

October 28, 2025

Public Hearing on the University Boulevard Corridor Plan

Oral Testimony of Kevin Bromberg
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Statement in Opposition to the University Boulevard Corridor (UBC) Plan

Why has the University Boulevard Corridor Plan not been sent back to the drawing board? The Office of Legislative Oversight's Racial Equity and Social Justice Analysis is the latest to sound the alarm on the likely displacement of longtime residents. Yet, Planning persists with a plan that has tremendous opposition at all levels. I'm here to speak about Planning's disregard of the community and its failure to uphold the Maryland Public Information Act.

Flawed Public Disclosure Process

Planning claims:

"The University Boulevard Corridor Plan engaged the community through extensive outreach... producing over 24,000 words of feedback analyzed through qualitative data analysis." — Appendix B, p. 24

Yet Planning refuses to release the individual outreach responses. When a resident sought to review some of the underlying outreach records through a Maryland Public Information Act request, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) demanded over \$1,000 in fees and denied a public-interest waiver—claiming the summarized results were "already available."

But, in fact, the individual survey results are not available. Taxpayers funded those surveys, and the individual results should be disclosed at no cost so residents can confirm that their views were accurately represented. I have requested mediation with the Public Access Ombudsman and filed a new request for the "qualitative data analysis" database itself.

Of additional deep concern: As of October 25, staff have still not confirmed whether all respondent comments were included in Appendix B. Some language suggests that entire categories—such as citizen comments at community meetings—may have been omitted. Without that disclosure, neither the Council nor the public can determine whether the outreach summary is complete or reliable.

What the Summary Ignores

The evidence shows residents were almost uniformly opposed to the UBC Plan. They had specific concerns: up-zoning, density “upgrades,” and traffic-worsening street reconfigurations. Yet the Board’s report insists:

“The Plan’s recommendations reflect the community’s priorities, balancing development with sustainability, housing affordability, and transportation improvements.”

That is simply not true. Instead, the Board replaced information on detailed objections with vague generalities that bear little resemblance to the record.

A Call for Accountability

The public is entitled to see the full record of the information that the county government is relying on. That full record is not “a summary,” but must be the original source. Summaries can be useful when there is a significant volume of information. But the correct practice is to add a summary to the release of the raw information, not to release a summary in place of the original source information.

Planning is flouting the entire spirit of the Maryland Public Information Act by its refusal to be transparent. Will the Council support ignoring citizen requests? Will the Council make its decision based on a summary that is not full, fair, or complete?

Return this Plan to the Planning Board for correction. Demand transparency, full disclosure of the public-input database, and an honest accounting of what residents actually said. Montgomery County deserves planning grounded in facts—not fiction.

Note: A longer written statement has also been provided for the record