic. Unless other commissioners have any
5 initial comments, I will turn it over to staff to
6 give us just an introduction and to get us going
7 with the public testimony of our Volume II City
8 Master Plan, comprehensive master plan.

9 Mr. Wasilak I believe you're on. Will
10 you be giving us the introduction or Mr. Larson
11 perhaps?

12 MR. WASILAK: Actually Mr. Larson is in
13 queue.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, I see you
15 there Mr. Larson, can I turn it over to you?

16 MR. LARSON: Thank you, thank you. Mr.
17 Littlefield and planning commissioners, members of
18 the public. I am going to try to share my screen
19 quickly so you can see what I'm seeing.

20 My name is Clark Larson for those who
21 don't know me. I am one of the planners in charge
22 of leading the comprehensive plan update, what

1 we've termed Rockville 2040. Through the review
2 and approval process ultimately. This is the
3 Planning Commission's turn to go through the draft
4 document and after the Planning Commission had
5 completed their review and approved it for
6 recommendation to the Mayor and Council. The
7 Mayor and Council will then have their opportunity
8 to seek public testimony and review it themselves.
9 And so really the Planning Commission is charged
10 with initiating the comprehensive plan of update.
11 And that's where we are at today. I'll also note,
12 well I'll go into it later, but this is what we
13 are terming Volume II for the planning areas
14 previously -- actually I realized I don't have
15 something on this on a slide -- previously the
16 Planning Commission reviewed first volume of
17 elements.

18 These are 10 topical elements that apply
19 citywide, their policies and actions in areas
20 including the environment, historic preservation,
21 housing, land use. And what we're looking at now,
22 and what the commission has put out for public

1 review and comment this year concerns the planning
2 areas which are more neighborhood specific areas
3 with more focused polices and recommendations.

4 So, to review where we've come from and
5 I guess where we are going also. During December
6 19 to January 2020, earlier this year, the
7 Planning Commission reviewed an initial staff
8 draft. This is really the culmination of all of
9 staff's work getting public information and input
10 and putting together the draft document itself.
11 The Planning Commission reviewed it at this time
12 to make sure it was ready, and they made some
13 edits and changes before it was released for
14 public review. And that happened on February 13th
15 of 2020. Quite a while ago as you can see, but
16 we've had some hiccups in the meantime.

17 So, what has been released is the public
18 hearing draft. This is the draft of the current
19 Volume that we want to have public comments on and
20 testimony. We want to hear from the public what
21 they think. Whether anything needs to be changed
22 in their minds or any items are supportable by

1 them. And so, September 9th is today, this is the
2 first date of public hearings to accept oral
3 testimony, spoken testimony. And we will have
4 another opportunity for those who weren't able to
5 make it or who decide between now and right before
6 the 23rd that they would like to sign up and speak
7 and to provide a spoken testimony. And a date
8 proposed by staff, this has not been decided yet,
9 but we will have this discussion with the Planning
10 Commission either tonight or on the 23rd, is when
11 to close the public record for written testimony.

12 You'll remember that it was released for
13 review and put online and we've been accepting
14 written testimony since February this year.

15 Although some may have reviewed and forgot what
16 was in there, and some may be just hearing about
17 it now. So, we want to provide a little bit of
18 extra opportunity for those who have just come to
19 be aware of what's happening to provide more
20 written testimony even two weeks after the last
21 public hearing date.

22 A little bit about what's inside the

1 draft itself, this Volume consists of the 17
2 neighborhood scale planning areas. They are
3 mostly in the same format as far as structure.
4 There is one that is more lengthy expanded
5 planning area. But they generally cover the same
6 kind of topics, the same headings. They recognize
7 the unique characteristics and needs of
8 Rockville's residential neighborhoods and
9 commercial districts. That's really the reason
10 why we are doing that in this forum where you
11 don't get to dive in that deep in the elements.
12 Those are citywide policies that you don't get a
13 lot of fine grain approach to or fine grain
14 attention.

15 It also identifies in each of the
16 planning area sections, specific policy changes
17 that the plan would adopt, upon approval and
18 adoption they would come into effect for those new
19 comprehensive policies. There are also
20 recommendations for later implementation of zoning
21 changes, urban design recommendations, potential
22 city projects and topics for additional study.

1 Any of the zoning recommendations would not take
2 effect immediately. Because they would be taken
3 through their own process to update the zoning
4 ordinance.

5 So, there'd be more public comment for
6 that, more consideration might tweak it somewhat
7 as long as it's consistent with what the
8 comprehensive plan is saying. And I put the
9 website here for our Rockville 2040 initiative if
10 you want to. If you haven't seen it already, we
11 have tried to get it out to as many eyes as
12 possible. But you can go visit
13 www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville2040 that's a short
14 link to get right there. And it has all of the
15 information that we have put on line that we think
16 is important for you.

17 A bit of a summary of public outreach
18 that we have taken to date, leading up to this,
19 today's public hearing. We sent out letters and
20 notifications to the Maryland Department of
21 Planning. They have a clearinghouse that requires
22 all jurisdictions to notify them when a

1 comprehensive plan update is being undertaken,
2 when the public hearing dates are going to occur.

3 We also sent letters to the City of
4 Gaithersburg representatives, both staff and
5 elected officials; Montgomery County, various
6 agencies and departments with the county; WMATA,
7 the transit administration; MCPS school district;
8 REDI, which is Rockville Economic Development,
9 Inc.; and the Rockville Chamber of Commerce,
10 informing them that the draft plan was out and
11 available for review and comment by them. They
12 will submit public testimony as well city
13 residents and employees and visitors.

14 We also advertised in the Washington
15 Post prior to the public hearing as required by
16 state law. And we have been trying to get the
17 word out as much as possible this year through the
18 Rockville 2040 website. Our email distribution
19 list, which is a list of people that have
20 subscribed and joined a list of our distribution.
21 I'm just going back through the definition
22 basically, but it's a self-identified group of

1 people who get email updates and you can join that
2 as well on our project website.

3 We've also had articles on Rockville
4 reports, sent direct emails to civic association,
5 homeowner association, representatives, the
6 contact person who we have for them; as well as
7 managers of rental apartments in the city. And a
8 slew of social media posts and staff video
9 announcement on social media accounts that the
10 city has. So, we have done our best in lieu of in
11 person meetings, which we probably would have had
12 a few leading up to the public hearings, but we
13 try to do our best in a virtual manner.

14 So, to go over, this information is on
15 our website as well. But just to let people know
16 that this is only one opportunity to provide
17 testimony or it's another word for comments. On
18 the draft plan, today and on September, the month
19 of September 23rd and we would ask that you
20 pre-register for the 23rd by emailing me and
21 providing some of the information that we would
22 need to send you an invitation to join the virtual

1 meeting. You can also submit written testimony
2 through an online comment forum at our Rockville
3 2040 website. And email written testimony
4 directly to the Planning Commission, they see it
5 as soon as you send it. They see it as soon as
6 you send it. We also see it and are adding it to
7 the public record as it comes in. Or you can mail
8 it by letter to the address shown on the slide and
9 we will, we check that periodically not every day,
10 but we check the mail.

11 I wanted to make a note to say, that all
12 oral and written testimony will be made available
13 for review by the Planning Commission and the
14 public, following the close of the public record,
15 whenever that may be. We are also posting the
16 written testimony, periodically as it comes in.
17 So, for those that submitted it some time ago, it
18 should be online and we try to put that up about
19 weekly or as it comes in.

20 So, this evening, staff recommendation
21 to the Planning Commission to receive oral
22 testimony of the draft plan. That would be

1 primarily the planning areas, because that's what
2 the content is fresh on right now, the document
3 that we are looking for comments on. But really
4 it could be anything that pertains to the
5 comprehensive plan the first Volume elements,
6 maybe neighborhood plans that related to it as
7 well. But we expect the most comments the most
8 interest will be this evening on the planning
9 areas draft and to keep the public record open, to
10 accept additional written testimony through the
11 close of business on Wednesday, October 7th. That
12 would be two weeks after the last public hearing
13 date. That's our recommendation, but as the
14 commission sometimes does that date may be
15 extended as they see fit.

16 So that concludes my presentation. And
17 all that's really left now, is to invite, I'm
18 unmuted now. Just time to accept public
19 testimony, I think there is a list of those who
20 signed up in order. So, thank you.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you Mr.
22 Larson. Indeed, I have a list open here, that I

1 received shortly before the meeting. So, I will
2 take it as the official list for this meeting,
3 however I would ask staff to please interrupt me
4 if something seems amiss.

5 Without further ado though, I would
6 invite the first speaker, if you could please
7 arrange for that technically for him to take over
8 and be able to speak on WebEx. And that will be
9 Mr. Steven VanGrack. Are we able to connect with
10 Mr. VanGrack? On my screen, I see just the
11 timers but I do not see Mr. VanGrack nor do I hear
12 him audio wise. Commissioners and I seeing what
13 everyone are seeing?

14 COMMISSIONER WOOD: That's all that is
15 shown, is the timer.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay.

17 COMMISSIONER TYNER: We see it in queue.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, thank
19 you. Reverend Wood, Commissioner Tyner. We will
20 wait, and apologies this is all new to us we've
21 done a little bit of testimony but not a lot thus
22 far and mostly gone smoothly and I'm sure we'll

1 work it out but.

2 BETINA: This is Betina, I believe that
3 Mr. VanGrack may be having technical difficulties
4 so perhaps we could go to the next person and then
5 circle back to him?

6 MR. VANGRACK: Okay, that is part of our
7 rules and procedure anticipating that this is
8 going to happen from time to time. Unfortunately,
9 that's just the way it is. But please if you can
10 work out his technical difficulties to get him
11 back on the list. I will proceed to the second
12 person. And on my list it's Jaime Espinosa. If
13 you could please connect Jaime and we'll go from
14 there.

15 MR. ESPINOSA: Good evening, this is
16 Jaime Espinosa.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hi, are you on, do
18 you have video or are you just calling in?

19 MR. ESPINOSA: Just calling in.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, that's fine,
21 I'll invite you to proceed and I'll will give you
22 3 minutes, or are you representing an organization

1 or are you just here as a private resident?

2 MR. ESPINOSA: I'm here as a private
3 resident.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, and if you
5 could just state your address for the record.

6 MR. ESPINOSA: Yes, that is 5717
7 Ridgeway Avenue.

8 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, please proceed
9 and welcome.

10 MR. ESPINOSA: Okay. My name is Jamie
11 Espinosa and I live in South Twinbrook. I know
12 that all of the listening sessions, open houses,
13 and community forums the city staff held obviously
14 occurred prior to the current pandemic. Many of
15 my neighbors have expressed to me what they want
16 the city to look like has radically changed since
17 then. I'm here today to take a short pause in
18 their planning cycle and to request that the city
19 staff conduct an assessment based on the best data
20 available on how the pandemic will impact the
21 future needs of the city.

22 I note that neither Volume I or II of

1 the plans mention the pandemic or COVID. I am
2 firmly convinced that COVID-19 has completely
3 changed the housing paradigm for the rest of our
4 lives. While it may take some time for it to
5 become fully clear as to what the future needs of
6 Twinbrook will be due to the pandemic, it will
7 likely no longer include info in small scale
8 multi-unit housing concentrated around
9 transportation hubs. I based this on the fact
10 that media reports state that July, a set record
11 for sales for single families detached homes, as
12 people seek to escape crowded environments to
13 avoid the virus.

14 In addition, the demand for housing near
15 public housing has plummeted as many more
16 individuals have decided to switch from public
17 transportation to commuting in vehicles in order
18 to avoid the virus. This can be seen by the fact
19 that used car sales have skyrocketed. Many
20 planners are anticipating that within 2 years,
21 society needs will snap back to what they were in
22 December of 2019. I think this may be

1 unrealistically hopeful and due to the fact, the
2 planners have no experience or frame of reference
3 on including the impacts of a pandemic into their
4 planning.

5 As a 38-year-old millennial, this
6 pandemic will drive my housing decisions for the
7 rest of my life and I know that many of my peers
8 of my generation feel the same way. My decision
9 making this area is based on the fact that many
10 employers have already seen the cost savings of
11 having the vast majority of their workforces work
12 from home. Some employers have already told their
13 workforces to work from home forever. This will
14 have a significant impact on our area where many
15 workers are not originally from Maryland. Given
16 the freedom to work from home full time, I believe
17 that many of these individuals will choose to move
18 out of state to places with a lower cost of
19 living. If this occurs, then the need for
20 multi-unit housing in this area will disappear.

21 This pandemic is also pushing government
22 to expand telework dramatically. For example, in

1 the past many employees were allowed to telework 1
2 to 3 days per week. However, many managers are
3 seeing that employees have been just as productive
4 working from home in the last 6 months. This is
5 driving managers to only require employees to come
6 into the office one or two times a pay period.
7 That they only need to commute into the office two
8 to three times a month, employees will look harder
9 for housing options in Hagerstown or West
10 Virginia.

11 As you all know, rezoning in any area
12 will have dramatic impact. Individuals seeking
13 single family homes may not want to buy near an
14 area zoned for multi-unit housing even if no
15 developer has bought into the area. We need to
16 make changes before the demand has disappeared.
17 This may drive higher income and educated
18 individuals to track up 270 since they don't need
19 to come into town to go to the office. I ask this
20 body to take a short pause in their cycle, and to
21 reassess the city's need in light of COVID-19.
22 Thank you.

1 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
2 Espinosa, for your comments and before you go as
3 we would do in if we were conducting meetings
4 physically, we accept testimony and we also allow
5 commissioners clarifying questions as needed. If
6 you would entertain one. My question to you is,
7 do you think that housing is the only thing -- two
8 questions actually. Do you think as you commented
9 on it, is the only thing that is impacted or
10 should be looked at or assessed because of the
11 current corona pandemic is one question? And
12 also, do you feel that whatever is happening
13 because of corona, even if corona goes away and
14 ends and hopefully it does very soon, that
15 whatever, for whatever reason these impacts become
16 permanent beyond the end of the pandemic?

17 MR. ESPINOSA: I think so. I think that
18 if you look at the public polling on this, I think
19 a certain demographic, particularly those under 40
20 will be making certain decisions like long based
21 on their experience in the last 6 months.
22 Particularly if this expands to a year or 18

1 months as planners are deciding.

2 And to your question, while my comments
3 were completely focused on housing, I do think the
4 city should look in the plan as it relates to
5 transportation as I don't think the transportation
6 needs are going to be what they were. As I
7 suspect many more people are going to be working
8 from home and not commuting as often. And also,
9 retail I don't necessarily know that brick and
10 mortar stores are going to continue existing in
11 the way that they have. Before the pandemic we
12 saw them declining. But I think, the online sales
13 that have skyrocketed, particularly in grocery
14 deliveries and those kinds of things are going to
15 lead to less retail space needed.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, thank you
17 again, Mr. Espinosa, for your comments and
18 testimony. Commissioners are there any other
19 questions in addition to mine for Mr. Espinosa.

20 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: I would have one,
21 Mr. Chair, if that's okay.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Sure. Mr. Espinosa,

1 another Commissioner, Commissioner Hadley, would
2 also like to ask you a question.

3 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Thank you, Mr.
4 Chairman. Hello, Mr. Espinosa. You have cited
5 quite a bit of knowledge. I was wondering if you
6 have come by this and by the analysis behind it as
7 a matter of personal interest or do you have a
8 professional interest in relation to this.

9 MR. ESPINOSA: You know, and thank you
10 for that question. For sure, it's strictly
11 personal. Like I said, I'm under 40. I plan on
12 making Rockville my home until I retired. And so
13 these issues have been very important to me and so
14 I have been following the news very closely in
15 particularly in the last 6 months.

16 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Thank you. Thank
17 you, Mr. Chair.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you,
19 Commissioner Hadley, and thank you again, Mr.
20 Espinosa. Any further questions? Okay, I hear
21 none from my colleagues. Thank you again, Mr.
22 Espinosa. I appreciate it for joining us.

1 I've been informed that our first
2 participant is able now to connect so I would like
3 to invite him and proceed to give us his testimony
4 and that is Mr. Steven VanGrack. Mr. VanGrack,
5 can you hear me okay?

6 MR. VANGRACK: Well, I can hear you but
7 can you hear me?

8 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, I can probably
9 as good as you can hear me.

10 MR. VANGRACK: Well, maybe it's better
11 that I don't have my picture on the screen. I'm
12 not sure one way or the other but you can hear
13 what I have to say. Thank you.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Sure, please
15 proceed. Thank you.

16 MR. VANGRACK: My name is Steven
17 VanGrack, I reside at 401 King Farm Boulevard.
18 I've been a resident of Rockville since 1977, my
19 office has always been in downtown Rockville since
20 1980. I am here tonight on behalf of Rockville
21 Associates. Rockville Associates owns the office
22 building at 110 North Washington Street. The

1 owner is Scott Norwitz. Scott is my friend as
2 well as my landlord. And a stronger friend but he
3 is also a good landlord.

4 Rockville Associates contends that it's
5 in the best interest of Rockville Town Center to
6 encourage and enhance the transition of office
7 buildings to residential homes. Rockville
8 Associates seeks approval to reconstruct 110 North
9 Washington Street from office retail to
10 residential. Rockville Associates will not only
11 increase the size of the building but will seek to
12 provide more parking spaces than what is provided
13 for under the new structure at 110. You all may
14 be familiar with the Urban Land Institute report.
15 They recommended, and I quote, "that you redesign
16 each middle land and North Washington Street to
17 build density in town center without compromising
18 character."

19 I also suggest that you read and I'm
20 sure that you have, the comprehensive plan
21 prepared by our exceptional city planning staff
22 which recommends the west side of North Washington

1 Street change in zoning to MXCD, the mixed use
2 quarter district.

3 Personally, I am very familiar with
4 downtown Rockville in countless ways. But I have
5 spent time recently with many of the real property
6 owners and become involved in the redevelopment of
7 our town center. Many supports the requests that
8 we are making here, no one opposes it.

9 My personal opinion is that the single
10 most important real estate planning in Rockville
11 is the Rockville Town Center. The Rockville
12 Associates asks that you agree with the Urban Land
13 Institute report and with the comprehensive plan
14 to grant the zoning change at 110 to the MXCD, the
15 mixed use quarter district. Rockville Associates
16 also asks you to encourage and enhance more
17 residential homes in Rockville town center. Thank
18 you for your time.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
20 VanGrack. Commissioners are there any questions
21 for Mr. VanGrack, from hearing his testimony?

22 COMMISSIONER WOOD: Hi, this is

1 Commissioner Wood. I have one question.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Go ahead.

3 COMMISSIONER WOOD: Mr. VanGrack, your
4 proposal for more residential housing, does that
5 include all four social economic levels that
6 everyone will have a piece of this pie? And that
7 the housing will be so structured so that it can
8 be affordable?

9 MR. VANGRACK: I honestly believe, and
10 this is my opinion, I haven't asked Scott Norwitz
11 this but I can tell you. I think every
12 residential building in our town center should
13 have a moderate income provision for it. It needs
14 to be, we've done it, I believe it's the code to
15 do it. But I think that yes. I could give you a
16 simple yes but I think I said yes in a longer way.

17 COMMISSIONER WOOD: Thank you.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thanks to both.
19 Other commissioners have any questions for Mr.
20 VanGrack?

21 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Yes.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner Tyner,

1 go ahead.

2 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Mr. VanGrack, you
3 have mentioned one particular address, but I'm
4 assuming that the concept you are speaking of
5 might be all of the way up and down North
6 Washington Street at some point or even in other
7 areas within town center. It's a kind of concept
8 that you might find a possible location in
9 addition to what you have already spoken to us
10 about, is that true?

11 MR. VANGRACK: Well, the simple answer
12 is yes but if you'd like for me to go in to a
13 little more detail, I will tell you I have spoken
14 with the people at Federal Realty. And I would
15 not be surprised if they came forth to make the
16 same request that we are making here. I have
17 spoken with other developers, but that
18 intersection there, East Middle Lane and North
19 Washington Street, the east side of Middle lane
20 you aren't going to change, those buildings are
21 already there. The west side it proposes, I have
22 not spoken to any of the developers on North

1 Washington Street, other than Federal Realty.

2 COMMISSIONER TYNER: It's an interesting
3 idea, thank you for bringing it up.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you,
5 Commissioner Tyner. And Mr. VanGrack, as you
6 presented during your testimony this
7 recommendation is already to be found in the ULA
8 on the town center, correct?

9 MR. VANGRACK: Well, this specific
10 recommendation to change the zoning was in the
11 comprehensive plan, the Urban Land Institute
12 report has a lot of language about specifically
13 the intersection of East Middle Lane and North
14 Washington Street building density in the town
15 center. So, there could be some interpretation
16 there, I don't have all of the language there but
17 certainly very supportive from the Urban Land
18 Institute.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Yeah, thank
20 you, because I remember there was quite some
21 discussion in that report on Washington Street, on
22 various things but it includes what you said. And

1 it is geared toward improving the town center and
2 addressing residential in that further
3 development. So, thanks again, Commissioners.

4 Are there any --

5 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: I have a
6 question.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner
8 Goodman, sure, go ahead.

9 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: I just wonder if
10 you think that is a general principle that should
11 possibly be applied further than in town center.

12 MR. VANGRACK: Once again you are
13 asking, thank you Ann, once again you are asking
14 my personal opinion, it's a strong yes. I
15 actually believe we need to develop out town
16 center, with all due respect to everybody, I go
17 back to Rockville Mall days. I mean that's when
18 our town center was an abysmal failure. And it
19 appears that right now, and I'm not trying to be
20 critical that our town center needs some help. I
21 think a residential component is the best thing
22 that we can do to enhance our town center. Well,

1 if you look at the two new buildings the two
2 tallest buildings that have gone up in Rockville,
3 they appear to be doing well residentially. I
4 think that's where we should be headed.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, thanks again.
6 Any other Commissioners with questions? Okay.
7 Thank you so much, Mr. VanGrack, for your
8 comments.

9 MR. VANGRACK: Thank you and it's always
10 good to see all of you.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Likewise.

12 MR. VANGRACK: Have a good evening. I'm
13 going to listen for a while.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, take care.
15 Bye. Going back to our list, if I have it
16 correct, the next speaker is Randy Alton. And I
17 realize that I was following the old ways of
18 asking for people to give their address but I
19 think we don't need to do that since we are
20 gathering that information technologically.
21 Staff, correct me if I am wrong, it's not
22 necessary. As long as we have the right person

1 queued up to speak, we can just proceed as --
2 anyways, is Mr. Alton here?

3 MR. ALTON: Yes. Can you hear me?

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep.

5 MR. ALTON: Greetings. Grading
6 forwarded a detailed analysis as you know Planning
7 Area 14 back in May. And I share concerns and
8 recommendations including my suggestion that you,
9 the Planning Commission, define the word
10 "substantial" in your draft regarding Planning
11 Area 14. In my experience better to address these
12 details now rather than later. Wait, you are
13 looking to change the zoning for the Rockville
14 Village Shopping Center, please don't. Please
15 first get the answers to the following questions.

16 Ask the staff here tonight, do we know
17 about the Rockshire HOA parking rights, the number
18 how many parking spaces will be available?
19 Recently, I filed an ADA concern regarding no
20 handicap parking spaces at that facility. These
21 ADA parking spaces are going to be needed. An ADA
22 is a prominent key issue in that planning area.

1 In addition, we also have the Korean Presbyterian
2 church, they have a right to practice their
3 religion. How are they going to be impacted by
4 the parking if these zoning changes occur and we
5 have a different land use? Just like to get these
6 answers beforehand.

7 But one of my greatest concerns are from
8 being a teacher is back on November 7, 2019, the
9 Rockville Mayor and Council testified before the
10 MCPS Board of Education about the safety concerns
11 at Thomas Wootton High School, especially the
12 driveway where the buses and cars are not
13 separated from students and staff. Our students
14 literally walk through the driveway between buses
15 and cars pulling in and out of that complex.
16 Students can't safely access the middle school in
17 our Rockville neighborhood from Falls Mead to
18 Lakewood. Scott Drive has no sidewalks. If there
19 was ever any evacuation in our planning area
20 between Frost and Wootton High School, we would be
21 moving 3,000 students over a 56 inch wide bridge
22 due to the Scott Drive issue of no ability to

1 transition between two sides.

2 The Planning Commission members also
3 back in 1999 when they rebuilt Wootton High School
4 and we added on from 1,500 students over to 2,300.
5 They noted an adequate public facility ordinance
6 concern. Back in 1999, they actually told MCPS
7 no. And they told MCPS no because there was no
8 room for parking. And what ended up happening, we
9 have overflow student parking leased for the past
10 20 years at that Rockshire Village Shopping
11 Center, Giant. We go and make these changes,
12 there is nothing that has been done to change to
13 adequate public city ordinance from 1999. That
14 same concern exists today.

15 So, I would just say that before we
16 making any changes to zoning, our neighborhood due
17 to safety, ADA compliance, the adequate public
18 facility ordinance and including the fire lane
19 issue that they have in front of the school. Our
20 planning area needs a comprehensive neighborhood
21 plan. I thank you so much for your time.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.

1 Alton. Much appreciated receiving your testimony.
2 Commissioners, any clarifying questions? It
3 appears we have none. Thank you again, Mr. Alton,
4 appreciate it.

5 MR. ALTON: You are welcome.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. The next
7 person that I have on my list is Mr. Kapastin. Is
8 Mr. Kapastin available on either video or audio?

9 MR. KAPASTIN: Yes, I am available,
10 thank you.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You are welcome.

12 MR. KAPASTIN: Thank you very much.
13 Good evening, Mr. Chairman and members of the
14 Planning Commission. I am Kap Kapastin here
15 tonight on behalf of Shalhorn Rockville, LLC. We
16 own the Chesapeake Plaza Shopping center located
17 at 1460 and 1488 Rockville Pike in Planning Area 9
18 on the east side of Rockville Pike north of and
19 adjacent to Twinbrook Corner. The property's
20 located for you on Exhibits 1 and 2 in my written
21 testimony dated September 3rd which is marked
22 Exhibit 10 of the testimonies submitted. The

1 property is zoned MXCD, with recommended land use
2 of ORRM.

3 I should mention that our office is in
4 Bethesda and we have owned this property for 17
5 years. Our tenants there include Yekta Deli,
6 Joe's Noodle House, and Midas Muffler. Similar to
7 the other properties on the east side of the pike,
8 our properties are constrained narrowly between
9 the pike and railway tracks. Our issue is the
10 extension of Chapman Avenue through our property
11 to another section of the pike to shown in the
12 2016 Neighborhood Pike Plan and carried forward in
13 the draft comprehensive plan. The mere existence
14 of the Chapman extension presents a chilling
15 affair in the development of our property,
16 reducing the Midas Muffler parcel by almost three-
17 quarters of it. And the strips at our parcel by
18 more than one-quarter of it dividing the property
19 into three small parcels. The division of the
20 property is demonstrated on Exhibits 3 and 4 of my
21 written testimony.

22 In our review the property has the plan

1 to support and encourage the prospect of future
2 redevelopment, not inhibit and prevent it. Also,
3 the State Highway Administrations, SHA did not
4 allow a signal of Chapman Avenue and the Pike
5 because placement there would violate the SHA
6 access manuals required 750 linear feet between
7 signalized intersections and Congressional Lane
8 and Templeton Place. Shellhorn opposes the
9 Chapman Avenue extension through it's property and
10 informs the city that Shellhorn's attorneys and
11 traffic engineers advise it that it's very
12 existence in the draft plan gives Shellhorn the
13 basis for an inverse condemnation claim against
14 the city for the damage which will run into the
15 millions of dollars. Thus, we owe it to the
16 commission to delete that portion of the Chapman
17 extension, through 1460 and 1488 Rockville Pike.

18 Thank you for your steady attention to
19 this matter. A more complete discussion is within
20 my written testimony dated September 3rd and I am
21 available for any questions.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.

1 Kapastin. And yes, we have received your written
2 testimony on this matter as well. Commissioners,
3 are there any clarifying questions for Mr.
4 Kapastin? I believe we have none. But thank you
5 again, Mr. Kapastin, much appreciated.

6 MR. KAPASTIN: Thank you, sir.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Take care. Sorry
8 for the pause. I'm looking on my list for the
9 next person. The shift between documents,
10 multiple monitors no one can see. The next
11 speaker is Christopher Ruhlen. And I think
12 (inaudible) and Brewer. Mr. Ruhlen, are you with
13 us?

14 MR. RUHLEN: Yes, can you hear me?

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, I can hear you.
16 Commissioners, I think we are good to go. And
17 just as a reminder, that you have 3 minutes to
18 give testimony.

19 MR. RUHLEN: Great, thank you very much.
20 Good Evening, my name is Chris Ruhlen. I am a
21 principal with the law firm of Lercher and Brewer.
22 I am pleased to be here this evening to testify

1 about the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update
2 which our firm's land use attorneys have been
3 following with great interest.

4 As the Planning Commission is aware the
5 supply of housing in the greater Washington
6 metropolitan area has been the subject of
7 tremendous importance as the region continues to
8 grow. There is increasing demand from potential
9 new residence as well as from residence who are
10 already here and are interested in changing
11 accommodations. This issue has been the subject
12 of various recent studies by the city and other
13 recognized local authorities. Although specific
14 projections in terms of numbers are constantly
15 being refined, all of these sources agree that a
16 dramatic housing shortfall exists and that
17 addressing the shortfall must be a regional
18 priority given the importance of diversity of
19 housing options for overall economic
20 competitiveness, quality of life, and a viable tax
21 base.

22 I have provided of several of these

1 authorities with my written remarks that the
2 commission can review at it's convenience, but
3 it's worth noting these materials include, first,
4 a September 2019 report of the Washington Council
5 of Governments, which found that by 2030, the
6 region will require 75,000 additional households
7 over the 245,000 units that local governments have
8 been planning for. That's approximately 32,000
9 new units per year.

10 Second, a May 2019 task force report of
11 the Urban Land Institute, which also found that
12 the region must increase housing production to
13 attract and retain a sufficient employment base to
14 support continued economic growth.

15 And third, I provided the city's
16 December 2016 housing marking analysis and needs
17 assessment, which identified a future of demand
18 for nearly 10,000 new housing units in the city by
19 2040 across the income spectrum. All of these
20 authorities conclude that addressing this
21 shortfall will require meaningful governmental
22 intervention. To that end, it's encouraging the

1 Volume I of the 2040 plan embraces affirmative
2 policies to both promote diversification in the
3 residential land use pattern and also to plan for
4 land use changes from commercial to residential
5 uses.

6 It's also encouraging that Volume II
7 then applies these policies to specific properties
8 in the city's planning areas. While much work in
9 the years ahead to actually achieve this vision,
10 these policies will provide an important
11 foundation for those efforts. That at the same
12 time, I would encourage the commission to keep the
13 expansion of the housing access at the forefront
14 of its considerations as it continues to review
15 and analyze the property specific recommendations
16 in Volume II. The opportunities to change the
17 housing types allowed at specific locations and to
18 allow housing on traditionally commercial
19 properties are precious given the limited amount
20 of land that is available for new development.
21 The commission should remain vigilant for such
22 opportunities as it continues to fine tune its

1 planning area recommendations over the coming
2 months.

3 And again, I have provided more detailed
4 written testimony, but I thank you for the
5 opportunity to participate this evening and for
6 considering my comments.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
8 Ruhlen, your comments are much appreciated.
9 Commissioners, does any Commissioner have a
10 clarifying question for Mr. Ruhlen or comment?

11 COMMISSIONER WOOD: I do, this is
12 Commissioner Wood. Was he speaking on behalf of a
13 company or just himself?

14 MR. RUHLEN: I am speaking on behalf of
15 myself, thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER WOOD: Okay.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Thank you,
18 Commissioner Wood. Commissioner Tyner, do you
19 have a question?

20 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Yes, it's just a
21 question for the gentleman. Because so much of
22 what we are doing, not just for the housing, but

1 throughout the city, it's just so interrelated
2 with the school system and the transportation and
3 all of the facilities that are just as much needed
4 as housing. I appreciate that and the written
5 testimony that you have later will be instructive
6 for us. Thanks again.

7 MR. RUHLEN: Thank you.

8 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thanks, Commissioner
9 Tyner. Mr. Ruhlen, I have a question if you are
10 able to answer or not. But I'm wondering if, this
11 is a really a new topic, and we had a speaker
12 bring it up earlier and it's just going to be in
13 front of us. With the statistics on housing
14 trends and predictions have you seen... or
15 including the ones that you cited that have taken
16 into account the sort of new environment due to
17 the corona pandemic and even what could extend
18 beyond the pandemic once it's over in terms of
19 permanent change affected by it.

20 MR. RUHLEN: I have, they are different
21 than what we heard from the earlier speaker. I've
22 actually seen much more study and analysis of the

1 impact of coronavirus on the retail market. That
2 really falls in line with what this comprehensive
3 plan is looking at in terms of anticipating and
4 planning for changes of formerly commercial
5 properties to allow for residential, that the
6 commercial market seem to be much more impacted.
7 And again, coronavirus is only one of many issues
8 that go into a comprehensive plan of this kind you
9 have to look at things like the tax base climate
10 change and walk a fine balance for and
11 affordability, not to mention affordability. I
12 think that pandemic situation has really laid out
13 some of the disparities that we have in this
14 region and I think support the idea of having more
15 housing.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, that was
17 a very good answer. A question and just a quick
18 comment back is... I also thought of that in terms
19 of affordability. Some of us are able to work
20 remotely from wherever in these new times, but
21 there are others who continue to be what I would
22 call onsite workers or in place workers and

1 nothing has changed for them other than that they
2 have riskier conditions to work in. But they
3 still physically need to go where they are going
4 to work every day. A lot of those types of jobs
5 require affordable housing so thank you, thank you
6 for that additional comment.

7 MR. RUHLEN: You're welcome. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: I have a
9 question.

10 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner
11 Goodman.

12 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: I'm not sure it
13 applies to just to this person giving testimony
14 but I'm happy to have his thoughts on it and I
15 would like other people's thoughts on it as we
16 move forward in this. We've always talked about
17 smart roof and high density housing around metro
18 stations. But we're talking tonight increased
19 need for housing but the question in my mind is
20 are we going to need so much of this increased
21 housing concentrated around rapid transit any
22 longer if people are going to be working from home

1 and are not going to be required to travel to
2 their workplaces. So, any thoughts on this are
3 welcome.

4 MR. RUHLEN: If you would like for me to
5 try to answer, and again it's a little bit off the
6 cuff I will try to do my best.

7 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Please do.

8 MR. RUHLEN: I have certainly been a
9 student of the smart growth effort in this area
10 through my career which is now heading into its
11 end of its 14th year in practicing land use and
12 zone law here. I do believe that the smart growth
13 development continues to be of critical importance
14 to our region we certainly have issues right now
15 with public transit. But hopefully those issues
16 are temporary and again these plans are seeking to
17 walk a line to find a balance between a bunch of
18 competing policies. And I do think that in terms
19 of other issues like transportation and climate
20 change the smart growth development continues to
21 be important.

22 At the same time, though, I think that

1 the idea of supporting housing accessibility. And
2 by that, I mean housing types that are, you know,
3 diverse and available to folks across the spectrum
4 of the income range does maybe warrant looking at
5 other sites that aren't maybe transit accessible
6 that might benefit from these changeovers. And in
7 that regard, again, it kind of gets back to the
8 policy and the comprehensive plan update to kind
9 look at opportunities where perhaps you have
10 traditionally single family area but maybe other
11 housing types may be appropriate there or areas
12 that have been traditionally commercial that might
13 be appropriate to change over even if they're not
14 be smart growth locations per se.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
16 Ruhlen, for those additional comments. Any other
17 Commissioners have any further questions for Mr.
18 Ruhlen? Nope, I think you have answered a few.
19 Thank you again we appreciate your comments.

20 MR. RUHLEN: Thank you.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Take care. Our next
22 speaker is Joe McClane of 216 Halpine Court. Is

1 Mr. McClane present virtually or able to join us
2 via phone or video.

3 MR. MCCLANE: Yes, good evening. Can
4 you hear me?

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, we can hear you
6 please proceed and welcome.

7 MR. MCCLANE: I am the president of
8 Cambridge walk to homeowner's association. I live
9 in Halpine Walk Court as you know which is on the
10 5900 block of Halpine Road near the Metro station.
11 Tonight, I am speaking on behalf of both of our
12 Cambridge Walk communities; there are two of them
13 in support of our written testimony that we have
14 already submitted to you. A petition supporting
15 our views has been submitted to the Planning
16 Commission from our neighbors that live on the
17 north side of the 5900 block of Halpine Road.

18 While backing the goals of the draft
19 comprehensive plan and most of its
20 recommendations, the over 100 residents of our
21 block firmly oppose the proposed cleavage of our
22 block into two separate zoning districts. For the

1 many reasons detailed in our written testimony we
2 believe the proposed division of an established
3 residential neighborhood of over 25 years in
4 direct contradiction of the stated goals of the
5 draft plan. This division and the differing
6 building standards would negatively affect the
7 residential character of our street which has
8 served for decades as a transitional buffer from
9 one of the highest density areas to a low density
10 neighborhood of single family homes.

11 It also fails to meet both of the goals
12 in both Zone and Zone 9. The Cambridge townhomes
13 communities represent the missing middle which is
14 so much needed in our city. The area to our south
15 both city and county are already approved for the
16 highest concentration of monolithic blocks of
17 workforce housing in the wider area. But a recent
18 Arlington County, Virginia, study about missing
19 middle housing details a high economic and racial
20 cause of a lack of diverse housing choices in a
21 neighborhood.

22 In addition, the roadway of our single

1 block is so narrow that traffic is concentrated in
2 one usable lane when cars are parked on both
3 sides. With the 5900 block, what would it be like
4 were there yet more high density construction
5 allowed on our block? Our pocket neighborhood has
6 received awards from peers in Rockville and
7 Montgomery County for our environmentally friendly
8 landscaping. But we also care deeply about the
9 building environment and how it affects the
10 quality of life of our neighborhood and our
11 neighbors both current and future. The nearby
12 high density neighborhood already lacks amenities
13 such as tot lots and dog walks which puts a strain
14 on our small green block.

15 The bottom line is that our current
16 infrastructure and amenities are insufficient for
17 current residents, Rockville, and county
18 authorities have already approved high density
19 workforce housing along one block of Ardennes
20 avenue accommodating almost 1,000 residents all
21 within this one block. Frankly, we are
22 approaching a breaking point again for the 5900

1 block what would it be like if yet more high
2 density construction allowed.

3 Let me be clear, we support the stated
4 goals of the draft comprehensive plan. Unlike
5 some neighborhoods we welcome development of
6 housing of different types at different price
7 points. But proposed development must be
8 sensitive to the existing character and
9 infrastructure of community. Smart growth does
10 not segregate high density workforce housing,
11 cheap by chow nor does it destroy the residential
12 character of the existing neighborhoods not even
13 our block. Please help us preserve our wonderful
14 neighborhood by allowing both sides of the 5900
15 block of Halpine Road to remain within the Zone 8
16 Twinbrook, the boundary between Zones 8 and 9 need
17 to remain within the northern property line of the
18 Alaire and the Metro property. Thank you for this
19 opportunity to present the testimony and reviews
20 of our neighborhood.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
22 McClane. And before I ask other Commissioners and

1 before you leave us, I do actually want to ask a
2 clarifying question to our staff who are listening
3 in. I don't know if, Mr. Larson, if you want to
4 take the question at least initially. Are you
5 there?

6 MR. LARSON: I'm here.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: So, I seem to -- I
8 don't have a map or the testimony they submitted
9 in front of me or open on my monitor, I'm aware of
10 it. And I followed pretty well what he was saying
11 when he referred to the 5900 block of Halpine Road
12 on both sides. But I do want to make sure that if
13 we do get into discussion on this one way or
14 another later just with Commissioners after when
15 public testimonies close that staff follows to the
16 "t" the areas that he's referring to in the event
17 the commission would want to consider a change in
18 moving between zones planning areas.

19 MR. LARSON: Yes.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Sorry, yes, so if we
21 needed --

22 MR. LARSON: Yes, I think that's when he

1 talks about zones, I think he is really referring
2 to the boundaries of the planning area.

3 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Planning Area 8 and
4 Planning Area 9. And testimony is that both sides
5 should be in. Staff is well aware that geography
6 as needed.

7 MR. LARSON: Yes, and as he pointed out,
8 this is a change from the past boundary and it was
9 done for a set of reasons but can be changed if
10 the commission so chooses. Yeah, that's really --
11 the boundaries are in organizing they are. Sorry,
12 I have to put my video on to help put things
13 together in what we see is affinity areas. But
14 they don't have any other tangible rationale
15 behind it otherwise, just as far as it changes how
16 your demographics and your housing counts work
17 out. But the recommendations can still be the
18 same as far as policies or new zones. So, yeah,
19 we would be happy to discuss with you and
20 entertain a change in the boundary as they are
21 asking.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, and our

1 process is to deliberate on this, the Commission
2 will deliberate on this in the months ahead, but
3 any Commissioners have any clarifying questions
4 for Mr. McClane while he is on with us?

5 Commissioner Tyner, do you have your hand up?

6 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Yeah, I just want
7 to comment that neighborhood has been part of not
8 only their own area, but Twinbrook Citizens
9 Association, or Community Association, that now
10 it's called for over 50 years. We last looked at
11 this in 1972, when they were putting in the church
12 on the corner which was to have been a firehouse
13 once upon a time. So, I mean, there is a long,
14 long history for this area of Rockville to be a
15 part of the same association through everything.
16 They have their own -- their homeowners at the
17 moment, but is still a part of the overall area in
18 Planning Area 8. And that's what they really --
19 what they are talking about. And I appreciate
20 Clark's comments because they are just moving a
21 boundary here. Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: And I just have a

1 comment. As one who drives up that street often,
2 I can understand Mr. McClane's comments about
3 single lane dodging between cars on both sides of
4 the street.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you,
6 Commissioners. Anyone else? Okay. Thanks again,
7 Mr. McClane, for your comments.

8 MR. MCCLANE: Thank you.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Next on the list
10 George Liechti, if I've said that correctly.

11 MR. LIECHTI: That's close enough.
12 George Liechti.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Good enough.
14 Welcome.

15 MR. LIECHTI: Much appreciate it. I
16 don't mean to hammer you guys too much with this,
17 nut I am in the same homeowner's association as
18 the previous speaker. And I live at 221 Halpine
19 Walk Court. My wife and I moved here from the
20 Shady Grove area and we have been a part of the
21 Twinbrook community for about 5 years now. And my
22 testimony is specific to proposed rezoning changes

1 on the 5900 block of Halpine Road.

2 Since moving here, I have watched the
3 prevalent large construction of high-density
4 apartment complexes begin to work their way down
5 the street on Ardennes Avenue. I've often
6 wondered if our little suburban area can absorb
7 this many new residents. So, this was a concern
8 prior to this 2040 plan. But then when I read the
9 city's proposed redevelopment plan for our area, I
10 was shocked that even more higher density housing
11 was in the works for the planning area essentially
12 on either side of our apartment, on either side of
13 our townhouse communities. And I was upset enough
14 to propose and help change and make our draft
15 letter from our HOA in response to the planners'
16 proposal. Our letterheads have had universal
17 support from all of the residences of both
18 townhouse communities as well as the larger area.

19 Again, our major issue of concern is the
20 proposed plan to effectively remove our block from
21 the rest of Twinbrook in Planning Area 8 and
22 parcel off our section and move it over to

1 Planning Area 9. I liked that when the plan was
2 developed it came up with key issues that were
3 specific to the residences to each planning area.
4 However, when I was struck by, when I looked
5 through them, I looked at the concerns raised for
6 residents of Zone 9, they appeared to apply to not
7 mirror any of my neighbors. And in contrast when
8 I looked at these areas that were specific to Zone
9 8, I felt a connection to all of those things.

10 So when you include things like a desire
11 to maintain a residential character of a planning
12 area, a need to address housing stock and housing
13 maintenance concern over the limited diversity in
14 as well as availability of affordable housing; an
15 interest in reduced traffic congestion and a need
16 to improve pedestrian safety, those are the key
17 interests to me an my neighbors. And when I
18 looked at the list of concerns, it became pretty
19 clear that these proposed rezoning changes for
20 focus area 1, didn't address any of them. So
21 despite being against the rezoning, I support the
22 stated goals in the draft comprehensive plan,

1 providing that workforce housing is a worthy goal.
2 But packing them all into two square blocks really
3 isn't. Clearly, those two square blocks in an
4 underrepresented community that already lacks
5 sufficient infrastructure support for its current
6 and future residents, this is not in the best
7 interest of the city, in my view, or the Twinbrook
8 community.

9 And I strongly endorse our letter to the
10 Planning Commission resoundingly backed by the
11 community and our proposed issuance is to allow
12 the boarder between Planning Areas 8 and 9 to
13 remain as it has been for over 25 years between
14 the northern property line of the Alaire and the
15 Metro property. More housing is fine, but diverse
16 housing is better and smart growth doesn't mean
17 monolithic apartment complexes. And I thank you
18 for listening.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
20 Liechti. Commissioners, any questions or
21 comments? Apparently not, but thanks again for
22 providing us with your testimony.

1 MR. LIECHTI: Sure thing.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, have a good
3 evening. The last speaker on my list is Meera
4 Murgai. Is Meera here with us?

5 MS. MURGAI: Yes, can you hear me?

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: We can but there is
7 an echo. Can somebody help her to get rid of that
8 echo?

9 SPEAKER: Yes, we are working on that.

10 MS. MURGAI: Too many devices on the
11 same house and we are all working remotely and
12 video conferencing for our day jobs and this is
13 what happens. Does it sound better now?

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: It does and I can
15 completely appreciate that, I've got computers all
16 over the place at my house.

17 MS. MURGAI: This is ridiculous, but we
18 are so we can work that way.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Welcome.

20 MS. MURGAI: Okay, I can get started.
21 Thank you very much for allowing me this
22 opportunity to give testimony over the Planning

1 Commission's proposed plan. I too am here to talk
2 about the 5900 block of Halpine Road. I have been
3 a resident of this neighborhood for 4 to 5 years
4 now. And it's interesting, my husband and I
5 actually pursued this neighborhood specifically
6 because we were in pursuit of this missing middle
7 type of housing that I now appreciate is in very,
8 very high demand and in low supply within
9 Rockville City. In fact, this is one of the only
10 neighborhoods within this price point with these
11 characteristics that we could actually find that
12 we could afford to live in.

13 I bring this up, because the proposed
14 change in the 5900 block of Zone 8 to Zone 9 as
15 you heard in the past, in the last two
16 testimonies, would actually affect this missing
17 middle neighborhood very much. They're already,
18 as you have also heard, are getting or have gotten
19 many high density housing units in our
20 neighborhood of which I am really highly
21 supportive of but what we are actually missing is
22 this lower density is so sorely needed and missing

1 the middle.

2 And what I think that could really help
3 matters if we could stay with the Twinbrook
4 community we would not only keep the same
5 character that we had with our neighbors which we
6 so much enjoy but we could enable a lot more of
7 these townhouses keeping to (inaudible). That
8 would definitely help people like me and my
9 husband who came here for our jobs We still like
10 to be close to our high transit such as the Metro,
11 even given our remote working capabilities, even
12 as we go forward, future work even past COVID. We
13 will probably still need access to high transit
14 opportunities to get to our jobs. And there are
15 many people in this middle income bracket finding
16 themselves this is the case so it's not just
17 people at the lower income levels that do
18 thoroughly need housing, but also people in the
19 middle that need access to these amenities.

20 You've also heard about how crowded our
21 street is on Halpine Road. We also look out with
22 great interest for different amenities such as the

1 elementary school in Twinbrook, which I know is
2 outside the purview of this Planning Commission
3 but perhaps we should also recognize with the
4 higher density of residence that come to the area
5 a higher density of elementary students who need
6 access to those schools also as necessary. That
7 school is already overcrowded and is in need of a
8 lot of these to bring it up to par with the rest
9 of the exemplary schools that we have in Rockville
10 city.

11 So, in summary, I would like to propose
12 that we include the block, both sides of this
13 block, in zoning so that we can maintain character
14 and maintain the missing middle or shore it up.
15 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Ms.
17 Murgai. I have a clarifying question. I
18 appreciate your testimony, it's well-received.
19 And I just wanted to make sure as I listened, so
20 as the previous two speakers you also support the
21 adjustment to the planning areas in the area we
22 are talking about so that they all lie within

1 Planning Area 8 is one of your points. But are
2 you also saying or advocating for us to promote
3 greener, do a better job of promoting the missing
4 middle, specifically in Planning Area 8, or is
5 that just more generally something we should look
6 up citywide?

7 MS. MURGAI: Yes, thank you for that
8 question. So, yes, to your first point to
9 clarify, I'm advocating for us remaining both
10 sides of this block remaining inside of 8.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay.

12 MS. MURGAI: Any particular not
13 necessary to this neighborhood but to surrounding
14 areas we do need to take a better look at the
15 missing middle, I do know that that was one of the
16 priorities or one of the points that was raised in
17 many parts of the company's plan. But a lot of
18 the zoning issues that have been brought up
19 tonight and also in that plan that kind of miss
20 out on our actual list of this.

21 And this is actually a big deal. I was
22 not kidding while we were looking for places to

1 live, we could just not find anything that fit
2 these characteristics and we are very happy to be
3 on this block in our neighborhood, but we love the
4 community but it's literally is one of a kind.
5 And I really want to see where my peers have that
6 (inaudible) find the right housing. There really
7 is not this type of housing in different parts of
8 the city. And it's kind of goes back to the
9 things what some of the other testimonies have
10 raised is that when we talk about diversity,
11 housing stock, I think it's important to talk
12 about diversity and where that housing stock is
13 located as well.

14 So, yes, we do give a high importance in
15 housing. This has been quite an issue in the
16 entire D.C. metro area. But it cannot be
17 concentrated in one area and the missing middle
18 cannot be concentrated in one area as well.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, thank you for
20 clarifying. I guess to summarize, you were -- you
21 support the neighborhood feel and the residential
22 neighborhoods as they are, but find ways to

1 accommodate more people such as townhomes and new
2 types of housing that one would not call high
3 density in those places, but higher than what is
4 currently there, but still maintaining a certain
5 neighborhood character that is appreciated.

6 MS. MURGAI: Yes, thank you.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Thanks.
8 Commissioners, any other questions. I guess not.
9 Well, thank you again for your testimony.

10 And that actually, I don't have any
11 other people on my list that would like to speak
12 tonight. So, I would ask staff, I don't know if
13 we had any other procedure, anyone else that's
14 calling in or anything or if we had anyone that I
15 am missing.

16 MR. LARSON: Well, I would see if anyone
17 logged in or expressed their interest during the
18 meeting or right up before the meeting they could
19 speak now. But as you say, I don't think I see
20 anyone extra who has joined, so I think we have
21 gone through our list this evening.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, well, very

1 good. We got pretty good testimony for doing this
2 virtually on diverse issues. I believe that we
3 could go to the next topic. I don't think that
4 our intent here is to have Planning Commission
5 discussion, though. I certainly would, before we
6 move on, ask if any Commissioners do feel -- do
7 have any comments they would like to make while we
8 are still on the topic of public testimony and
9 maybe even the topics that were presented to us.

10 COMMISSIONER WOOD: Hi, this is
11 Commissioner Wood, Reverend Wood. I think it's
12 important to keep in mind some of the references
13 to COVID-19 was like when we're -- when it's over.
14 We don't know when it's going to be over. We are
15 looking to go in to 2021 with residue from
16 COVID-19. So I think it's important to keep in
17 mind that we do have to start thinking around
18 transportation and other issues as related to
19 COVID-19.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, I would agree
21 and I look forward to our ongoing discussion on
22 that in the sessions ahead even following our

1 testimony that there is a lot to be said about the
2 coronavirus, but for our purposes here as planning
3 commissioners that is a big chunk of what there is
4 to be said in looking at it. And you're right, we
5 are in it right now. We don't know, we don't know
6 what the future holds.

7 Any other commissioners? Commissioner
8 Hadley go ahead.

9 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Was Commissioner
10 Goodman trying to speak? I will yield to her if
11 she is.

12 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: That's all right,
13 I'll wait.

14 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Okay.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Go ahead, I
16 apologize. I don't have the hand up thing
17 tonight, but we're working it out. You're next,
18 Commissioner Goodman.

19 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Well, I was just
20 going to say I think we have had a lot of good
21 testimony form the Halpine Walk folks and I would
22 like to say that I for one support their request

1 to leave the boundaries as they are. I think they
2 had some good arguments and it appears to me that
3 there are a lot of representatives from that block
4 that felt the same way about it. So I would just
5 propose that we deal with that issue right now.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Well, we have
7 concluded the testimony, so, Commissioners, what
8 do you think? I think just to clarify, yes, we
9 had three people testify, but we also received
10 other written testimony including, I believe a
11 petition with more names if I'm not mistaken on
12 that. But regardless, it seems like it is not a
13 change that we need to make, but rather a change
14 that we may simply want to prevent. In other
15 words, leave it as it is. Because the plan right
16 now proposes to make the changes. Is that
17 correct? So we would say don't make that change
18 in the current draft of the plan.

19 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Mr. Chairman.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Sure, Commissioner
21 Hadley.

22 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: This is not the

1 point I was going to raise earlier. But I am
2 inclined to be friendly to idea of not making a
3 change but if we have two meetings to poll the
4 testimony. I think procedurally we might hesitate
5 to make any change in so with public testimony.
6 Not that that would necessarily change your mind
7 but in fairness give everybody a chance and then
8 if you come back and it's pretty easily again.

9 MR. DUMAIS: This is Nick, and I just
10 wanted to follow Commissioner Hadley's comments.
11 If the commission is interested in taking a policy
12 position it's probably way into an advertised work
13 session do that. Because it's like an advertised
14 as public testimony, although comments by
15 commissioners are perfectly fine. There couldn't
16 be discussions and votes on policy issues.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thanks for weighing
18 in today. Commissioner Tyner, you also have a
19 comment.

20 COMMISSIONER TYNER: I agree with my two
21 colleagues in both ways except our procedures have
22 always been that we wait until all of our public

1 hearings are over because we may not know exactly
2 what has been submitted in writing, let alone
3 whether we will have other kinds of commentary at
4 our next hearing. Not so much on this particular
5 issue but on housing and some other areas, I'm
6 sure there will be people coming forward the next
7 time. I would feel much more comfortable making
8 any kind of a decision on anything that comes
9 forward. Once we see the record close and then we
10 see what we are dealing with. Because you never
11 know what might pop up. I agree with our
12 attorney, believe it or not.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: The eagerness around
14 the issue is duly noted, but I feel based on the
15 comments thus far we might not have enough for
16 that such a motion to carry if we were to. So I
17 would say let's follow the advice.

18 Unless any other commissioner wants to
19 weigh in one way or another, I would say with all
20 due respect to Commissioner Goodman suggestion
21 that we just leave it as a comment and follow the
22 advice of our legal counsel and continue this

1 after public record as closed.

2 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Mr. Chair, I'd
3 like to come back to the comment I was going to
4 offer before we were going to --

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Oh, I'm sorry, yes,
6 please do.

7 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: I'm greatly
8 offended.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Technical issues.

10 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: It's just a
11 reminder from me in referring to the need to
12 consider changes in the pandemic environment. We
13 are also recognizing that the variation in our
14 language we are also including articulation of
15 post pandemic environment there may be long term
16 changes that are influenced by this time. So I
17 hate to leave on just this COVID or pandemic type
18 changes. But we will see if there will be rapid
19 change in a number, including in a section of what
20 kind of housing.

21 But I'm wondering, and we don't have to
22 discuss it now, but if we can just put a footnote

1 or a placeholder, it may be that when our hearings
2 are through that we may want to consider adding a
3 sort of a flexibility clause out of another
4 existing clause. But there may need to be a
5 sooner review than 10 years on the issues that
6 we've discussed tonight because really the trends
7 and the data are either only barely beginning for
8 me or I'd even be emerging yet. I think I would
9 hate to see us adopt some view of the post
10 pandemic environment in anticipation of some
11 assumption that, in fact, never occurs or occurs
12 doubly or whatever. Thank you.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you,
14 Commissioner Hadley. I would add the thought as
15 well, you know we did have one testimony that kind
16 of was suggesting that, I think pause was the word
17 that they used with this process because of the
18 coronavirus and, you know, that seed has been
19 planted in our minds. Maybe a pause isn't a pause
20 but a slower -- a slow down on that issue or those
21 issues, but something to consider as we go forward
22 with this.

1 And also, you know, I mean, there is
2 really going to be a lot to unpack when we do get
3 into our deliberations. The coronavirus in some
4 ways is simply accelerating trends we already know
5 about and have already seen like retail under the
6 stress, people buying things online and people
7 being able to work remotely at home. Those all
8 started before the pandemic and they're just
9 accelerated.

10 At the same time, though, it might even
11 -- that acceleration might bring new things that
12 completely the opposite of our assumptions and
13 some of that came through this evening with some
14 of the -- I think on smart growth and just the
15 questions is the smart growth model still hold,
16 yes or no, and not to get into that tonight.
17 There was certainly a lot. It was -- I enjoyed
18 the testimony and the thoughts and comments and
19 the ideas raised. It was a lot to think about.
20 Anyone else?

21 MR. LARSON: Mr. Chair. This is Clark
22 Larson.

1 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hi, go ahead.

2 MR. LARSON: I just had one question for
3 you. I know this might be a little tone deaf to
4 what you were just saying about not speeding up or
5 slowing down. I wondered if you wanted to
6 entertain the advertising the closing record date.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: It's a good segue.

8 MR. LARSON: Yeah, I know. Let me just
9 complete the part of what you just said. We feel
10 that it's important for the public to know at some
11 point when the deadline is. It's certainly been
12 extended past two weeks after the last public
13 hearing date before. You could, it just is up to
14 you.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yeah, and that sort
16 of actually before -- thank you, Mr. Larson,
17 because we really shouldn't move on to any further
18 agenda item until we address that. That's part of
19 the agenda item until we address that. That is
20 part of this agenda item is part is the -- the
21 staff has suggested that we set a date to close
22 the public record. But my comments, I was

1 thinking more post closure so it's just our own
2 deliberations on the points that have been already
3 raised. We're not too at odds in that thought
4 vein. But to do that we would specifically need,
5 let me look at our agenda because I know you
6 presented it to us. There was a date, all right
7 the thing between monitors.

8 MR. LARSON: Yeah, we suggested October
9 7th.

10 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: October 7th at the
11 close of business as the end date for when written
12 testimony can still be submitted to us, to the
13 commission. And that would actually mark our next
14 public hearing is September 23, thank you. Yeah,
15 and so that would actually be two weeks from that
16 date, too, which seems like an ample period of
17 time for anyone to digest and get back to us on
18 whatever thing might be raised at that next
19 meeting if that were what was driving their
20 written testimony.

21 Commissioners, what is the general
22 consensus on the staff's suggestion on that date?

1 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: I have a question.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner Pitman.

3 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: I know we talked a

4 lot at the beginning of the meeting what was that

5 it was to advertise to the public. Mr. Larson,

6 what -- how will this go back out to the public,

7 about the testimony date ending? Will you guys

8 run it again in Rockville Reports? Will you

9 contact the civic associations again to let them

10 know that the deadlines are October 7th or

11 whatever deadline it is? What kind of public

12 contact will there be post public hearing to make

13 sure that people know when the deadline is for the

14 comments?

15 MR. LARSON: Right, I think that's --

16 you're right on. Every media outlet, every way of

17 communication we have used in the past, including

18 letters to official agencies, but also social

19 media, emails, website, I think we should use it

20 all. To let everyone know, once you decide what

21 the closure date is, that it will be closing and

22 even if you have submitted testimony already, you

1 can submit more but this will. We are letting
2 people know this will be the opportunity to give
3 the Planning Commission your thoughts and comments
4 before they start deliberating on it at the work
5 sessions. So, yeah, I would imagine that we would
6 use every avenue that we can.

7 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: So, outreach
8 continues after the last public hearing?

9 MR. LARSON: After the last public
10 hearing on the 23rd, we could do one more blast.
11 I imagine even late this week, even next week. If
12 you do decide on date of closure tonight, we would
13 everyone know that there is another public hearing
14 coming up for oral testimony and the date of the
15 last opportunity to provide written testimony. I
16 don't know if we would do all of those media
17 outlets and communication avenues between the 23rd
18 and the 7th. But, you know, social media
19 certainly, the easy stuff online probably, not
20 letters to all of the agencies again.

21 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: Okay. Okay, thank
22 you.

1 MR. LARSON: Then I have a question
2 related to that. How would it affect staff's
3 planning and execution of all of that campaign
4 effort, communication effort if we did not set
5 that date tonight but rather at the next hearing?
6 So, two-week delay. Well, we would probably go
7 about it the same way, but you would give any
8 member of the Rockville community, the general
9 public less notice. It really wouldn't change my
10 work, this is my job, I'm going to do it anyway.
11 It would just -- if it is the 7th and you decide
12 on the 23rd, people would only have 2 more weeks,
13 so we're just seeing that giving this advance
14 notice, if you decide tonight, is more of a
15 service to the public.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, I don't know
17 if it's a question for you or Mr. Dumais, but to
18 set that date tonight is not the actual closure of
19 the public record. The record would actually
20 close on the 7th? I think we have a meeting, no
21 we would meet after that. Or would it be that we
22 would vote on it tonight and then it just sets in

1 motion and it ends at that time? That's all
2 that's needed.

3 MR. DUMAIS: My understanding is that
4 they have, you would vote on it tonight, you would
5 not need a separate vote to close the record. So,
6 you could keep the record open, for example a week
7 behind here public hearing, your last public
8 hearing without actually taking a vote to close.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, so that's what
10 it is. Thank you. Commissioners, further
11 comments? Commissioner Tyner.

12 COMMISSIONER TYNER: I just would like
13 to comment that setting the time tonight gives
14 people another whole month to get their act
15 together for which they should have been thinking
16 in the last 7 months. I think it's particularly
17 good to set the date because after supposing that
18 on the 9th of October is the closing date, we only
19 have four meetings after that to begin looking at
20 all of this material. So obviously we are not
21 going to finish, in my opinion obviously we won't
22 finish it up this year. But the sooner that the

1 public knows that this is a hard fast date bang,
2 we could, they could proceed and we could proceed
3 too.

4 I would also note, in the past there
5 have been occasions where when we were doing the
6 Rockville Pike plan, we had from the public
7 hearings we had a closing public hearing, closing
8 the public record which we then extended because
9 all of a sudden in between the two there seemed to
10 be a whole lot more activity. So that was still
11 even though we voted tonight and picked the
12 particular date it would still allow us
13 opportunity if there was a huge surge of something
14 and we wished to discuss extending it another week
15 or something after that, we could still do that
16 too. But I really think we should think in terms
17 of how many meetings we have scheduled at the
18 moment of this year. Because we've only got one
19 in November and one in December.

20 So, we need to keep our head of steam
21 going for a whole lot of this stuff. As you
22 mentioned the COVID-19, a lot of the things we

1 will need to look at, as I mentioned before, in
2 part II is all our bits and pieces of what the
3 city's going to do in a particular planning area
4 because some of that depending on how the budgets
5 are going to look, we may want to take a look at
6 that too as we get into the nitty gritty of part
7 II, I think part I we've pretty well worked on.
8 Thank you, sir.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you,
10 Commissioner Tyner. Other Commissioners?

11 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Mr. Chair.

12 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner Hadley.

13 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: If I understand
14 correctly the consideration is whether we will be
15 closing the public record as to Volume II planning
16 areas as a question of a higher plan.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: That's a fair
18 question and I actually assumed it was the plan,
19 but, Mr. Dumais, can you please tell us, are we
20 closing the public record on both volumes or only
21 on Volume II?

22 MR. DUMAIS: This might be a good

1 question for staff because I don't know if we had
2 previously closed the record on volume I which was
3 handled in a separate series of public hearings.
4 So, I'll defer to staff on this one. If that is,
5 in fact, the case, then really the testimony here
6 technically should be limited to the second volume
7 of the comp plan and we would only be closing the
8 public hearing, excuse me the public record for
9 that second volume.

10 MR. LARSON: This is Clark. Yes, that
11 is my understanding although we recognize there
12 might be comments and discussions about the
13 planning areas' volume that pertain and go back to
14 the elements. So, there's a lot of crossover
15 here. Previously, we did have a public record
16 open for Volume 1. We hadn't produced Volume II
17 yet or drafted the planning areas yet, so that was
18 closed. And then we came back and did a bunch of
19 work in the office to produce the areas volume and
20 now that is what open today. So, I wouldn't say
21 that we would prohibit people from speaking on
22 anything in Volume I. But we are really looking

1 for feedback and testimony on planning areas
2 volume.

3 But I believe closing the public record
4 would close it out for the entire comprehensive
5 plan at this stage Unless the Planning Commission
6 decided there was another reason to reopen it
7 again before they take action and send it to the
8 Mayor and Council. But of course, the Mayor and
9 Council will have another opportunity for
10 testimony and their own review.

11 MR. LEVY: Mr. Chair, if I might, it's
12 David Levy.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, welcome, Mr.
14 Levy.

15 MR. LEVY: In our communications to the
16 public we have said that the primary focus is on
17 the planning areas, but we have said that
18 testimony could come in on other parts of the
19 plan. And so, I think we have generally
20 communicated that the plan is open. In prior
21 communications with the city attorney's office, I
22 have understood that when the plan is open, the

1 plan is open.

2 So, we kind of segment these things, but
3 if somebody gives testimony on the plan when the
4 record is open. They are giving testimony on the
5 plan. You know, they might give it on a
6 completely different portion than we're thinking
7 about. That doesn't mean the Commissioner, the
8 Mayor and Council have to take that up at that
9 time. But if the record is open for the plan then
10 its open is what I have understood. So, if you
11 were to close the record, you would be closing it
12 for the plan.

13 MR. LARSON: Yes, I would agree with
14 that. That makes sense to me.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: All right, I will
16 also agree. We didn't have a plan II when plan I
17 was closed so it closed the plan. Now in two
18 parts but it closed the plan. And we ourselves
19 are telling everybody that we want to harmonize
20 and that these are kind of interrelated components
21 so if you want to see the next few weeks or the
22 next few months open it's all interrelated.

1 Commissioner Tyner, go ahead.

2 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Just a personal
3 comment. We did all of the elements in part I.
4 And that was based on what we had talked about and
5 what the public had told us and all that. And
6 when we were doing part II, we had in essence
7 operationalized some of those elements that we
8 talked about. And there is always my interest
9 that once we were through with part II in making
10 whatever adjustments and whatever we still had an
11 opportunity to look at the elements in part I in
12 case we would want to strengthen some part of it
13 on the environmental area or housing or whatever
14 before that actually got clocked in and we set it
15 up to Mayor and Council. There is always the
16 opportunity to adjust the broad brush stuff based
17 on what we've done in the planning areas if in
18 fact it doesn't look like we got a whole lot of
19 stuff but you just never know. And that's just a
20 comment for everybody's edification.

21 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Mr. Chair.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Mr. Hadley.

1 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: If I may to just
2 put something on the table. I move that we
3 approve closure of the public record on the 2040
4 plan in its entirety both parts in Volume I and
5 Volume II on October 7th, 2020.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Is there a --
7 actually could I offer a friendly amendment as
8 close of business October 7, 2020?

9 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Of course, agreed.

10 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Is there a second to
11 that?

12 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: I'll second that.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you. Sorry,
14 who seconded that? I don't see a name on the
15 screen.

16 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: Pitman.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Oh, Commissioner
18 Pitman, thank you. There we go. All right.

19 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: For discussion I
20 would just offer that the idea of sending notice
21 out as early as possible. After tonight's
22 meeting, after this is passed would be good. And

1 that notice could make it clear that the feedback
2 that will be entertained both at the next hearing
3 and up to the cutoff date would be on any part of
4 the plan or has the two parts coordinate.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yeah, the only thing
6 that I might add for discussion is that there was
7 some talk of October, November, December in our
8 agenda. I don't think that has anything to do
9 with when we would want to close or this motion to
10 close on the 7th. But I will say I don't know if
11 we'll get an update later on this evening on that
12 or if I would have to as chair work on that to
13 flush out to know what the rest of our year looks
14 like, our calendar year. So, we are assuming they
15 will all be work sessions, they may or may not be.
16 It's something that we will have to address, maybe
17 even if not tonight at the next meeting just to
18 get a better feel of that.

19 Other than that, any other discussion or
20 should we proceed to a vote? No? Okay, let's
21 vote Commissioner by Commissioner. I see
22 Commissioner Pitman first.

1 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: Yes.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You vote yes? Okay.

3 Commissioner Hadley.

4 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Yes.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner Wood.

6 COMMISSIONER WOOD: No, I think it

7 should be extended.

8 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Commissioner

9 Goodman.

10 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Yes.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes. Am I missing

12 anyone? Commissioner Tyner, how do you vote?

13 COMMISSIONER TYNER: I think we need to

14 set the date, so this is for part I and part II to

15 be closed?

16 MR. DUMAIS: Correct.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: That's the motion,

18 yes.

19 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Okay, I vote no.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You also vote no?

21 COMMISSIONER TYNER: They should be --,

22 I don't want them, we are concentrating on part

1 II. We need to finish part II and then we can
2 move on with part I if we wish to make any
3 adjustments on and beyond that. It might be a
4 moot point, but you never know.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: So, you're casting a
6 no vote on this, we would have to rephrase the
7 motion to your point. But I'm going to also vote
8 no. And so, the motion isn't going to pass, it's
9 going to tie 3-3.

10 And let's consider what Commissioner
11 Tyner just said about the two parts. I want to
12 hear what your point is there.

13 COMMISSIONER TYNER: I don't have a bit
14 of problem with doing a motion if it's only part
15 II this time.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Well, is
17 there any discussion on that, Commissioners?

18 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: I would just offer
19 a point; I'm not violently opposed to leaving it
20 open other than part II. My point is, it really
21 is dragging. I want you to prepare the public
22 notice this fair and says it will be proposing at

1 both points and at the next hearing or written
2 comments to get objection and, as Commissioner
3 Tyner said, we can extend it. My concern is that
4 no one pays attention and then we go for another
5 month or two and how much shorter it would make
6 subsidy process by simply delaying. I think this
7 would be a way of encouraging people, if you want
8 more time to ask for it.

9 MR. DUMAIS: And this is just for
10 clarification purposes. So, it sounds as if, when
11 the Planning Commission initially considered
12 volume I, they had a comment period that
13 ultimately was closed. The comment period for the
14 plan obviously focused on volume II but able to
15 accept comments on both volumes of the plan was
16 then reopened and we are considering closing that
17 only for volume II but leaving it open for volume
18 I. I just want to be sure that is what the
19 commission is talking about if not I have some
20 concern that there is a little bit of lack of
21 clarity there. Maybe I am missing something.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: It adds with our

1 earlier fall of conversation. I think you have
2 stated it correctly that the motion to close the
3 whole thing, parts I and II did not pass. We
4 could have -- if a Commissioner wants to make
5 another motion, it sounds like there's greater
6 support on closing the record on Volume II. We
7 can have such a motion and it could be voted on
8 and it could pass. And I would say the
9 interpretation of that is this evening they are
10 saying any comments on Volume II of master plan
11 must be submitted by COB on October 7th. There
12 would probably have to be another vote.

13 MR. DUMAIS: I want to obviously defer
14 to the will of the Commission. From a practical
15 perspective, I think that might be very difficult
16 for staff to administer. If, for example, it
17 would require that staff were to review each one
18 that came in after the closure of volume II,
19 determine whether or not it related to volume II
20 or Volume I and then reject it if staff determines
21 that it related to Volume II. And I do not think
22 that is practical. And I think the result of that

1 is that I would certainly recommend that staff
2 simply accept all comments that came in regardless
3 of the commission's vote to close the testimony on
4 Volume II. Because the concern will be, of
5 course, that staff will reject testimony and the
6 person who submitted the testimony obviously would
7 object to that.

8 I would recommend very strongly that the
9 commission, whatever the commission decides,
10 closes testimony uniformly and if it chooses then,
11 after a work session or two to reopen the public
12 comment period for Volume I, that would take a
13 separate motion and do that. And I hope that
14 makes sense and the last I'll say on it.
15 Obviously, the commission can vote however it
16 would like to but I'm very concerned about the
17 workability of that.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, that take on
19 Commissioners, any responses?

20 MR. LEVY: If I might please, Mr.
21 Chairman.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, please, Mr.

1 Levy.

2 MR. LEVY: This public hearing and this
3 public testimony period was advertised primarily
4 as for the planning areas. But we recognize along
5 the lines of what Mr. Dumais is saying, that
6 people might submit testimony that feels more like
7 part I than part II. The advertisement was just
8 to communicate, and if you have comments on the
9 plan, go ahead and make them whether or not it's
10 the planning areas. But it was primarily on the
11 planning areas because that's what the Planning
12 Commission was releasing at that time. So, there
13 was no particular intention and there certainly
14 was no advertisement with an affirmative statement
15 we are requesting testimony on the elements
16 portion of the plan. Though I guess my point of
17 view that it would be a little bit odd to close II
18 and leave I open based on what we advertised to
19 the public.

20 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Mr. Chair.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, Mr. Hadley.

22 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Look all... well

1 maybe the better part of discretion or something.
2 I'm cynical, let's kick this can down the road
3 until the next meeting and the next public
4 hearing. At that point, after we have that public
5 hearing we can decide as to whether we make the
6 uniform motion as to closure or requites of the
7 whole thing. We may be just premature to try to
8 consider it now.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: That's an option.
10 Commissioner Tyner, go ahead.

11 COMMISSIONER TYNER: I want to thank our
12 attorney, Mr. Dumais, for his proposition. And
13 Dave as usual. Mr. Levy came forward with his
14 comment and I am better than both of them, I would
15 suggest that I'd be willing to change my vote on
16 the original proposal. Mr. Hadley.

17 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: What can I tell
18 you?

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: I think that we
20 would need -- I would like to ask Mr. Dumais if we
21 are in order with voting on a motion that did not
22 pass.

1 MR. DUMAIS: I think you may just want
2 to make a new motion. Because the initial motion
3 failed so we would just after discussion you make
4 a new motion. That's if Mr. Wasilak agrees.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: If we are in order,
6 then I would entertain a new motion for our
7 further discussion.

8 COMMISSIONER WOOD: Before we do that,
9 can I say something?

10 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Sure, go ahead.

11 COMMISSIONER WOOD: I'm getting an awful
12 lot of feedback. Someone's got an open mike, it's
13 giving a lot of feedback, I can hardly hear what's
14 going on.

15 MS. GILLES: Can I just say one.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes.

17 MS. GILLES: From a practical
18 standpoint, about closing of the -- I will say
19 I've had to in the past couple days and the most
20 recent one speaking with these Rockville
21 neighborhood Association last night. It would be
22 really helpful, as a staff person, to give

1 residents a date because I've been asked. And I
2 generally give -- you know, and I generally say,
3 and this is actually more than we generally give.
4 It's usually one week after the close of the
5 public hearing. This is two weeks after. I will
6 just say that people have been asking for a date
7 to feel some assurances.

8 So, it really would be helpful to give
9 closure to it and to be able to provide that date.
10 Just a practical on the ground update.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Ms.
12 Gilles. And also, I just want to make sure from
13 the staff comments that I heard that no one feels
14 there is confusion amongst the public about that
15 such a closure that we are talking about Planning
16 Area 2 but they know that it follows planning area
17 one which was already dealt with and this would
18 close the whole thing. Any second thoughts on
19 that?

20 MS. GILLES: That is very much
21 emphasizing that this is about the neighborhood
22 specific areas and we talked about the city

1 elements previously and we are good with that and
2 now we are moving into the second part.

3 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Sounds good, fair
4 enough. And we didn't really get a lot of
5 Planning Area 1 type stuff this evening, so it
6 seems like it's working. Okay. Commissioner
7 Hadley.

8 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: I'm here. I will
9 make an all new motion, that we close the public
10 record on the entire Rockville 2040 comprehensive
11 plan and this is on October 7th, including both
12 Volumes I and II.

13 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Second.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: It's been moved and
15 seconded. Let's vote Commissioner by
16 Commissioner. Commissioner Tyner, how do you
17 vote?

18 COMMISSIONER TYNER: Yes.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner Hadley,
20 how do you vote?

21 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Yes.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner

1 Goodman, how do you vote?

2 COMMISSIONER GOODMAN: Yes.

3 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner Wood,
4 how do you vote?

5 COMMISSIONER WOOD: Yes.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Commissioner Pitman,
7 how do you vote?

8 COMMISSIONER PITMAN: Yes.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, and the chair
10 will also vote yes. So that motion carries 6-0
11 with no abstentions. There you have it, October
12 7th, COB. I think with that, we are done.

13 (Whereupon, the PROCEEDINGS were
14 adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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CITY OF ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

MEETING NO. 17-2020

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1A
PUBLIC HEARING ON VOLUME II: PLANNING AREAS, OF
THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S DRAFT ROCKVILLE 2040
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

1 PARTICIPANTS:

2 Planning Commission:

- 3 CHARLES LITTLEFIELD, Chair
- 4 ANNE GOODMAN, Commissioner
- 5 SARAH MILLER, Commissioner
- 6 DON HADLEY, Commissioner
- 7 SUSAN PITMAN, Commissioner
- 8 JOHN TYNER, II, Commissioner
- 9 REV. JANE E. WOOD, Commissioner

10 Staff:

- 11 CLARK LARSON, Principal Planner
- 12 DAVID LEVY, Assistant Director of Planning
- 13 JIM WASILAK, Staff Liaison
- 14 ANDREA GILLES, Principal Planner
- 15 NICHOLAS DUMAIS, Assistant City
16 Attorney

17 Speakers:

- 18 MIKE STEIN
- 19 BOB YOUNGENTOB
- 20 ROBERT HARRIS
- 21 DAVID DeMARCO
- 22 MIKE DUTKA
- JIM POLICARO

- 1 PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):
- 2 CATHERINE CONTRERAS
- 3 JANE PONTIUS
- 4 NOREEN BRYAN
- 5 PATRICIA WOODWARD
- 6 MARGARET MAGNER
- 7 DEBORAH LANDAU
- 8 LAUREN POVICH
- 9 JAIMIE MORRIS
- 10 JENNIFER TIMMICK
- 11 NICK JONES
- 12 KEVIN ZALETSKY
- 13 RHODA NDJOUKOUO
- 14 NANCY PICKARD
- 15 BRIAN SHIPLEY
- 16 HYUN KIM
- 17 CHRISTINE McGUIRL
- 18 PATRICK WOODWARD

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Good evening and welcome everybody to the city of Rockville Planning Commission meeting. This is our 17th meeting of the year 2020, and it is being held virtually via WebEx due to City Hall being closed on account of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic we're all suffering.

We only have one agenda item tonight. And also, I should note there are six of seven commissioners present. We're short one commissioner this evening. But we only have one agenda item this evening, and that is a public hearing on our Draft Comprehensive Plan, Volume II, which covers planning areas. This is the second of two hearings that the Planning Commission is holding, and the previous hearing was already held on our last meeting, which was September 9th, I believe. So, this is our second and final meeting virtually -- well, in general.

And just I'm going to start us off, I'm going to turn it over to staff to start us off on

Attachment 1.A.d: Complete Vol. II Oral Testimony - Sept. 23 Public Hearing (3258 : Work Session 1: Draft Comprehensive Plan, Vol. II: Planning

1 this. However, I just have a few quick
2 announcements initially.

3 So, one is that we, at last check, we
4 had 37 people registered, pre-registered, which is
5 a procedure for participating in this virtually,
6 which is quite a lot compared to our usual
7 meetings. I have heard that some people may have
8 potentially registered by mistake, that they just
9 wanted to listen into the meeting and not
10 necessarily give commentary. So, if that is the
11 case, you can sign out and continue to watch
12 either on regular TV or via stream via the city's
13 website. But, in any case, if you do want to
14 speak and you're signed up, that's the plan. So,
15 please feel free to participate in any case.

16 I do want to say that we have slightly
17 modified our usual procedures, not a lot, but
18 simply to account for the virtual nature of this.
19 And one thing about that is that we have limited
20 of three minutes for every speaker. And that
21 actually is how we do it anyways. And five
22 minutes if you're representing a civic association

1 or a similar entity.

2 But I will say we're going to be very
3 strict with that limit. Our last public hearing
4 nobody went over by not even one second. And so
5 we are going to hold everybody to three minutes.
6 There will be a display on the screen so you can
7 tell how much time you have remaining. I do
8 apologize ahead of time. It's not that I want to
9 cut people off, but we do have a lot of speakers.
10 And even that aside, important, the main reason we
11 have this rule is just to ensure fairness from one
12 speaker to the next, so it's going to a
13 three-minute limit or five if you're with an
14 organization.

15 In any case, the virtual testimony is
16 just one way of communicating to us your thoughts
17 and feelings on our draft plan. We also take
18 written testimony and, in fact, even prefer it or
19 encourage it, especially given the difficult times
20 we're going through right now. And that can be
21 provided after tonight. We voted at our last
22 meeting to keep the public record open until

1 October 7th, close of business, I think 5 p.m. to
2 be precise. So, that gives anyone additional time
3 to provide further commentary in writing to us.
4 And you are not limited; if you speak tonight and
5 you want to give further commentary in writing,
6 you can. You can do that up until we close the
7 public record on it.

8 So, those are my initial comments.
9 Again, welcome and we're all looking forward to
10 hearing everybody's thoughts.

11 So, with that, unless any other of my
12 fellow commissioners have any initial comments,
13 I'll turn it over to staff, city staff, to get us
14 started on this item and get the public hearing
15 underway.

16 MR. LARSON: Yes, thank you, Chairperson
17 Littlefield. This is Clark Larson. I'm a
18 principal planner in the Planning and Development
19 Services Department. And I'm joined here with
20 just part of the project team that's been working
21 on bringing the Draft Comprehensive Plan to the
22 Planning Commission for their consideration and

1 deliberation over the past few years.

2 I wanted to name a few others who are on
3 the call today: Andrea Gilles, David Levy, Jim
4 Wasilak, Larissa Klevan, Manisha Tewari, Nicholas
5 Dumais. And those are the staff I see. I think
6 everyone else who you might see pictures of on the
7 screen are either planning commissioners, who are
8 also important people, as well. But there's a lot
9 of other staff behind the scenes who have been
10 working with us over the years, so I want to
11 recognize them, as well.

12 So, I will start sharing my screen now
13 to provide a little more visual interest. And as
14 Chairperson Littlefield said, this is the public
15 hearing to accept oral testimony, spoken
16 testimony, for the "Planning Areas" draft of the
17 Comprehensive Plan Update that we're working on.
18 We've called it "Rockville 2040." And I'll get
19 into a little bit more about the background and
20 how we've been going through the process in the
21 next couple slides.

22 Some milestones that we've hit and

1 expect to hit in the future. An initial staff
2 draft was reviewed by the Planning Commission of
3 December of last year through January. And this
4 was really the culmination of staff work behind
5 the scenes, but also working to speak with the
6 public and meet with the public in various groups
7 and settings to create the "Planning Areas" draft.
8 And the Planning Commission had some edits and
9 changes to the draft before they decided to
10 release it to public review, and that happened in
11 February of 2020.

12 And it's been out on the street in
13 various forms and venues since then. Although we
14 had some -- you'll see below, on the public
15 hearing dates scheduled in May 2020, to have
16 what's happening now happen back in May, so we had
17 to, because of the COVID pandemic, reschedule
18 those, figure out better ways to do outreach and
19 get the word out about it, and figure out how to
20 hold a virtual public hearing, as well.

21 So, right now we are at the public
22 hearing phase of the draft review, but we've been

1 accepting written testimony every since February.
2 So, the public record has been open since then
3 and, as Commissioner Littlefield said, will be
4 open until October 7th.

5 And then after that passes, we will be
6 moving into the work session phase with the
7 Planning Commission, reviewing all of the
8 testimony that was received on the "Planning
9 Areas" draft and any comments that we might have
10 received on other portions of the Comp Plan. I'll
11 talk in a minute about what's in Volume I. I
12 think I will. If I don't, I'll bring it up later.

13 But we expect to have work session
14 meetings in October, November, and December at
15 regular Planning Commission meetings. And at that
16 point, the Planning Commission may decided that
17 the draft and both volumes for the elements for
18 citywide policies and the planning areas are in a
19 good enough format that they can vote to approve
20 it for consideration by the Mayor and Council.
21 So, that is another step after this point where
22 the Planning Commission really is the review

1 authority that initiates the Comprehensive Plan
2 updates and they send it on to Mayor and Council
3 for approval, ultimate approval.

4 So, I don't know. I'm going to do a
5 quick -- yeah, I don't know if I talk about the
6 Volume I in these slides, but I will just briefly
7 mention that what we've termed "Volume I" are the
8 10 citywide elements. They have to do with
9 transportation, land use, housing, the
10 environment, water resources, and some other
11 topics. And they really have recommended policies
12 and actions to take that apply to the entire city,
13 citywide. These planning area policies and
14 recommendations are really specific chapters for
15 each planning area, which is a neighborhood-based
16 area, a neighborhood-scale area of a cluster of
17 neighborhoods, maybe some commercial areas. We
18 think of them as really common areas of the city
19 that have a similar character, have an affinity
20 with each other.

21 The boundaries really represent just
22 that, just breaking it up for organizational sake.

1 They are treated equally as far as the land use
2 categories are pretty much the same across them,
3 but they're just kind of broken up in sort of
4 sections or chapters by planning area for the ease
5 of being able to focus on what certain planning
6 areas might need over others. So, I think I've
7 covered some of that.

8 So, it includes in -- essentially each
9 planning area has area-specific policy changes.
10 It might be one property or a group of properties,
11 zoning and design recommendations that would be
12 considered during new developments or changes in
13 land uses, potential city projects that might take
14 place in any one planning area, and other topics
15 for study.

16 And I've had the website up here for a
17 little while. It's pretty easy to find if you
18 want to find out any information or read the
19 actual draft if you haven't yet. It's the city's
20 website, rockvillemd.gov/Rockville-2040.

21 A little bit about what we've been doing
22 over this past year for public outreach. We've

1 gone through the official channels of sending
2 letters and notifications to the State Department
3 of Planning, surrounding jurisdictions, advertised
4 it in the paper. But we're really also tried to
5 leverage as much electronic outreach as we can,
6 email distribution lists, websites, the city's
7 Rockville Reports articles, social media. We
8 haven't been able to go out into the community as
9 much as we had hoped this year, although that has
10 been happening over the entire Rockville 2040
11 process through initial conversations with a
12 number of -- essentially every neighborhood that
13 we could contact, every planning area. So, this
14 is really the public outreach that we've done this
15 year, although we have been face-to-face with the
16 community in the past.

17 So, as Commissioner Littlefield said,
18 this tonight, the public hearing, is an
19 opportunity oral testimony. It's not the only
20 opportunity to provide comments and testimony to
21 the Planning Commission. You can email them
22 directly at this address,

1 planning.commission@rockvillemd.gov, and the all
2 receive that at once. We also receive it and we
3 add it to the record that way.

4 You can online to our project website
5 and submit comments through an online forum. It's
6 really just name, address, topic, and you can type
7 in the comment field there. Or you can use the
8 old-school mail-in written testimony. We're still
9 checking mail at City Hall even though we have a
10 skeleton crew there basically.

11 All oral and written testimony will be
12 made available to the Planning Commission during
13 the work sessions. We'll be summarizing it and
14 sort of organizing it for discussion at that
15 point, so it's al considered part of the public
16 record.

17 So, the official part of my
18 presentation, our recommendation is for the
19 Planning Commission to receive oral testimony on
20 the Draft Plan tonight and confirm the work
21 session dates that already have been discussed,
22 but just to have them be solidified as far as the

1 next few meetings for work sessions.

2 So, with that, it starts the public
3 testimony period. And I'll stop sharing my
4 screen. I think it's going to come back to Bonita
5 (phonetic). And I think we'll just start going
6 down the list. It's basically in the order of
7 which we were contacted for public testimony.

8 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
9 Larson. It looks like we're ready to proceed then
10 with our public testimony. So, I have the list
11 open and I will just state the name and address.
12 We don't need to state it for the record because
13 we already have it.

14 So, number 1 is Mike Stein, 13004
15 Atlantic Avenue, in representation of Twinbrook
16 Community Association. Mike, are you online with
17 us?

18 MR. STEIN: I am. Can you hear me?

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. Welcome and
20 please proceed. You have five minutes as a civic
21 association representative.

22 MR. STEIN: Thank you. Good evening,

1 Mr. Chair and fellow commissioners as noted. My
2 name is Mike Stein and I am speaking tonight as
3 president of the Twinbrook Community Association,
4 who wishes to thank you for this opportunity to
5 provide feedback to the Planning Commission on the
6 Draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of
7 Rockville. We have a longer written document we
8 will submit as written testimony, but tonight
9 we'll just be reading a few excerpts.

10 Volume II, which represents Rockville's
11 planning areas, is a positive step forward in a
12 long-range plan to develop our beloved city. We
13 especially want to thank city planning staff for
14 their efforts over the last five years. City
15 staff have me with Twinbrook residents at least
16 three times since 2015. According to Rockville
17 2040's website, this appears more than any other
18 planning area. We appreciate the outreach and
19 think the plan accurately reflects the vision of
20 the neighborhood shared by neighbors at the
21 meeting. TCA agrees with all of the
22 recommendations in the plan for Planning Area 8,

1 and we will specifically highlight those we find
2 most important and were commented on by neighbors
3 as part of our outreach.

4 With regard to land use, housing, and
5 economic development, we applaud the inclusion of
6 the Twinbrook Metro Station area and the Veirs
7 Mill Corridor in the land use policy map to ensure
8 that Twinbrook residents have access to flexible
9 zoning arrangements that allow for growth and
10 housing options. We think this is a smart and
11 creative way to help address the city's and
12 county's housing needs in the future, as well as
13 support the Metro and the hopefully soon to be
14 built Bus Rapid Transit along Veirs Mill Road.

15 In particular, the residential-retail
16 nodes highlighted in Areas 2 and 3 are responsive
17 to the community's request to be a more walkable
18 neighborhood. The area around the Twinbrook Metro
19 is an important one to our community. It connects
20 us to the retail and services provided along
21 Rockville Pike. We support transit-oriented
22 development that can connect the residential side

1 of the track to the Pike in a meaningful way,
2 including a pedestrian-bike crossing. This will
3 also fulfill our shared goal of a truly walkable
4 city. Project 6 remains a top priority of the
5 neighborhood.

6 With regards to transportation, we look
7 forward to the possibility that the BRT will bring
8 for innovation, economic development, easing of
9 traffic congestion. We strongly support a BRT
10 station at Atlantic Avenue as well as the
11 extension of Atlantic through to McAuliffe should
12 the shopping center be developed.

13 The extension of Lewis Avenue to Fishers
14 Lane is a project that has been raised many times
15 over the decades. We understand it has been
16 controversial and there was limited support for it
17 in the past. However, we believe the time has
18 come to implement this improvement. With the
19 recent and anticipated future development at
20 Twinbrook Metro, it serves as another access point
21 for the neighborhood.

22 We understand the concerns people have

1 using Lewis -- about people using Lewis Avenue as
2 a cut-through to avoid Rockville Pike. However,
3 in this age of smartphones and navigation apps, we
4 believe that this cut-through traffic already
5 occurs. People already use Lewis Avenue to get to
6 and from the Pike and Twinbrook Parkway. But
7 today that means a (technical inaudible) also been
8 a long-time request of residents.

9 In the area of recreation and parks, we
10 encourage an investment in the Rockcrest Community
11 Center so that it may serve as a location for
12 community meetings, programs, and sports. At a
13 recent TCA membership meeting, support for Project
14 8 was specifically mentioned as a need.

15 Rockville's ballet program is highly regarded and
16 a strength of the city's recreation program.

17 Improvement and expanding in this facility would
18 be a benefit not only to Twinbrook, but also the
19 city.

20 And lastly tonight, I wanted to comment
21 on some testimony you received from the Cambridge
22 Walk HOA on September 9th. The TCA strongly

1 supports Cambridge Walk HOA's request to remain
2 part of Planning Area 8 rather than part of the
3 Rockville Pike Planning Area or Planning Area 9.
4 Although the townhome communities along Halpine
5 are represented by their own HOAs, they are and
6 historically have been part of the Twinbrook
7 community.

8 We share their general concern about the
9 potential redevelopment of the properties at 5906
10 Halpine Road, the Twinbrook Community Church, and
11 5946 Halpine Road. TCA does not have a position
12 at this time on the appropriate zoning for these
13 two properties. However, we do support townhomes,
14 a missing middle housing, at these locations. We
15 are in contact with the Cambridge Walk HOA and are
16 committed to working together to find a solution
17 that works for everyone. We believe that can best
18 be accomplished if we all remain part of the same
19 planning area.

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you for your
22 comments, Mr. Stein.

1 The next on my list is Bob Youngentob of
2 EYA, LLC, 4800 Hampton Lane, Bethesda. Bob, are
3 you with us? Hello? Maybe you need to unmute.
4 Bob, are you connected?

5 MR. YOUNGENTOB: There we go. Can you
6 hear me now?

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, yes. Welcome.

8 MR. YOUNGENTOB: I was trying to unmute.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Loud and clear.

10 MR. YOUNGENTOB: I apologize there, but
11 I was trying to unmute.

12 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: No problem.
13 Welcome. Go ahead.

14 MR. YOUNGENTOB: Thank you, Chairman
15 Littlefield and members of the Commission. For
16 the record, I'm Bob Youngentob I'm the CEO of EYA.
17 While we're new to this process here tonight in
18 the city, we're not new obviously to the City of
19 Rockville. As many of you know, we have been
20 involved in numerous developments in the city over
21 the years, including leading the development
22 effort at Falls Grove as well as under

1 construction today over at Tower Oaks.

2 We are here tonight to speak about the
3 Rockshire site and specifically the
4 recommendations for the Rockshire property. I
5 have a couple of slide that Clark is going to
6 share for me. Maybe, Clark, if you could just
7 advance to the second -- yeah, go ahead. This
8 just shows the site itself, but going to the
9 second slide -- if you go to the next one --
10 really just focused on one of the concerns that we
11 have in the language that speaks to the
12 requirement -- if you go back one -- to
13 substantial retail. And the idea that the
14 language I believe today says "substantial retail
15 and/or a community gathering space."

16 Having been involved in the development
17 at Park Potomac and Falls Grove, there is
18 substantial retail that has already been developed
19 in this area. And if retail was possible, it
20 likely would have already taken place on the
21 Rockshire site. We do not believe it's feasible
22 for new retail to be built there and, therefore,

1 would like the language changed or clarified so it
2 takes away the "and" and provides language of
3 "substantial retail or a community gathering
4 space."

5 If you go to the next slide, what we
6 believe is appropriate for this property, and
7 again we were brought into the site by the
8 landowners and are currently the contract
9 developer of the property, is primarily a
10 residential development with a community gathering
11 space at the intersection of Hurley and Wooten
12 Parkway. We believe it is an appropriate location
13 for a significant community gathering space that
14 could serve not only people using the bike path
15 and the bike trails, but also the residents of the
16 broader community.

17 We believe that architecturally that the
18 development -- I know we're not here to talk about
19 a development plan, but the development could, if
20 you go to the next slide, reflect and be
21 compatible with the existing residential in the
22 neighborhood. And these are some examples of

1 various townhome architectural styles that we have
2 incorporated not only on the lower right at Falls
3 Grove, but also in downtown Silver Spring and
4 Arlington, and the lower left at Tower Oaks today.

5 It's not a secret that housing demand is
6 of critical importance in the city. The city has
7 endorsed the Council of Government study. There
8 is much talk in the plan about the need for
9 additional missing middle housing. We believe
10 that townhomes are the appropriate use for this
11 site and they will definitely be compatible with
12 the adjoining townhomes, the community pool, the
13 church, and the bordering streets.

14 We do believe that this is a unique
15 opportunity to take advantage of existing
16 infrastructure where there is existing road
17 network, existing school capacity, existing
18 utility capacity to build on an infill property
19 with new missing middle housing. We're excited to
20 be selected by the landowner to be the developer
21 of this property and we look forward to working
22 with the community to address their concerns as

1 best we can.

2 But, again, I think the language today
3 provides too much ambiguity with regard to the
4 expectation for retail. And I think clarifying
5 that language will allow this development to move
6 forward. Unfortunately, the property obviously
7 has sat vacant for a number of years and we
8 believe this is a unique time and a unique
9 opportunity to actually see this solved, both for
10 economic development reasons, for the creation of
11 new missing middle housing, and also for the
12 addition of some new affordable housing in the
13 form of the MPDUs that go along with the site.

14 I don't see the timer on mine, so I
15 assume that I'm out of time. But I'm available to
16 answer any questions if there are any by the
17 commissioners.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
19 Youngentob. Commissioners, any questions?

20 And yes, please feel free to share that
21 with us in writing, as well, the slides you were
22 presenting.

1 I would ask a favor of city staff. I
 2 had a problem during the -- just now with my other
 3 monitor, so I don't have the participant list. I
 4 know we're on participant number 3, so if somebody
 5 has that open, if they could please ask the
 6 participant to start. And I will fix my monitor.
 7 I'm pretty sure it's fixable.

8 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: It's Robert
 9 Harris.

10 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Pardon?
 11 Commissioner Hadley, you have it?

12 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: It's Robert
 13 Harris.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay.

15 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: With (inaudible),
 16 I believe.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Mr. Harris, are you
 18 with us?

19 MR. LARSON: Might be working on
 20 unmuting.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yeah. It takes some
 22 getting used to. Is he confirmed on, though, on

1 our list?

2 MR. HARRIS: I'm 81. This is Bob
3 Harris. I was muted, I apologize.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: No problem.

5 MR. HARRIS: A common crime.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: It is. We're all
7 guilty of it. Welcome. Go ahead.

8 MR. HARRIS: Thank you. For the record,
9 I'm Bob Harris and I wanted to speak briefly and
10 also about the Rockshire Center, supporting the
11 principles of the Draft Plan that staff has worked
12 so hard on, but I want to clarify three issue.
13 One is the retail, two is the community us, and
14 the third one is parking on there.

15 As those of you who have lived any time
16 in Rockville know, a lot has changed in the retail
17 world since the Rockshire Shopping Center was
18 built. And when it was built originally it worked
19 well, but since then we've had a proliferation of
20 retail around the area, from Falls Grove to
21 Travilah to Park Potomac to even the new shopping
22 center on Research Boulevard, a new grocery store

1 on Darnestown Road. And at the same time, what
2 has happened is big box retailers have eaten into
3 the normal retail that we were used to at the
4 time. So, retail is struggling throughout the
5 country and, you know, this center has been
6 closed. Giant left I think eight years ago and
7 the other retailers left soon after that.

8 The owner of the property, whom I
9 represent, has tried diligently to find tenants
10 there and just to no success. So, we have a
11 concern about the language in the plan that calls
12 for substantial retail as an option. We just, in
13 all honesty, do not believe it's a realistic
14 option. We did provide the staff with a research
15 study that was done some time ago that amplifies
16 this.

17 Secondly, it does talk about "or an
18 amenity," which makes some sense so long as
19 expectations are realistic here. There has been
20 talk by some in the community that they want to a
21 new community center built there. Of course, a
22 new one was built not long ago up at Thomas Farm

1 that serves the west side of I-270 very well.
2 It's probably the biggest, best, and newest of the
3 community centers, and it's only about a mile and
4 a half away from the Rockshire area. We think
5 that meets the major community need.

6 Rather, we think that what would serve
7 the community well would be more of an outdoor
8 gathering space that would be consistent with the
9 Millennial Trail and what's going on in the
10 community around there. And I know that EYA is
11 looking at ways in which to do that. So, we're
12 hoping that the Planning Commission will see that
13 as a more viable option.

14 Lastly, there's been some recent
15 discussion about parking. The property today
16 provides about 31 spaces for the Rockshire pool
17 under an agreement that was entered many years
18 ago. The owners of the property have very
19 intention of continuing to adhere to that
20 agreement and will do so. We've already reached
21 out to the community to talk about how that is
22 done, but, at the same time, want to make it clear

1 that the property isn't --

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Mr. Harris. Sorry
3 to interrupt.

4 MR. HARRIS: Yes, sir.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: It's three minutes.
6 The three minutes are up and I apologize, but
7 please just finish your last sentence, if you
8 could.

9 MR. HARRIS: I was just going to say we
10 can provide that parking, but I don't believe we
11 would be able to provide more than that. Thank
12 you very much.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Thank you.
14 And I have a question, if you don't mind, on some
15 of your testimony.

16 MR. HARRIS: Sure.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: And I was following
18 along and taking notes, but on the retail, is it
19 your position that you are opposed to any retail?
20 And the circumstances as you explained them are
21 easily and readily understood, but would you be
22 open to less or some retail or maybe even a

1 different retail that looks different than the
2 current type of retail people usually talk about?

3 MR. HARRIS: I certainly am opposed to
4 anything that would be considered significant
5 retail because I just think that has no
6 feasibility whatsoever. Minor retail, the problem
7 with that is that most small retailers rely on
8 grocery anchors to bring in the tenants. And so
9 it is very difficult for one small retailer or two
10 to function in an area like this, particularly
11 where it's not on a major highway and not in the
12 middle of a central business district. So, I
13 think work has to be done in terms of whether any
14 retail is really viable there.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Thank you for
16 that further clarification. Commissioners, any
17 other questions or comments?

18 No, okay. Thanks again.

19 MR. HARRIS: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. Our next
21 participant is Christine McGuirl from Federal
22 Realty Investment Trust, 909 Rose Avenue, North

1 Bethesda. Christine, are you with us? Please
2 check -- sorry, I see --

3 BONITA: I'm sorry, (inaudible).

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay.

5 BONITA: David DeMarco should be next.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, I see that
7 now. Thanks, Bonita. So, David DeMarco, are you
8 with us then from PulteGroup, 9302 Lee Highway,
9 Fairfax?

10 MR. DeMARCO: Yes, I am.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Welcome and
12 please go ahead. You have three minutes.

13 MR. DeMARCO: My name's David DeMarco
14 and I'm vice president with Pulte Homes and I'm
15 testifying tonight as contract purchaser for the
16 Twinbrook Community Church property located at
17 5906 Halpine Road.

18 I think, as you may have heard, the
19 church is downsizing. They no longer need such a
20 large facility. And while I understand they are
21 looking for a new home in Twinbrook, they have
22 selected us to be contract purchaser for their

1 property.

2 We are very excited about this
3 opportunity to bring some condominium housing
4 options closer to the Metro in Rockville. And
5 we're really hoping to replicate the success we've
6 had in developing and building at the Tower Oaks
7 community (technical inaudible) Youngentob. As
8 you may or not know, we have four condo buildings
9 there and all four of them are under construction.
10 We're over halfway sold out and it's just been a
11 tremendous success for us. And it really
12 identified what we all know, there's a tremendous
13 need for housing in the area.

14 And while there's a lot of rental
15 communities, there's not a lot of individual
16 condominium ownership opportunities, especially
17 with the type of product that we're proposing at
18 the Twinbrook site, which is the same exact
19 condominiums that we're building at Tower Oaks.
20 These units are larger. They're designed for
21 downsizers. And I would tell you for 75 percent
22 of our buyers are empty-nesters, which is, you

1 know, good because we don't have a lot of impact
2 on the school.

3 And the reason our units attract the
4 empty-nester is because that they're large.
5 They're 1,550 square feet on average. And we
6 believe we can get two buildings at the 1-1/2 acre
7 site at Halpine (inaudible) and we're less than
8 one dozen feet from the Metro. And as the county
9 and city have just determined, there's a need for
10 a thousand housing units by 2040, and we think we
11 can help address the need. It'd be a good
12 transition from the Avalon Apartments that are
13 (inaudible). We are in support of the (inaudible)
14 residential land use designation and we urge the
15 Planning Commission support the MXNC zone, which
16 would allow for this modestly (inaudible) family
17 project, which I know it's smaller, but we had
18 fewer units, but they're bigger and better as I
19 like to refer to them.

20 We recognize the need for compatibility
21 and we're, you know, happy to go with -- meet with
22 the county and city staff and look at different

1 avenues we can do to address that. The MXNC
2 provision regarding setbacks is inconsistent with
3 the Comp Plan recommendation and we would like to
4 see a one-foot setback for each one foot in height
5 instead of one-foot setback for every two feet in
6 height. We would agree to a minimum setback of 30
7 feet.

8 We look forward to working with the
9 staff. I will submit my testimony for the record.
10 I appreciate your time tonight and thank you very
11 much. If you have any questions, let me know.

12 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
13 DeMarco. Commissioners, any questions?

14 No, okay. Thanks again, appreciate it.
15 The next person on my list is Mike Dutka of 713
16 Shetland Street, Rockville.

17 MR. DUTKA: Hello. Can you hear me?

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep.

19 MR. DUTKA: Okay.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Welcome. Please
21 proceed. You have three minutes.

22 MR. DUTKA: Yeah. I'm speaking as an

1 individual and a self-described YIMBY or a "yes,
2 in my backyard" person. I'm also speaking as a
3 lifelong resident of the City of Rockville. I
4 grew up in College Gardens. I think that's
5 Planning Area 4. And I just want to say, you
6 know, when my parents bought their house there, it
7 was worth \$125,000. Inflation adjusted, that's
8 \$330,000 today. What their home is actually worth
9 now is \$680,000, so more than double.

10 And the reason for this is because we
11 simply have not built enough housing in Rockville.
12 We need to go much further. We need to be very
13 ambitious with up-zoning. Missing middle homes
14 are a great creative solution. I applaud what the
15 Comprehensive Plan is looking at doing there. But
16 I think it needs to be pushed further. I think
17 densities needs to be pushed further when we have
18 Metro stations.

19 So, yeah, I think as the Planning
20 Commission, you know what needs to be done. You
21 need to give a good, strong starting point to the
22 Council and then the Council, as the elected

1 officials, can decide what they need to do based
2 on what the constituents are willing to accept.

3 So, that's the end of my testimony.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Thank you
5 very much, Mr. Dutka. Much appreciated.

6 I guess we will go to our next speaker.
7 And on my list that is Maya Gothman (phonetic) of
8 23 Ridgefield Court, Rockville. Maya, are you
9 online?

10 SPEAKER: I think she's not here.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Sorry, I see that
12 always a second after you guys. So, next on my
13 list is Jim Policaro with Lerner Companies, 2000
14 Tower Oaks Boulevard, Rockville. Jim, are you
15 with us?

16 MR. POLICARO: I'm here. Can you hear
17 me?

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. Welcome and
19 please proceed. You have three minutes.

20 MR. POLICARO: Thank you.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You're welcome.

22 MR. POLICARO: Good evening. My name is

1 Jim Policaro, senior vice president of development
2 for Lerner Enterprises. Lerner has been
3 developing at Falls Grove for the past 15 years,
4 including Falls Grove Village Retail Center,
5 Hilton Garden Inn and Homewood Suites, and Falls
6 Grove Plaza medical office building.

7 Our (technical inaudible) the Planning
8 Commission this past spring for the development of
9 a multi-family community of 350 market-rate units.
10 The project appeared to be well received. In
11 June, we made a similar presentation to the Mayor
12 and Council and, again, the project appeared to be
13 viewed favorably.

14 The property is part of the Falls Grove
15 Comprehensive Plan development and thus is zoned
16 PD-FG. The Comprehensive Plan appropriately
17 designates the property as OR-RN, which is
18 intended as the most flexible mixed-use category,
19 allowing for property owners a wide choice in
20 mixed office, retail, and residential uses. We
21 concur with this recommendation.

22 The Comprehensive Plan also designates

1 the property with retail frontage along its west
2 -- with retail frontage along its west grading --
3 frontage and along the northern half of Research
4 Boulevard frontage. This designation would
5 require retail at this location. We do not agree
6 with this recommendation and request that this
7 designation be eliminated.

8 While we had concerns about this retail
9 designation initially, well in advance of the
10 COVID-19 pandemic, our concerns over the retail
11 requirement have increased significantly given the
12 pandemic's acute impact on the retail market. In
13 requesting that the retail designation be
14 eliminated we note the following.

15 The retail market is struggling even in
16 established areas. It is self-defeating to
17 require that additional retail be added in future
18 developments. Requiring retail likely will result
19 in vacant ground floor space. This is not
20 beneficial to the project, surrounding property
21 owners, or the city as a whole.

22 There is also a major gas line easement

1 which is across the entire northern frontage of
2 the property at Guide Drive. Therefore, a retail
3 along Research Boulevard cannot be located on the
4 main corner of this site. This severely limits
5 the opportunity for a successful retail
6 establishment.

7 For the reasons identified, we
8 respectfully request that you request the retail
9 requirements designation in the Comprehensive
10 Plan. Thank you.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you very much
12 for your comments, Mr. Policaro. Much
13 appreciated.

14 MR. POLICARO: You're welcome.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you. The next
16 person on my list is Catherine Contreras of 404
17 Ridge Point Place, Gaithersburg. Catherine, are
18 you there?

19 MS. CONTRERAS: Hi.

20 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hi. Welcome.

21 MS. CONTRERAS: So, hi. My name is
22 Catherine Contreras and I'm a senior at Thomas S.

1 Wootton High School -- I am actively involved in
2 clubs like Best Buddies and sports like bocce and
3 handball.

4 When I'm not participating in club
5 activities or practices for sports, I am
6 advocating for the Americans With Disabilities Act
7 building compliance. And I tend to have off-
8 campus advocacy meetings that I attend and which
9 is why parking at Rockshire is a necessity for me
10 and other Wootton students.

11 Current and future Wootton students need
12 Rockshire for parking and it's important that we
13 recognize the needs of thousands of students.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you very much,
16 Ms. Contreras, for your comments.

17 Next on my list is Christopher Yea
18 (phonetic), if I'm pronouncing that correctly,
19 1411 Girard Street, Rockville. Christopher, are
20 you online? Are you with us?

21 SPEAKER: Christopher is not present.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Not present, okay.

1 Then I will go to the next person, which is Jane
2 Pontius, 127 South Van Buren Street, Rockville.
3 Jane, are you with us?

4 MS. PONTIUS: Yes, I am.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Welcome. Please
6 proceed. You have three minutes.

7 MS. PONTIUS: I'm providing testimony on
8 behalf of the Planning Area 4 Committee regarding
9 the Neighborhood Plan. I live at 127 South Van
10 Buren Street and in 1975, my husband John and I
11 moved to this house where he and his brothers had
12 lived since 1952. We raised both of our sons in
13 this home. And in 2010, my son subsequently
14 bought the former Oxley (phonetic) home across the
15 street. I'm presenting my testimony on behalf of
16 my family's longstanding ties to the West End of
17 Rockville.

18 I wish to express my support of the plan
19 with the exception of the following key issues
20 which remain: Too many and too large
21 institutions, preservation of the land which
22 surrounds historic structures, freestanding

1 accessory dwelling units. The 2016 WECA survey of
2 its residents indicated that the citizens do not
3 want commercial, office, or institutional uses
4 within the confines of the West End neighborhood.
5 Neither excessive commercial or office uses are
6 permitted due to current zoning laws. However,
7 institutional usage is handled by the special
8 exception process, which can lead to the
9 destruction of neighborhoods one institutional
10 project at a time.

11 I request that the city staff provide
12 more explicit procedures for granting such uses.
13 This type of change inevitably results in more
14 traffic, congestion, and parking demands, all of
15 which disrupt and interfere with the residential
16 character of the neighborhood.

17 The preservation of the land surrounding
18 historical buildings is also an important
19 component to the planning process. It is not
20 enough to preserve the buildings alone, but also
21 the surrounding open spaces and landscaping
22 contribute to the rich historical significance of

1 the site. I suggest that city staff adopt more
2 specific language to preserve landscaping,
3 grounds, and setting of historic districts. Once
4 that land is subdivided, there is no turning back.

5 Finally, allowing separate, standalone,
6 accessory dwelling units in the West End of
7 Rockville will greatly threaten the historic
8 character of the neighborhood. The number of
9 separate residential structures on a lot must be
10 limited to one. A process for reviewing
11 applications for attached accessory apartments
12 needs to be created to protect the residential
13 character of a neighborhood. A special exception
14 application for this type of structure needs to be
15 formulated to provide neighbors the opportunity to
16 comment and review the application.

17 Thank you for this opportunity.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Ms.
19 Pontius. Much appreciate your comments.

20 The next person that I have is Noreen
21 Bryan, who will be speaking on behalf of the West
22 End Citizens Association. Noreen, are you with

1 us?

2 MS. BRYAN: Hi. I think I'm here. I
3 just succeeded on unmuting.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: We can hear you.

5 MS. BRYAN: Okay, good. Thank you.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You're welcome. You
7 have five minutes.

8 MS. BRYAN: Thank you much. Tonight
9 I'll be speaking relative to the Planning Area 4
10 Neighborhood Plan as one of the co-chairs of the
11 community committee. I would like to -- there
12 will be five speakers for the committee; four of
13 them will follow me.

14 My foremost message tonight is to thank
15 everyone who has helped us to update the plan.
16 The process began five years ago. For the first
17 two years, the community worked on its own --
18 Clark, we don't need that photo yet, please; thank
19 you -- surveilling all households and drafting
20 initial updates of the 1981 plan. Thereafter our
21 committee and city staff spent nearly two years in
22 biweekly meetings honing the details. Throughout,

1 residents had many opportunities to participate.

2 The result is the plan that you have
3 before you, one that we fully support. Thank you,
4 thank you to everyone, staff and neighbors, who
5 have given so many evenings to make this possible.

6 Of the dozens of topics that the
7 community and staff initially viewed differently,
8 all have been resolved except for the three
9 remaining issues mentioned by Jane Pontius. I
10 will address each briefly and then also testify
11 after and we will explain them more fully.

12 We're passionate about these issues
13 because we believe that additional policy is
14 essential to preserve the residential character of
15 Planning Area 4 and prevent transition to a
16 hodgepodge of uses and loss of single-family
17 houses.

18 Preserving our residential neighborhood
19 was the value expressed most often by respondents
20 to the neighborhood survey. We need your help to
21 add policies that ensure the neighborhood will not
22 be eroded.

1 It is essential to recognize that
2 Rockville neighborhoods are not governed equally.
3 Since the 1970s, most new neighborhoods were
4 created as self-contained entities with their own
5 rule and governing homeowners associations. They
6 operate with covenants more restrictive than
7 citywide zoning policies.

8 Most HOAs prevent commercial uses,
9 office, and institutions, preventing cut-through
10 traffic and (inaudible) accessory dwelling units.
11 Today it appears that 50 percent or more of the
12 residential properties in Rockville are contained
13 in HOAs, such King Farm, New Mark Commons, Rose
14 Hill, Rose Hill Falls, et cetera. Only a small
15 group of the oldest communities in Rockville are
16 left without the protection afforded to HOAs.
17 Planning Area 4 is particularly vulnerable because
18 of its location between I-270 and Town Center.
19 Further, it bears the burden of more cut-through
20 traffic than any other neighborhood in the city.

21 Here are the issues. Institutions, more
22 than 80 percent of the respondents to the

1 neighborhood survey oppose having commercial,
2 office, or institutional uses replace residences.
3 There's protection provided in the zoning
4 ordinance against excessive commercial and office
5 uses. Institutions, as Jane mentioned, are
6 different. They come into the neighborhood one at
7 a time; there's no limit on how many or where they
8 can be located.

9 When looked at individually, nearly all
10 institutions appear desirable. However, in
11 aggregate, too many institutions, particularly
12 those that are large and consume many residential
13 lots, destroy the character of a residential
14 neighborhood.

15 Secondly, preserving the open land
16 around historical structures, we believe that to
17 preserve Rockville's history, it is essential to
18 preserve the land and setting, not just the
19 buildings themselves. Policy is needed to clearly
20 state the neighborhood's vision of preserving the
21 areas of open space in historic districts.

22 National and local standards are not

1 sufficient. Too many historic structures in D.C.
2 and nearby Bethesda stand only a few feet from
3 giant high-rise buildings. We don't want that to
4 happen here. And looking at the current special
5 exceptions, there are many buildings that are
6 allowed therein to get to be 50 feet high. That
7 could be close to double all those little Cape Cod
8 houses in the neighborhood.

9 Freestanding accessor dwelling units,
10 most of the land in Planning Area 4, is composed
11 of single-family detached housings. Respondents
12 who participated stated overwhelmingly that they
13 want to preserve the neighborhood as it exists
14 today. If freestanding ADUs are allowed, two, not
15 one, dwelling unit per lot will be allowable and
16 single-family housing will be a thing of the past.

17 The protections that we are requesting
18 do not come close to those afforded HOAs. For
19 example, we are not actively excluding
20 institutions outright. We are asking to put caps
21 with (inaudible) size. We hope that you'll
22 embrace these steps towards equalizing protections

1 for all neighborhoods.

2 Thank you so much for your service and
3 your consideration. And again, thank you to
4 everyone how has participated in the update of the
5 plans.

6 I can't see the timer, so I don't know
7 where we are.

8 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: I think it's good
9 timing, you just made it.

10 MS. BRYAN: Okay.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Ms.
12 Bryan, for your comments.

13 MS. BRYAN: Charles, may I ask one more
14 thing? Patrick Woodward is the fifth speaker here
15 and he may be late to this. If he arrives late,
16 is it possible for him to join?

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yeah, I would
18 coordinate that with Bonita, who's online, but we
19 will -- yeah. We also ask at the end if there's
20 people who haven't, there may be others, but I
21 would ask to coordinate that with Bonita because I
22 don't handle the technical part, but thanks for

1 letting us know.

2 MS. BRYAN: Thank you.

3 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. The next
4 person I have is Kevin Zaletsky. Kevin, are you
5 with us? Can you hear? Hello?

6 No. Kevin, are you unmuted?

7 SPEAKER: (inaudible) unmuted, Kevin.

8 SPEAKER: He may be having technical
9 difficulty.

10 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: I'll give him
11 another second or two. Hello?

12 Okay. I am going to go to the next
13 person on the list, who is Patricia Woodward of
14 111 North Van Buren, Rockville. Patricia?

15 MS. WOODWARD: Good evening.

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Good evening.
17 Welcome.

18 MS. WOODWARD: Thank you.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You have three
20 minutes. Go ahead.

21 MS. WOODWARD: Good evening. I'm
22 Patricia Woodward. I live on North Buren Street

1 here in the historical West End. The need for the
2 Neighborhood Plan and the need to include policy
3 to preserve the settings and landscaping of
4 historic districts thereby preventing overbuilding
5 of new structures and the loss of land surrounding
6 the historic structures. Planning Area 4 is one
7 of the oldest neighborhoods in Rockville and has
8 more historic districts than any other. They are
9 highly valued by the community.

10 Buildings all by themselves do not tell
11 a site's history. They must be seen in the
12 context of the surrounding -- the land surrounding
13 them. For the 19th and much of the 20th century,
14 we all know that Rockville had surrounding
15 countryside, large farms, vast rolling cropland
16 and pastures. Closer to town, the homes and
17 community buildings, such as Rockville Academy,
18 Chestnut Lodge of which I worked there from 1964
19 until July of 1975, and the Beale-Dawson House
20 were surrounded with sweeping lawns, dotted with
21 magnificent oaks and chestnuts. They demonstrate
22 how these schools and hotels, et cetera, worked.

1 Historic buildings sandwiched between
2 giant structures have become the norm locally and
3 nationally. We've all experienced walking in city
4 streets, coming upon a little church or an old
5 post office that is lost between 30- and 40- story
6 buildings. Nothing is left of the original
7 setting except two pieces of lawn maybe on each
8 side of the building. This is so, so sad.

9 The history has been relegated to
10 architecture and historic markers. We don't want
11 this to happen in Area 4. We want future
12 residents and visitors to have an accurate vision
13 of the history of these districts and how they
14 fill and it into the community. Without their
15 landscape history, historic structures are
16 severely diminished and compromised.

17 Most of our significant historic
18 districts have already been reduced significantly.
19 Chestnut Lodge once owned 140 acres of land; when
20 I worked there it was 100. The Beall- Dawson
21 House was the center of a large plantation.
22 However, we are very fortunate that we have

1 Chestnut Lodge and Rockville Academy and the
2 Beall-Dawson House where some of the lands and so
3 forth were preserved.

4 However, without policy in the
5 Neighborhood Plan it's highly likely that these
6 open spaces and landscapes still could be lost or
7 greatly diminished. The historic national, state,
8 and local standards do not protect the --

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Ms. Woodward, I'm
10 sorry, three minutes is up. Please finish that
11 last sentence, though.

12 MS. WOODWARD: Oh, okay, thank you very
13 much. Only then can we preserve our history if we
14 go with what we ask. The committee is --

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, that's good.

16 MS. WOODWARD: Thank you very much for
17 listening.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you. And
19 apologies for --

20 MS. WOODWARD: And we look forward to --

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. Thank you very
22 much.

1 MS. WOODWARD: Goodnight.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. Take care and
3 sorry we have to have a limit, but we have to
4 stick to it.

5 The next person on my list is Margaret
6 Magner.

7 MS. MAGNER: Hi. Did I successfully
8 unmute?

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes.

10 MS. MAGNER: Excellent.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You did and we can
12 hear you very well.

13 MS. MAGNER: Thank you.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Welcome and go
15 ahead. You have three minutes.

16 MS. MAGNER: Thank you.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep.

18 MS. MAGNER: My testimony addresses the
19 need to include policy on accessory dwelling units
20 in the Planning Area 4 Neighborhood Plan.

21 Planning Area 4 is composed primarily of
22 single-family residences. The Neighborhood Plan

1 survey shows that PA 4 residents desire above all
2 to preserve the composition of the neighborhood.
3 This value is a guiding principle of the PA 4
4 plan.

5 To achieve this, policy needs to be
6 added to the plan setting standards on ADUs.
7 Citywide policy as expressed in Volume I of the
8 Comprehensive Plan does not apply to neighborhoods
9 governed by HOAs, which is 50 percent or more of
10 the residential land in Rockville. ADU policy
11 that is allegedly citywide actually targets only a
12 handful of neighborhoods. These are Planning Area
13 4 and the other older neighborhoods with deep
14 backyards.

15 Each of these neighborhoods deserves to
16 have its own ADU policies that sustain it's unique
17 characteristics and community values. Here is why
18 ADU policy is needed for Planning Area 4
19 (technical inaudible) often becomes a rented
20 apartment or an Airbnb when the property changes
21 hands and new owners move into a main house. The
22 substantial backyards of PA 4 will be gone if

1 second dwellings are built there, resulting in the
 2 removal of a large percentage of the mature trees
 3 in the neighborhood, the degradation of the
 4 ecology, elimination of habitat for birds and
 5 wildlife, and destruction of the park-like quality
 6 of PA 4.

7 Allowing a second house per lot would
 8 further incentivize tear-down and mansionization
 9 as developers seek to maximize profits with two
 10 houses on one lot. This would destroy rather than
 11 preserve the range of housing we have in PA 4,
 12 which has many small houses built after World War
 13 II.

14 Providing affordable housing through
 15 ADUs in PA 4 is a myth. Property owners would
 16 seek to maximize the return from a freestanding
 17 ADU. Our initial investigation indicates that the
 18 rental rates would be out of the range of
 19 affordable housing. Allowing accessory apartments
 20 in existing residences or in addition would be
 21 beneficial, as long as there are standards to
 22 preserve the single-family character of PA 4

1 streets and keep them from being overburdened with
2 parked cars.

3 We have prepared draft policy language
4 on ADUs that we recommend for inclusion in the PA
5 4 plan. We hope that you will support the need
6 for this policy. It is essential for our
7 neighborhood to continue as the community of
8 single-family homes and green park-like spaces
9 that our residents have strongly stated they wish
10 to maintain.

11 Thank you for your dedication and your
12 willingness to hear and support the citizens who
13 live in PA 4.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Ms.
15 Magner, for your testimony. Much appreciated.

16 We have some pre-registered speakers,
17 four in a row, I guess, that are not on mine. So,
18 I think that the next person on the list is
19 Deborah Landau. Deborah, are you online? Are you
20 with us?

21 MS. LANDAU: I am. Can you hear me?

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep. Welcome.

1 MS. LANDAU: Thank you so much and good
2 evening.

3 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Good evening. You
4 have five minutes. You're here for ERCA, correct?

5 MS. LANDAU: Erica? Oh, ERCA, yeah,
6 sorry.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: ERCA, sorry.

8 MS. LANDAU: Yes.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: East Rockville Civic
10 Association.

11 MS. LANDAU: Correct, and thank you for
12 the introduction. I am indeed the president of
13 the East Rockville Civic Association. And I'm
14 here to provide our comments and feedback on this
15 2040 Comprehensive Draft Plan.

16 We very much appreciate all the work the
17 city has done to prepare this Comprehensive Plan
18 and the efforts by the city staff to give us
19 opportunities to understand its contents. We also
20 very much appreciate the changes that were made to
21 this draft plan reflecting our comments on the
22 previous version. Thank you.

1 In general, ERCA supports the new
2 residential attached zoning in East Rockville with
3 the following exceptions. ERCA does not support
4 the RA zone stretching down one full block into
5 Reading Terrace, Highland Avenue, Croydon Avenue,
6 and on the corner of 1st Street and Veirs Mill.
7 ERCA instead would support the RA zone change
8 reaching down two or three lots from South
9 Stonestreet Avenue, but no further.

10 It should be explicitly stated in the
11 plan that the East Rockville design guidelines
12 currently under development will apply to this new
13 RA zone. We've worked really hard with the city
14 and are very, very excited about these guidelines
15 and we hope that they will be kept.

16 Specifically in the plan, under the
17 Urban Design section on page 23, Area 5, the
18 fourth bullet under "Neighborhood Content" says,
19 "Mature trees and tree canopy should be
20 prioritized and preserved." We feel very strongly
21 that this needs to be a must. Mature trees and
22 tree canopy must be prioritized and preserved.

1 And this doesn't mean replacing them with
2 seedlings.

3 Moving down under "Building Form" on the
4 same page, the first bullet says, "New residential
5 attached buildings should be proportional in
6 height, mass, and scale with adjacent homes."
7 This also needs to be a must. New residential
8 attached buildings must be proportional in height,
9 mass, and scale with adjacent homes.

10 Next bullet, "When adjacent to a lower
11 scaled structure, a graduate transition should be
12 utilized." Again, this needs to be a must, a
13 gradual transition must be utilized.

14 And finally, the third point, "Side
15 elevations should include windows of consistent
16 proportion and placement as the front elevation
17 and large, blank walls should be avoided." Large,
18 blank walls must be avoided.

19 I would also encourage the Planning
20 Commission to make sure that they read previous
21 comments from the earlier drafts, many of which I
22 think would still be relevant to this version.

1 And that's all I've got. Thank you so
2 much for your time and consideration on this
3 really impressive Comprehensive Plan.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you very much,
5 Ms. Landau, for your comments. Much appreciate
6 that.

7 Let's see, the next person on my list is
8 Lauren Povich of 331 --

9 MS. POVICH: Okay, that's another
10 (inaudible) I can get it.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hello?

12 MS. POVICH: Oh, hello?

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hello. Hi. Is this
14 Lauren Povich?

15 MS. POVICH: I'm a Wootton student. I'm
16 a sophomore and I was -- I would like to advocate
17 for the Rockshire parking to be open for us
18 because a lot of us need parking. And me,
19 specifically, I'm on the field hockey team and I
20 just am a part of these few clubs. And after
21 school, a lot of the times the activity bus
22 doesn't come at the same times, so a lot of us

1 need to, like, park and be able to get home. And
2 I know that a lot of people who have parents that
3 are divorced are -- don't have a bus location at
4 one of their houses, so they need to be able to
5 drive.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you very much
8 for providing your comments on the parking.

9 Let's see, the next on my list is
10 Jasmine Gong (phonetic) of 11638 Pleasant Meadow,
11 North Potomac. Jasmine, are you online? Can you
12 hear us?

13 MR. LARSON: Okay, per Bonita's messages
14 --

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Oh, sorry.

16 MR. LARSON: -- she and Marilyn
17 (phonetic) may not be present. Jaimie Morris?

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: I keep missing
19 those. Too many things on my screen at once, two
20 screens.

21 MR. LARSON: I'm here for you.

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You're helping me.

1 Okay, so, next speaker then will be Jaimie Morris
2 of --

3 MS. MORRIS: Hi.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: -- 14004 Natia Manor
5 in North Potomac. Jaimie, can you hear us?

6 MS. MORRIS: Yes. Can you hear me?

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, we can. Please
8 proceed. You have three minutes to provide us
9 with your comments.

10 MS. MORRIS: Thank you.

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You're welcome.

12 MS. MORRIS: Hi. I'm Jaimie Morris and
13 I'm testifying on behalf of the hundreds of
14 students at Wootton that wish to have parking.
15 I'm a junior at Wootton High School and I'm also
16 on the Wootton Cheer Team and being a student
17 athlete I stay after school a lot and for meetings
18 and practices. And also on behalf of the other
19 students, I know that they want the opportunity to
20 stay after for clubs and school help.

21 There are not enough parking spots in
22 the lot for every licensed student to have a spot.

1 And also, I know that all the spots are dedicated
2 to the students, so when parents need to pick up
3 students there aren't spots for them to park. So,
4 Rockshire, the parking there is very much
5 appreciated.

6 I just would like you guys to take into
7 consideration the student parking at Rockshire for
8 now and for the future when planning this out.
9 So, thank you.

10 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you very much,
11 Jaimie, for your comments on our plan.

12 The next speaker that I have -- there's
13 actually two, so I would ask staff if there's a
14 clarification on this or if there are two -- if it
15 should be two separate people speaking. But it's
16 Victor Hernandez (phonetic) and Petra Grunveldt
17 (phonetic). Are we having two people or is this
18 just one or the other?

19 SPEAKER: I'm sorry, they're not online.
20 Jennifer Timmick is next.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay, the next two.
22 All right. Jennifer Timmick of 4 West Argyle

1 Street. Jennifer, are you online? Can you hear
2 us?

3 MS. TIMMICK: Yes, I am.

4 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hi. Welcome.

5 MS. TIMMICK: Can you --

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, we can. Please
7 go ahead.

8 MS. TIMMICK: Thank you, I'm glad to.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You have three
10 minutes.

11 MS. TIMMICK: I have been a part of the
12 Committee of Residents working on the update for
13 Planning Area 4 since December 2015. I wanted to
14 take a moment to acknowledge some of the people on
15 this committee who've put an amazing amount of
16 work and time into preparing a draft of the
17 planning area, from creating and implementing the
18 survey to compiling the results, then writing a
19 completely new planning areas draft, presenting
20 that to neighbors, and revising it based on their
21 input.

22 The committee co-chairs are Judge

1 Patrick Woodward and Ms. Noreen Bryan. Other
2 members of the committee who worked on this
3 project include Dennis Kane, Warren Crutchfield,
4 may he rest in peace, Eric Fulton, Jack Jellen
5 (phonetic), Larry Giammo, Nancy Pickard, Ken
6 Sonner, Patricia Woodward, and Kevin Zaletsky. I
7 am honored to have worked with such a dedicated
8 and smart group of people.

9 This committee completed a draft of
10 Planning Area 4 and submitted it to city staff in
11 December 2017. Starting the next spring, we began
12 to meet with members of city staff for about an
13 hour and a half to two hours every two weeks.
14 During these meetings we discussed in detail all
15 the topics, elements, issues, policies,
16 recommendations, everything.

17 Over the next year and a half, committee
18 members and city staff managed to come together
19 and agree on nearly all of the draft that you have
20 now for Planning Area 4. There were only a few
21 areas where we still disagree.

22 While many different staff members

1 attended our meetings at times, we worked mostly
2 closely with Cindy Kebba and Dave Levy, who were
3 there almost every other week. Cindy and Dave
4 were always professional. They were willing to
5 work hard. They listened to our ideas, discussed
6 differing opinions, did research, came back with
7 answers, and made some compromises. I am very
8 grateful for the many, many hours both Cindy and
9 Dave devoted to our planning area and for their
10 willingness to work with us to produce a draft
11 that clearly states the desires of planning areas
12 residents.

13 One area that's still difficult is the
14 section regarding institutional uses. Planning
15 Area 4 residents do not want to see the expansion
16 of large institutions in their neighborhood and
17 the plan you have should protect them from that.

18 On page 46 of this draft, the fourth
19 bullet under "Policies" says that you should "seek
20 standards that establish maximum acreage," and
21 then it continues you should "review and amend
22 other standards." It gives you all great ideas of

1 things to do, but I would say rather than just
2 seek new standard or review and amend existing
3 standards, the plan should right here and there
4 actually define those standards to accomplish the
5 goals.

6 I support the standards described by the
7 Planning Area 4 Committee, specifically no more
8 than one institution per block, no more than one
9 acre in total area, and no further expansion of
10 total land use.

11 Thank you very much for this time
12 tonight.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you for your
14 comments, Ms. Timmick.

15 Let's see, next on my list is Nick Jones
16 of 9907 Lambertina Lane. Nick, are you there?

17 MR. JONES: (inaudible) can you hear me?

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, we can.

19 Welcome.

20 MR. JONES: Thank you. So thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman and respected members of the board.
22 I am Nick Jones, a junior from Thomas S. Wootton

1 High School. And I am advocating not only on
2 behalf of myself, but for my fellow students and
3 the effort to retain Rockshire parking for Wootton
4 students.

5 Students rely on these spots day-in and
6 day-out for so many reasons. Personally, my
7 parents are separated and my father lives out of
8 the district, making driving a necessity.
9 Moreover, my mother, who lives in the district,
10 lives in a neighborhood called The Willows, which
11 from my house is exactly two and a half miles.
12 That's two and a half miles and the county does
13 not offer a single bus to my neighborhood since
14 part of the neighborhood is within Montgomery
15 County's two-mile range that they say is perfectly
16 fine for walking distance.

17 With both of my parents working
18 full-time and the inability to drive myself for
19 the first two years of school, I was forced to
20 walk through frigidly icy days to downpours that
21 flood the streets. Now that I'm finally a junior
22 with my license, I thought those days were over

1 until I heard about the county's decision to
2 possibly take away the Rockshire parking.
3 Rockshire parking would not only allow me to drive
4 myself, but drive others who haven't been given
5 the opportunity to get a ride to school.

6 My only ask is that if you aren't going
7 to supply the transportation, at least supply the
8 parking so those fortunate enough can drive those
9 who can't. Sorry, those who either do not have
10 their license or cannot get it for one reason or
11 another. We deserve our spots.

12 I want to thank you guys for your time
13 and your effort. Bye.

14 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Nick. We
15 appreciate your comments about the parking and the
16 nice words for our effort.

17 The next person I have, Kevin Zaletsky.
18 Kevin, are you online?

19 MR. ZALETSKY: Yeah, hi. Can you hear
20 me?

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, we can.

22 MR. ZALETSKY: Okay, great. Well, thank

1 you very much.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Go ahead and
3 welcome.

4 MR. ZALETSKY: Yeah, pardon me for that
5 technical difficulty.

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: No problem.

7 MR. ZALETSKY: So, my name's Kevin
8 Zaletsky. I live at 101 North Street. I've been
9 a Rockville resident for more than 16 years. Most
10 of that time I've been an active member of the
11 West End Citizens Association, to include serving
12 as a member of the Planning Area 4 Neighborhood
13 Planning Committee for the last four years.
14 Tonight I wanted to address the need to include
15 policy in the Neighborhood Plan to prevent the
16 encroachment of too many or too large of
17 institutions into the neighborhoods.

18 As you know, Planning Area 4 is one of
19 the oldest neighborhoods in Rockville, has more
20 historic structures and districts than any other.
21 You walk down our streets, you're met by a
22 progression of largely single-family homes that

1 invite children to play on the sidewalks,
2 neighbors to converse as they walk their dogs, and
3 a general sense of peace away from urban
4 congestion.

5 By contrast, most of us have experienced
6 walking in towns where residential streets have
7 become islands of individual houses squeezed
8 amongst nonresidential buildings that dominate
9 them. These streets have lost irrevocably the
10 cohesiveness and friendliness of a residential
11 community.

12 Over time, Planning Area 4 has amassed a
13 greater percentage of land devoted to institutions
14 than almost any other neighborhood in Rockville.
15 Due to their convenience locations, the areas of
16 budding Highway 270 at West Montgomery Avenue and
17 Falls Road are particularly at risk. In these
18 areas institutions occupy more than half the
19 available land. The residential character of
20 these neighborhoods is already significantly
21 compromised.

22 One of only 10 primary guiding

1 principles delineated in our Neighborhood Plan
2 states, "Limit the expansion of commercial and
3 institutional uses." This principle is not
4 arbitrary. It was drawn directly from a
5 comprehensive neighborhood survey conducted in
6 2016. In this survey our neighborhoods
7 overwhelmingly, more than 80 percent of 500
8 households that responded, indicated that they
9 opposed replacing residences with commercial and
10 institutional uses.

11 In that same survey, when neighbors were
12 asked what do you like least about your
13 neighborhood, traffic was the number one response.
14 Without appropriate limitations on their number
15 and size, institutions will continue to add more
16 parked cars and traffic to our already congested
17 streets.

18 Our neighborhoods are protected from
19 commercial expansion through land use designations
20 and zoning. Similar protections do not exist for
21 institutions which enter the neighborhoods one at
22 a time via special exceptions with guidelines that

1 are largely arbitrary and subjective.

2 Currently, there's no limit on the total
3 land that can be used for institutions or other
4 limitations on an institution's size or footprint.
5 When considered one at a time, most institutions
6 appear reasonable are approved. But together,
7 however, too many institutions or excessively
8 large ones threaten to destroy the integrity of
9 Planning Area 4 as a residential neighborhood.

10 Rockville neighbors take great pride in
11 the institutions that currently exist in our
12 neighborhoods. These churches, schools, shelters,
13 nursing homes, museums, and many other services
14 grew organically with our community and are part
15 of the rich tapestry of our lives. They have a
16 scale and size that harmonizes with the
17 residential structures around them, were built to
18 serve the immediate community, not as a draw to
19 significant volumes of transient traffic from
20 other locations. Reasonable limitations on the
21 expansion of the number and size of institutions
22 can keep these cherished neighborhood services

1 from becoming our greatest neighborhood threats.

2 We've prepared draft policies regarding
3 institutions that we recommend for inclusion in
4 the plan. Hope that you'll support the need for
5 this policy to preserve Planning Area 4's historic
6 and residential character. Thank you very much.
7 I appreciate it.

8 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
9 Zaletsky. And I have a question for you, if
10 that's okay.

11 MR. ZALETSKY: Sure, of course.

12 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: And in a way I
13 apologize because it just popped into my head and
14 I believe others have spoken in a similar vein as
15 you just did and one the same topic. So, anyone
16 listening, you know, you can always send written
17 testimony. But I do want to clarify on what I've
18 been hearing.

19 So, it seems that some people have
20 spoken out against the advancement or
21 proliferation of institutions in Planning Area 4.
22 My question is, does that mean that you would

1 support a reduction? So, if institutions over
2 time were to change use and become residential or
3 housing, would that be something that you're also
4 in favor of or is it just that you are okay with
5 the existing amount, but would like to see -- not
6 see it expand.

7 MR. ZALETSKY: Sure. So, speaking from
8 the discussions that we had in the Planning Area 4
9 Committee, you know, an underlying theme has
10 always been that we'd be happy to further return
11 to, you know, to residences of any of the
12 properties. So, and I think the underlying zoning
13 for a lot of these institutions is single-family
14 residential. So, if they were to leave, we would
15 be (technical inaudible).

16 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you very much.
17 Appreciate it.

18 MR. ZALETSKY: No problem. Thank you.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You're welcome. The
20 next speaker I have on the list is Rhoda
21 Ndjoukouo, if I've said that correctly, of 10505
22 Bounty Cove Court, Gaithersburg.

1 MS. NDJOUKOUO: Hi. Can you hear me?

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hello. Yes, we can.
3 Welcome.

4 MS. NDJOUKOUO: Okay. Good evening,
5 Chair, members, and people of the board. My name
6 is Rhoda Ndjoukouo and I'm here on behalf of
7 Wootton High School Committee and I'm also part of
8 Wootton SGA; I'm secretary. Thank you so much for
9 having me and this opportunity to speak out and
10 share my views about the Rockshire planning.

11 So, the Rockshire parking lot means a
12 lot to us Wootton students. You know, as Wootton
13 students in the Wootton community we park there a
14 lot, like, for school and for after school, as
15 they say. For me as a senior and junior, you
16 know, we have internships and interviews we go to
17 in and out during school and after school and we
18 need these parking lots because our school parking
19 lots aren't big enough to fit all our students
20 that have licenses, so we really need --
21 Rockshire's really there for us to park.

22 Also, as SGA, we also hold all sorts of

1 events, like after-school events, like dances and
2 stuff like that, and we need our students to come
3 and, you know, be able to park their cars and be
4 like, you know, having to show that they have a
5 place to park to come to these school events.

6 And, you know, parking can also seem
7 like we don't want to -- we want to have Rockshire
8 there so students won't have to, like, park in the
9 neighborhoods next to Rockshire, so they'll have
10 parking at Rockshire to part at.

11 So, yeah, I hope you guys, you know,
12 take us into consideration while planning and you
13 guys, you know, think of us students because this
14 parking does really mean a lot to us and parking
15 here, and taking this away would really be hard
16 for us to have a place to park at school because
17 we do have the right to park somewhere and attend
18 school. And again, if these places -- if the
19 transportation's not provided, we need at least
20 parking for these licensed students to, you know,
21 park at and go to school.

22 Thank you so much for your time. And,

1 yeah, thank you.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Rhoda,
3 for taking the time to provide us your comments.

4 MS. NDJOUKOUO: Mm-hmm.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: The next person on
6 my list is Nancy Pickard of 29 Courthouse Square.
7 And Nancy is representing Peerless Rockville, so
8 will have five minutes of time. Nancy, are you
9 online with us?

10 MS. PICKARD: I am. Can you hear me?

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, we can.
12 Welcome and go ahead. You have five minutes.

13 MS. PICKARD: All right, great. Thank
14 you, Chairman Littlefield, and greetings to all
15 the members of the Planning Commission.

16 I'm Nancy Pickard, but I am speaking to
17 you tonight as executive director of Peerless
18 Rockville Historic Preservation. I welcome the
19 opportunity to address you this evening and we are
20 happy to provide input on Volume II of the Draft
21 Comprehensive Plan, and express our appreciation
22 of your role in the Comprehensive Master Plan

1 process and for our inclusion and involvement in
 2 it, as well. This is an extremely complex,
 3 detailed, and vitally important document and we
 4 commend the staff for their many, many hours, in
 5 fact years of hard work.

6 Peerless Rockville is particularly
 7 pleased to see the inclusion of plans and goals
 8 for some of our most significant historic
 9 properties. We will be submitting a detailed
 10 written response to Volume II, but tonight I will
 11 present some general comments that are applicable
 12 in certain focus areas and citywide.

13 We have fully understanding that this
 14 plan was designed to guide future growth in the
 15 city and, as such, it acts as a tool to guide
 16 planning for continuity, change, and growth as
 17 stated in Land Use Policy 1 in Volume I. To meet
 18 future growth and community needs the plan targets
 19 areas for new residential housing types with
 20 higher density and new zoning. The change in
 21 growth areas are highlighted throughout the plan.
 22 Tonight we would like to bring a bit of attention

1 to areas not explicitly targeted for growth,
2 particularly our historic and older residential
3 communities.

4 We note that nine planning areas report
5 residents' concerns for preserving the character
6 of their single-family residential neighborhood.
7 Issues such as mansionization, the renovation or
8 replacement of original homes with structures that
9 dwarf the community, also appear to be a concern.

10 Yet these citizen concerns accompany a
11 Draft Comprehensive Plan that emphasizes
12 multi-family housing development, redevelopment,
13 and plans to permit an accessory dwelling unit on
14 every property. We see little in the way of
15 concrete regulations or policies for protecting
16 existing community character and/or the settings
17 for historic properties.

18 Neighborhood character encompasses
19 various aspects of site and environment reflecting
20 the shape and size of buildings, materials,
21 craftsmanship, spaces features. Preserving this
22 character refers to more than simply architecture.

1 Although existing and long-established building
2 types and patterns are central, the alignments of
3 buildings, the relationships to streets and
4 sidewalks, tree planting, accessory buildings,
5 U-sheds (phonetic), and landscaping all contribute
6 to the character that creates neighborhood
7 identity. Changes to neighborhood character in
8 historic and conservation districts requires
9 sensitivity, but these features remain important
10 to all neighborhoods throughout the city.

11 We note that in some areas, such as Area
12 4, there is increasing pressure from development
13 and encroachment of nonresidential offices and
14 growing institutions. Concrete regulations and
15 guidelines need to be put in place to ensure
16 protection of our existing communities, and we
17 call upon the Planning Commission to strengthen
18 these protections, particularly from expanding
19 office, institutional, and retail growth. One
20 opportunity to respond to citizens' concerns lies
21 in the implementation of neighborhood design
22 guidelines, documents that will establish

1 architectural standards and direct us within the
2 city's unique neighborhood.

3 Peerless Rockville wants to express
4 strong reservations about the impacts of Land Use
5 Policy 2.3, which permits an ADU on every
6 residential property in the city, particularly
7 when resident feedback strongly states a
8 preference to preserve the character of those
9 single-unit, detached residential housing. This
10 policy is currently unclear, lacks specifics, and
11 appears to disproportionately affect older areas
12 of the city already facing development pressures
13 and other impacts. While Peerless Rockville
14 agrees in concept with ADUs and supports increased
15 affordable housing and missing middle housing,
16 permitting blanket ADUs will increase housing, but
17 offers no guarantees regarding affordability. We
18 believe the community should be provided with more
19 detailed guidelines and policies before permitting
20 such a monumental change to Rockville's
21 neighborhoods.

22 The health and vitality of Rockville

1 Town Center remains a pressing issue in the city.
2 Proposed increases in retail in an area where
3 retail currently struggles requires careful
4 decision-making. Redevelopment plans on North
5 Washington Street abutting established
6 neighborhood must be sensitive to the size and
7 scale and character. We hope to see the
8 redevelopment in Area 1 that focuses on commercial
9 vibrancy and connection between Town Center and
10 neighborhoods across 355, which will increase
11 accessibility to business and safe travel north
12 and east in an area where current retail space
13 offers a fruitful mixed-use development rather
14 than westward towards neighborhoods and
15 single-family housing.

16 I know I'm about out of time, so I have
17 one last thought and that is just that we really
18 do appreciate the acknowledgement of needed
19 research and publicity of existing preservation
20 districts as well as better policies. And we are
21 very encouraged to see future intentions for King
22 Farm, Lincoln High School, and new boundaries for

1 Dawson Farm Pack -- Park. Sorry.

2 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: That's okay.

3 MS. PICKARD: Thank you so much for
4 listening tonight.

5 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Ms.
6 Pickard. Much appreciate your comments on behalf
7 of Peerless Rockville.

8 The next speaker that I have is Brian
9 Shipley at 211 South Washington Street, Rockville.
10 Brian, are you with us? Are you connected?

11 MR. SHIPLEY: Can you hear me?

12 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, yep, we can.
13 Welcome.

14 MR. SHIPLEY: Good evening. My name is
15 Brian Shipley and I'm providing testimony on
16 Planning Area 4. I've been an officer, either
17 president or vice president, of the West End
18 Citizens Association for more than two years and
19 participated in the biweekly meetings with the
20 city staff to finalize the Planning Area 4
21 Neighborhood Plan in 2018 and '19.

22 I want to make sure that the Planning

1 Commission is aware that the development of the
2 Planning Area 4 plan has been a community effort
3 from the ground up. We recognize that our 1989
4 Neighborhood Plan was sorely out of date and as an
5 appendix to the Master Plan was largely a lost
6 document. It was rarely referenced. We knew that
7 the future of our neighborhood depended on having
8 a neighborhood plan that was recognized as policy
9 by everyone: Developers, government officials,
10 and residents.

11 Throughout our own planning process we
12 have sought to build out plan on the views and
13 values of the residents. And to accomplish this,
14 we surveyed the households in the West End. Once
15 the survey was complete and to ensure our planning
16 process remained public, we discussed the status
17 of our plan at monthly WECA meetings and at our
18 annual general membership meetings that are open
19 to all residents. So, before these public
20 hearings, residents have had many opportunities to
21 express their views and shape our Neighborhood
22 Plan.

1 As Rockville continues to grow and
2 become an urban center, we knew how the residents
3 of the Planning Area 4 feel about preserving the
4 character of the neighborhood. And as we have
5 heard from others who have testified this evening,
6 Planning Area 4 residents overwhelmingly desire to
7 preserve the single-family residential
8 neighborhood that exists today. The survey data
9 supports residents' desires. We knew our
10 Neighborhood Plan needed to be clear and provide
11 protections that do not currently exist.

12 As Rockville is urbanizing, pressure to
13 expand commercial and institutional uses into the
14 neighborhood is increasing. Communities with HOAs
15 have covenants that protect them from this
16 happening. Planning Area 4 has none. We hope
17 that you will support the protections incorporated
18 into our Draft Plan and will support the
19 additional policies for institutions, open spaces
20 in historic districts, and freestanding accessory
21 dwelling units.

22 Our new neighborhoods with HOAs have far

1 greater protections from traffic and the
2 encroachment of nonresidential uses. This has put
3 more traffic on our streets and an unbalanced
4 pressure for development in Planning Area 4 and
5 other older neighborhoods. Through our
6 Neighborhood Plan and the proposed additional
7 policies we're hoping to preserve our existing
8 residential character through increased
9 protections and leveling the playing field with
10 HOAs.

11 Thank you very much.

12 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
13 Shipley, for your comments.

14 The next person, I believe we skipped
15 one person, so we are at Hyun Kim. Hyun, are you
16 online?

17 MS. KIM: Yes, I am.

18 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Hello and welcome.
19 You have three minutes.

20 MS. KIM: Thank you.

21 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: You're welcome.

22 MS. KIM: Good evening. Thank you for

1 the opportunity to address you today on behalf of
2 the Korean Presbyterian Church of Rockville. We
3 are located at 800 Hurley Avenue, next to the
4 Rockshire Shopping Center.

5 My name is Hyun Kim and I have been a
6 member of the church for the past 13 years. And
7 I'm speaking to you today because we appreciate
8 being included in the plan as a consideration and
9 we needed to impart on this Planning Commission
10 how we will be directly impacted by its decisions
11 and recommendations. The very existence and
12 continued operations of the church will be
13 determined by how the redevelopment will take into
14 account our church's need for additional parking
15 spaces.

16 From its inception, the Rockshire
17 community provided for a religious institutional
18 presence. In 1980, Temple Beth Ami built the
19 synagogue at 800 Hurley Avenue. And as a
20 synagogue, clearly met a need of the community.
21 It grew and soon needed to expand. In 1986,
22 Temple Beth Ami remodeled to expand the building

1 and, in doing so, did not have enough parking
2 spaces to accommodate its growing congregation.

3 From that time, it entered into a
4 license agreement with then-leaseholder GFS. GFS
5 leased and operated the Giant in the shopping
6 center next to the synagogue and granted use of
7 the 40 parking spaces on its parking lot at no
8 cost. These parking spaces were to be used in
9 conjunction with the Rockshire swimming pool, who
10 had been using the same spaces since 1977.

11 Then in 1998, our church, KPCR, took
12 over occupying the synagogue and moved into the
13 neighborhood and have been calling it home for the
14 past 22 years. Since then, we have opened our
15 doors to meet the needs of the community when
16 able. The community has in the past used our
17 church to hold meetings and we allow Wootton High
18 School students to park in front of our building.

19 Our church bought the building only with
20 the understanding that we were going to be able to
21 use the additional parking spaces. Without the
22 accommodation of these additional parking spaces,

1 our church will not be able to operate as the
2 limited spaces in front of the building will not
3 be sufficient to accommodate the congregation and,
4 in effect, maintain a permit to keep its door
5 open.

6 Since 1977, the additional spaces that
7 GFS leased free of charge allowed for the
8 community to provide a necessary service. The
9 additional parking spaces are vital to not just
10 the continued operation of our church, but also
11 for the continued presence of the swimming pool
12 and assisting in alleviating the overcrowding and
13 meeting the needs of our high school students, as
14 you've heard so many from today. Therefore, we
15 ask that you ensure desperately needed parking
16 when redeveloping the Rockshire community.

17 Thank you for your attention and
18 consideration.

19 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Hyun, for
20 your comments. We appreciate those.

21 The next four people on my list are
22 apparently not present, although I was advised

1 that we do have one more person who would like to
2 -- who's online and would like to speak. It's
3 Kaitlyn (phonetic), but I don't have a last name
4 and I'm not sure if -- Kaitlyn, are you here?

5 MS. MCGUIRL: It looks like mine was
6 unmuted, but this is Christine McGuirl.

7 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Oh, okay. So, I
8 don't have -- Christine, I don't have you on my
9 list, but I think that's -- I'm not -- oh, yes,
10 you were signed up earlier and you're now here.
11 So, you're with Federal Realty Investment Trust?

12 MS. MCGUIRL: Yes.

13 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. Well, go
14 ahead then and welcome. And sorry for the bit of
15 confusion, but --

16 MS. MCGUIRL: Thank you so much.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you and you
18 have three minutes.

19 MS. MCGUIRL: So, my name is Christine
20 McGuirl. I'm a development director with Federal
21 Realty Investment Trust, the owner of 12 North
22 Washington Street. And as you know, Federal

1 Realty is also the owner of a large portion of
2 Town Square and thus we have a particular interest
3 in ensuring the long-term viability and vitality
4 of the Town Center and the surrounding area. This
5 goal, however, is a shared goal, one which is in
6 the best interest of the city, the residents, and
7 the visitors to downtown Rockville.

8 I'm here this evening to testify in
9 support of the Draft Comprehensive Plan
10 recommendations to rezone the property to MXCD.
11 We echo the sentiments of our neighbor, Steve
12 VanGrack, who you heard from two weeks ago during
13 the September 9th public hearing. The 12 North
14 Washington property is currently improved with
15 37,000 square feet of retail that for many years,
16 well before COVID, has struggled to survive.
17 Surface parking fronts the building on North
18 Washington Street and West Middle Lane, making it
19 difficult to create an appealing streetscape.
20 The zoning change in accordance with the
21 Comprehensive Plan recommendation will help
22 encourage the redevelopment of the property as

1 well as the surrounding properties that share the
2 same recommendation, and provide needed
3 residential uses. These residential uses will in
4 turn help to support the Town Center.

5 Just over a year ago, ULI conducted an
6 assessment of Town Center with the goal of
7 providing meaningful recommendations to strengthen
8 the area's vitality. One of the specific
9 questions that ULI panel posed was, is the
10 development density and land use mix, both
11 existing and expected, sufficient to support a
12 strong retail environment?

13 The ULI panel's answer was clear: The
14 density in the Town Center should be increased
15 without compromising character. The panel
16 recognized that a critical mass was just that,
17 critical to supporting the Town Center.

18 A number of years ago, Federal Realty
19 evaluated redeveloping 12 North Washington
20 property to provide multi-family housing, but it
21 was not economically viable under the existing
22 MXNC-MXT zoning. As the Draft Comprehensive Plan

1 recommendation for the west side of North
2 Washington Street recognized, the development
3 standards of the MXCD zone allow for sufficient
4 density to make residential development feasible
5 in a manner compatible with surrounding areas.

6 We encourage the Planning Commission to
7 support the recommendations of the Comprehensive
8 Plan for this area. Thank you.

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Ms.
10 McGuirl. Appreciate your testimony about the Town
11 Center.

12 I think that exhausts my list of
13 pre-registered participants. I'm going to ask
14 city staff if there's anyone else that's signed on
15 since or wasn't here and is now here and would
16 like to speak.

17 Bonita? Clark?

18 MR. LARSON: I just asked Bonita the
19 same thing. I'm not sure.

20 BONITA: I'm sorry. Yes, everyone has
21 spoken. There was one --

22 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay.

1 BONITA: -- who called in, but she's
2 already accounted for.

3 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay. So,
4 everybody's accounted for. Well, then I guess
5 that concludes our second and final public
6 testimony on the Comprehensive Plan, Volume II:
7 Planning Areas, at least the virtual testimony.
8 But for all those listening, I'll repeat what I
9 said at the beginning. Our public record, we
10 voted at our last meeting to keep our public
11 record open until October 7th, 5 p.m., I believe,
12 so that's another couple weeks to provide us
13 testimony in writing, and we are actually
14 encouraging that. We prefer that simply because
15 we're not in normal times and we're doing an okay
16 job, I think, right now with our virtual Planning
17 Commission meetings, but certainly it would be
18 beneficial to have -- to make sure we've heard
19 from everybody to have that testimony in writing,
20 as well.

21 So, with that --

22 BONITA: I'm sorry to interrupt you. I

1 notice that we did have one person just -- it
2 looks like they jumped on, Patrick Woodward, I
3 think his last name is. I don't have the --
4 Woodward, yes. He was on the list before, but
5 wasn't available (technical inaudible).

6 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Let's -- we'd like
7 to hear your testimony and your comments. And you
8 can have three minutes, which is the usual for
9 individuals. Are you here?

10 MR. WOODWARD: Can you hear me?

11 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yes, we can.
12 Welcome.

13 MR. WOODWARD: Okay. Thank you very
14 much. I just was able to log on.

15 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Okay.

16 MR. WOODWARD: All right.

17 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Please proceed.
18 Yep.

19 MR. WOODWARD: Good evening. My name is
20 Patrick Woodward and I live at 111 North Van Buren
21 Street. My testimony will address the overarching
22 need for the Planning Area 4 Neighborhood Plan to

1 preserve and protect the character of the
2 neighborhood as a predominantly single-family,
3 detached residential.

4 In the mid-1980s, I had the privilege of
5 participating in the neighborhood planning process
6 that ultimately led to the adoption of the 1989
7 Neighborhood Plan for Planning Area 4. Then as
8 now, the residents expressed their views in a
9 comprehensive survey. Then as now, the residents
10 voiced their concern over the encroachment into
11 the neighborhood of nonresidential development.
12 The residents also indicated their strong
13 preference for maintaining the single-family
14 residential character of the neighborhood.

15 Today we are faced with a new threat.
16 The proposal to allow accessory dwelling units and
17 freestanding structures on lots with single-family
18 detached dwellings will eventually destroy the
19 character of the neighborhood that the residents
20 expressly want to be preserved. I concur with the
21 reasons given by Margaret Magner for disallowing
22 ADUs in freestanding structures and will not

1 repeat them here.

2 I would like to add, however, that the
3 economic pressure to build ADUs will fall equally
4 on developers and homeowners. It is beyond
5 question that the value of a single- family
6 residential lot will be increased by the potential
7 addition of a standalone ADU. What homeowner
8 would not take advantage of this increased value
9 when selling his or her property. Similarly, a
10 purchaser who pays a higher price will seek to
11 recoup that expense by building an ADU.

12 Finally, the state of Maryland is
13 required by law to assess every parcel of land at
14 its highest and best use. The allowance of two
15 residential units on one lot will eventually lead
16 to a higher assessment and higher real estate
17 taxes.

18 In conclusion, I respectfully request
19 that you preserve and protect the residential
20 character of Planning Area 4 by prohibiting any
21 accessory dwelling unit in a standalone structure
22 on a lot with a single-family, detached dwelling.

1 In this way the voice of the residents will be
2 heard. Thank you very much.

3 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
4 Woodward. And I'm glad you finally made it. We
5 were just about to wrap up, so thanks again for
6 your comments.

7 I assume we are wrapping up.

8 MR. WOODWARD: Okay, (inaudible).

9 CHAIR LITTLEFIELD: Yep, have a good
10 evening. So, I'll ask staff, is that -- do we
11 have anybody else? One last chance. Okay. Then
12 that does conclude our public testimony, our
13 meeting agenda item.

14 (Whereupon, the PROCEEDINGS were
15 adjourned.)

16 * * * * *

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Carleton J. Anderson, III

(Signature and Seal on File)

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