

Statement by David Reed

President of the Long Branch-Sligo Community Association

My name is David Reed. I am President of the Long Branch-Sligo Community Association. As a community of 440 residential units directly contiguous with the Minor-Master Plan area, the very first question we asked 2 years ago was: What will be the Plan's impact on traffic? As our engagement has continued and as the MMPA has evolved, we have repeatedly requested a comprehensive traffic analysis. There are several reasons for that request:

First, our neighborhood streets are already overwhelmed by cut-through traffic between New Hampshire and Piney Branch, creating threats to residents and pedestrians from speeding cars, failure to stop at stop signs, and disregard for pedestrians and cyclists. With an anticipated increase of some 6,000 new residents, those threats will only intensify.

Second, the anticipated 3,500 new units will lie outside of the half-mile walk shed to public transportation hubs at Takoma Metro, New Hampshire and University, and the Arliss Purple Line station. It is unrealistic to think that the thousands of new residents will be walking or cycling over a mile to public transportation hubs on a regular basis, particularly in inclement weather.

Third, the transportation annex attached to the MMPA draft uses the Down Town Silver Spring and Adjacent Communities transportation plan as its reference point. The annex states that the 3,500 new residential units in Takoma Park will not create an appreciable impact on the traffic flowing

through Down Town Silver Spring. It is professionally irresponsible to use that as a MMPA reference point. Housing 6,000 plus new residents may well create congestion nightmares in Takoma Park, while Down Town Silver Spring may not register any change whatsoever. Can the bridge on Maple, and arteries along Carroll and Flower, and the Sligo Creek Parkway absorb that new traffic volume?

Four, city staff claim that existing streets were able to handle workers and visitors when the hospital was in full operation. That view overlooks the fact that even with the massive parking lot at the corner of Flower and Carroll, staff and visitors frequently parked on our neighborhood streets. And I suggest that you NOT overlook the fact that new high-rise buildings are anticipated where the parking lot currently sits. Where will those new residents park?

We have asked time and again for a comprehensive traffic analysis of the MMPA. That request has been repeatedly denied. Please help us avoid the embarrassment of the MMPA being Takoma Park's second major development plan rejected for non-compliance with the State Highway Administration requirements. Conduct a comprehensive traffic study first, next analyze and discuss the study, THEN and ONLY THEN should the MMPA be voted on.

Thank you.