



**Montgomery County Council Public Hearing
Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan
January 21, 2026**

Testimony of Bob Elliott, CEO of River Falls Investments

Good Evening. My name is Bob Elliott. I'm the CEO of River Falls Investments, owner of the 204-acre COMSAT property. I grew up in Montgomery County, am raising my family here, and have a long-term stake in getting this Plan right.

Let me be clear: we support the Plan. It has been a long and, at times, contested process, but the Planning Board produced a sound blueprint for the future of Clarksburg. We appreciate the work of Planning Staff, the Board, and the community in arriving at a balanced and realistic framework.

We share the County's goal for Clarksburg Gateway to become a complete community, with jobs, housing, retail, parks, and transit. The COMSAT site represents 70% of the developable land and is one of the last large, unified properties along the I-270 corridor with the scale and location needed to compete for major employers. It is a rare opportunity for transformative investment.

In September 2025, the County's own economic development leadership made this very point to the Planning Board. Laurie Boyer Babb, a Director at MCEDC, testified about the importance of protecting the economic viability of our site, calling it "the only one of its kind" and made clear that if Montgomery County expects to have a real seat at the table when Fortune 100 companies are making site selections, then we cannot allow this site's potential to be compromised.

Our request is simple. Do not reopen fundamental debates. Preserve the Planning Board's sound judgment in avoiding a series of missteps that, taken together, would have undermined our site and the Sector Plan's potential.

We concur with the recommendation of both the Historic Preservation staff and the Planning Board that the COMSAT building should not be designated as historic, which preserves flexibility and avoids unnecessary constraints on the site's future.

Second, the Board made the right call to retain the I-270 interchange option. Attracting a major life-science or commercial tenant requires direct highway access. It preserves marketability, reduces pressure on local roads, and avoids compromises that undermine walkability and transit.