

## Submitted Testimony for the Gateway Project, Clarksburg, MD

I would like to submit my testimony for the Gateway Project in Clarksburg, MD. While on paper, it sounds nice to have a 'mixed-use', transit-oriented, and 'sustainable community' project, the diagram being presented is showing a large majority of the project being residential. Clarksburg residents know well the story of developers (who are not regulated by the County) running amuck and not supporting the basic needs of our community. They are long gone after they have made their money.

Montgomery County has failed Clarksburg residents for decades and this plan should not be approved. Before there are more houses in our community, we should have the infrastructure that has not only been promised since 1996 in the Master Plan but is becoming vital in the day to day lives of Clarksburg residents.

Here are a few examples:

- The Clarksburg Public Library has been stalled for 25 + years. There's always some excuse or study or delay tactic. It was in the Master Plan which is publicly available. There's no excuse and, frankly, it's an embarrassment on the County.
- Clarksburg finally got a fire department (after months of figuring out a sewer system). Before that, and really still, we rely on Volunteer Fire Departments in the area because Hyattstown Volunteer Fire Department will tell you, we don't have fire hydrants. The whole of Clarksburg on the farm side relies on a big tank of water if there is a large fire.
- There is one grocery store for 30,000+ residents in Clarksburg (that's the current number, which is growing, based on census data). Residents will tell you the prices are high (because they can charge what they want) and the quality is not always the freshest.
- Transportation? A one-lane road that passes both the Rocky Hill Middle School and Clarksburg High School, when kids are trying to get to school on time and parents are trying to get to work.
- And don't even get me started on the public schools. There's currently a Boundary Study that affects our children directly. At least three of the options have children being routed to new schools that are out of the 'Clarksburg Cluster' because no one planned properly for all the houses and the lack of schools. And going back to transportation, when high schoolers want to take a specialty or advanced class that is maybe only offered at a different school, how long does the one public bus take to get them there? Hours! Yes, hours. So, it's not really an option.

There are serious infrastructure problems and Clarksburg residents have told you repeatedly that this is happening and NO ONE IS LISTENING. I just don't understand where our tax dollars are going. Down County is the answer. If you can't figure out the infrastructure, you should not be using this Gateway project to build more houses. That's the bottom line.

Thank you for listening.

Respectfully,

Rachel A. Wagner, MS

(Federal employee, small business owner, mom to Matthew (9<sup>th</sup> grade) and Lucy (6<sup>th</sup> grade) in MCPS and resident of Clarksburg for almost 13 years)