



March 21, 2022

Hon. Gabe Albornoz, President
Hon. Evan Glass, Vice President
Councilmembers of the Montgomery County Council
Montgomery County Council Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear President Albornoz, Vice President Glass, and Distinguished Councilmembers of the County Council,

My name is Chris Reynolds, and I am the President of the Seven Oaks–Evanswood Citizens' Association (SOECA), which is the civic organization that contains the old library site. **I write you on behalf of my organization to strongly endorse and support the proposed supplemental budget appropriation for water and sewer upgrades in the vicinity of Ellsworth Drive** (note that the Council is currently scheduled to consider this issue at 1:30 pm on March 22, 2022).

Our community—which contains a growing number of families with young children—is enthusiastic about the Gudelsky Child Development Center. We hope that the center will be able to open and begin serving the needs of families as expeditiously as possible. **Reliable, high-quality child care is in vanishingly short supply, and the old library site is conveniently located to parents who may already be on their way to/from jobs in downtown Silver Spring or the metro.** It is rare to have a large child care center so conveniently located to mass transit options including the metro, local busses, and the new Flash bus. We hope that the county council will approve these needed funds and work with WSSC to complete the needed upgrades as quickly as is feasible.

SOECA also urges the Council to use this utility work as an opportunity to consider additional pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along Ellsworth Drive between Spring Street and Dale Drive. When the underground work is complete, the roadway will likely need significant resurfacing work. This would be the perfect opportunity to adjust the current configuration of Ellsworth from an extremely wide road with an incomplete sidewalk network and no dedicated bicycle amenities to one that acknowledges the diverse array of road-users that it currently sees and one that better protects vulnerable users from the increased private car traffic that the Gudelsky center will inevitably induce.

In the unlikely event that the Gudelsky Center does not prove sustainable, these infrastructure upgrades will allow the old library site to be used for new housing or other opportunities. Even without building new housing, the SOECA neighborhood is growing—older homeowners (including some original owners) are transitioning out of the neighborhood and more growing families are transitioning in. It is critical that our neighborhood be served with adequate infrastructure that will allow the neighborhood to organically grow and evolve, over time.

Thank you very much for considering this important opportunity,

Chris Reynolds
SOECA President