



**Conservation
Montgomery**

To: Montgomery County Council

Re: Testimony on the Planning Board Draft of The Clarksburg
Gateway Sector Plan - January 21, 2025

Dear Council President and Councilmembers,

Since our founding, Conservation Montgomery has consistently supported the preservation of Ten Mile Creek, Little Seneca Reservoir and tributaries to Little Seneca Creek. During the many iterations of planning for Clarksburg as a compact community, the importance of protecting water quality has been the over riding priority. To do so requires limits on impervious surfaces, adequate forest to absorb run-off and wetland protection. Storm water management alone is not enough. We know that. Clarksburg is a Special Protection Area because that is the purpose of SPA's This sector plan is located within designated SPA.

How can standards of protection be maintained with the loss of large areas of forest? It cannot, and as a back-up drinking water supply. the reservoir and creeks emptying into it must have a support system to assure water quality standards remain high. Despite significant attention to this concern when large scale, planned development started, streams in the area are already showing decline. They no longer support the diversity they were once known for. As a path of protection, the State of Md. considers the forested tracts in the sector plan to be **Priority Urban Forest**. Maryland even provides guidelines to achieve these protections. So why is Montgomery County looking to destroy and/or bisect these vital forests ?

This plan resembles the M-83 dilemma you recently settled, in that, you concluded the cumulative impact of losing so many invaluable natural resources is not worth any individual benefit. The same is true here.

We fully support the detailed comments provided by Friends of Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Reservoir. We hope you will too.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Barnes, *Advocacy Committee*

Conservation Montgomery ~

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From: Friends of Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Reservoir testimony

The following are fundamental to protecting water quality and the health of streams in the Sector plan that flow to the Little Seneca Reservoir:

Council testimony on Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

- Preserve the remaining 285 acres of forest occurring within the 969-acre sector plan boundary.
- Safeguard water quality in the two main tributaries that originate in the Sector Plan area and flow to the Little Seneca Creek, and into the Reservoir, the region's back-up drinking water supply.
- Avoid the construction of new roadways through forests, parks, streams, stream valleys, and wetlands
- Preserve additional land through parkland dedication and conservation easements.
- Limit development on the COMSAT property to the existing open spaces and the building footprint (should it be demolished).
- Enhance safeguards to achieve the goal of the Special Protection Area - "to protect and maintain high-quality of sensitive water resources." The Clarksburg sector plan is located within the Clarksburg Special Protection Area.