DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS/DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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PUBLIC HEARING
Midcounty Corridor Study
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A hearing in the above-entitled matter was held on
Wednesday, August 7, 2013, commencing at 6:35 p.m., at the
Seneca Valley High School Auditorium, 19401 Crystal Rock
Drive, Germantown, Maryland 20874, before:

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
JOSEPH DAVIA
JACK DINNER
ERIN SHAW
ABBIE HOPKINS
BRITTANY BANGERT

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
AMANDA SIGILITTO
WILLIAM SEIGER
SEAN MCKEWEEN

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MR. DAVIA: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I want to welcome you to this joint U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Maryland Department of the Environment public hearing for the Midcounty Corridor Study. My name is Joseph DaVia and I'm chief of Maryland Section Northern and the Regulatory Branch of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District. With me here tonight from the Corps is Jack Dinnie, who is the Corps project manager and point of contact for this application, Erin Shaw and Abbie Hopkins greeted you at the registration desk and from our Corps Public Affairs Office, Brittany Bangert is present. Present here at the front table from the Maryland Department of the Environment is the MDE Hearing Officer, Amanda Sigillito, William Seiger and Sean McKewen.

It is the responsibility of my office to evaluate applications for Department of the Army permits for work in waters of the United States including jurisdictional wetlands. The Corps authority is found in Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The logistics for tonight's meeting are as follows. First, I'll briefly describe where we are in the permit process. I will then make a few opening remarks concerning the purpose of the meeting. I will then call on the State
Hearing Officer, Ms. Amanda Sigillito, to make their opening remarks. After these required presentations, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation representative, Mr. Bruce Johnston, will give a brief five to ten minute overview of the proposed project.

After the applicant's statement, we will facilitate public statements by calling first, on any elected officials or their representatives to make a statement. We will then call on those of you who indicated on the sign-in sheet that you wish to speak in the order that you signed in. You may provide comment into the record by written statement or oral statement. If you have a written statement, you do not need to provide oral comments. If you didn't sign in to speak but wish to do so, please sign in at the registration desk. When called, please proceed to the microphone, state your name, address and the interest you represent. Recognizing the number of people wishing to speak, please limit your remarks to three minutes.

We do not permit cross-examination of the speakers but you may pose questions as part of your statement. This auditorium venue is for the Corps and MDE to hear and record your public comments. If you have specific questions about the proposed project, you should see a Montgomery County representative at the poster session in the cafeteria.

The project proposed by the Montgomery County
Department of Transportation is to develop transportation improvements in Montgomery County east of I-270 between Clarksburg and Gaithersburg. There are six alternatives retained to detailed study. The alternatives include a no-build alternative, a transportation system management travel demand management alternative and four build alternatives.

Waters of the U.S. impacts of the six alternatives range from zero to .87 acres of permanent nontidal wetland impacts, zero to 1,035 linear feet of permanent impacts to perennial and intermittent streams and zero to 247 linear feet of ephemeral streams. The alternatives would convert between zero to 1.7 acres of forested nontidal wetlands to emergent nontidal wetlands. Alternative 9 would relocate approximately 746 linear feet of perennial intermittent stream and 243 linear feet of ephemeral stream. All temporary impacts to nontidal wetlands and streams would be restored upon completion of the project.

The applicant is developing a preliminary litigation plan based on the needs of the various build alternatives. Once a preferred alternative is identified, a final mitigation plan will be developed.

The purpose of tonight’s meeting is to inform you of this project and allow you the opportunity to provide comments to be considered in our public interest review of the proposed work. In compliance with the National
Environmental Policy Act, we are preparing an environmental assessment for the proposed project in which your comments will be included and addressed. Your comments are important in our preparation of this document and in our evaluation for the permit application. Please note that the Corps is neither a proponent or an opponent of any project.

The decision on whether or not to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest and compliance with the Clean Water Act, Section 404(b)(1) guidelines. That decision will reflect the national concern for both the protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits which may reasonably be expected to accrue from the proposal will be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments.

All factors that may be relevant to the proposal are considered. Among these are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plane values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, threatened and endangered species, environmental justice, cumulative impacts, consideration of property ownership and in general, the needs and welfare of
the people.

The comment period for this project extends to August 21st, 2013. Comments received tonight and throughout the comment period will be considered. This is a joint public hearing with the Maryland Department of the Environment. Therefore, I now want to call on Ms. Amanda Sigillito from MDE to make a statement. Following Ms. Sigillito’s statement, we will have the applicant’s statement followed by public comments. Amanda?

MS. SIGILLITO: Thank you. Good evening. Good evening. My name is Amanda Sigillito and I am Chief of the Nontidal Wetlands Division at the Maryland Department of the Environment. Attending the hearing tonight with me from the Department is Mr. Bill Seiger who is Chief of the Waterway Construction Division, Sean McKewen, who is the Western Region Chief of the Nontidal Wetlands Division, Mr. Hira Shrestha, who is project engineer for the Waterway Construction Division, and Ms. Paula Stonesifer, who is a Wetland Reviewer of the Nontidal Wetlands Division. I would like to welcome everyone here and thank Seneca Valley High School for the use of their facility this evening.

We are conducting a public informational hearing pursuant to Subsection 5-204 of the Environment Article in Code of Maryland Regulations 26.23.02.02. The purpose of this evening’s public informational hearing is for the
applicant to present an analysis of impacts that may be
associated with the proposed activity. In addition, the
hearing provides the Department with an opportunity to
solicit additional information from interested persons.

The purpose of this evening’s public informational
hearing is to consider a permanent application submitted by
the Montgomery County Department of Transportation for the
Midcounty Corridor Study. Construction of the proposed
project requires issuance of a Nontidal Wetlands and
Waterways Permit which is Application No. 13-NT-
3162/201360802. The Department must also review the
application for compliance with state water quality
regulations as required by Section 401 of the federal Clean
Water Act. The Section 401 review is conducted as part of
the Department’s permit review process.

The Department’s decision on the permit application
and accompanying information will be sent to the interested
person’s list as well as to the applicant. The Department
decision will be a final agency determination. There will be
no further opportunity for administrative review. Any person
with standing who is either the applicant or who has
participated in the public participation process through the
submission of written or oral comments may petition for
judicial review in a circuit court in Montgomery County.

At this time, I would like to turn the proceedings
back over to Mr. DaVia. I do have one announcement though.

If you have cell phones with you, if you would please put those on silence, we would appreciate it. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Sigillito. All right.

Now, I want to call on Mr. Bruce Johnston of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation for the applicant's statement.

MR. JOHNSTON: Thank you, Ms. Sigillito, Mr. DaVia and all the many representatives from the different agencies that are here this evening. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Bruce Johnston. I am the Chief of the Division of Transportation Engineering in the Montgomery County Department of Transportation. The purpose of my testimony this evening is to present for consideration by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and by the Maryland Department of the Environment a proposal to develop transportation improvements in Montgomery County east of I-270 between Clarksburg and Gaithersburg. This evening's proceedings are being recorded. The official transcript of the public hearing and any written comments that are submitted will be part of the official record and is considered public information. The hearing record will be held open until August 21st of 2013.

The Midcounty Highway, or M-83, was first listed in Montgomery County’s master plan of highways in the 1960s and
was planned to extend from Ridge Road, or Maryland 27, in Clarksburg through Redland Road in Derwood as an 8.7 mile controlled access, four to six lane major highway. Over the years, three miles of Midcounty Highway were constructed between Shady Grove Road and Montgomery Village Avenue. Between 1986 and 1992, Montgomery County completed preliminary engineering for the extension of M-83 from Montgomery Village Avenue to Ridge Road, Maryland 27, and over 60 percent of the right-of-way was dedicated, protecting it from future development. Due to the national fiscal climate, the project was put on hold and it was decided to widen Maryland 355 first which has been completed.

In the early 2000s, the Transportation Policy Review Group reconsidered M-83 and in 2004, Montgomery County DOT initiated the current facility planning study for Midcounty Highway for master plan alignment. Initial planning studies had indicated that the project could potentially cause significant wetland impacts of over 10 acres and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers advised that the study must include an evaluation of alternatives to the master plan in accordance with the National Environment Policy Act, also known as NEPA. Today, the master plan alignment impacts less than one acre of wetlands.

In January of 2007, the purpose and need was concurred with by the regulatory agencies. Through
collaboration with the stakeholder agencies, 11 preliminary alternatives were developed and in December of 2007, the 11 alternatives were presented at a public workshop to obtain feedback. Presentations were also made to the Clarksburg Civic Association, the Greater Goshen Civic Association, Montgomery Village Foundation and other neighborhood groups from 2008 to 2013.

After performing preliminary engineering on these alternatives and obtaining comments from the agencies and the public, these 11 alternatives were narrowed down to six alternatives retained for detailed study or ARDS, A-R-D-S. The ARDS consisted of five build alternatives and a no-build alternative and were concurred with by the regulatory agencies in January of 2011. MCDOT has completed detailed engineering and environmental analysis for each of the six alternatives and has posed results in the draft environmental effects report which was posted on the project website on May 2nd of 2013. In addition, a joint permit application was submitted to the Corps and MDE on April 30th.

The purpose and need of the Midcounty Corridor Study is to develop transportation improvements in Montgomery County east of I-270 between Clarksburg and Gaithersburg in order to, one, reduce congestion; two, improve vehicular safety; three, enhance network efficiency and connections between economic centers; four, accommodate planned growth,
planned land use and future growth; five, improve bicycle and
pedestrian access; six, enhance homeland security; and seven,
improve the quality of life. And the purpose is also to
design and construct any selected improvement in an
environmentally sensitive manner.

In the interest of time, I will now briefly discuss
the six alternatives retained for detailed study.
Alternative No. 1, the no-build alternative, is included to
serve as a baseline for comparing the other alternatives.
The no-build alternative, and in fact all the alternatives
assume that the improvements proposed in the CLRP, or the
projects that are showing in red and blue, will be
constructed by 2030 including the expansion of I-270 HOV
lane, the corridor city transit way, a new interchange at
Watkins Mill Road extended at I-270 and other state and
county program highway improvements. The no-build
alternative also assumes only the proposed improvements for
the Midcounty Corridor study will not be built.

Alternative No. 2 evaluated minor, low-cost
improvements within existing rights-of-way at 16
intersections that were projected to have unacceptable levels
of congestion by the year 2030. Elements of this alternative
may in fact be implemented regardless of the final
alternative selected.

Alternative 4 modified proposes to widen Ridge Road
to six lanes, Brink Road and Wightman Road to four lanes and
Snouffer School Road and Muncaster Mill Road to four or six
lanes. The total widening from Snowden Farm Parkway to Shady
Grove Road would be seven-and-a-half miles long. Goshen Road
would be widened to four lanes as a separate capital
improvement project.

Alternative No. 5 proposes widening Maryland 355 to
six lanes to increase capacity and would include intersection
improvements and constructing service roads to improve safety
along the 6.6 mile route from future Snowden Farm Parkway to
the intersection of existing Midcounty Highway and Goshen
Road.

Alternative No. 9 proposes a construction of the
5.7 mile portion of the master plan Midcounty Highway from
future Snowden Farm Parkway at Maryland 27 to existing
Midcounty Highway. The new highway would be a four lane
divided highway with six new signalized intersections and in
addition, the existing portion of Midcounty Highway from
Montgomery Village Avenue to Goshen Road would be widened to
six lanes. There are three northern terminus options being
evaluated, options A, B and D, all of which cross the North
Germantown Greenway Stream Valley Park. Options B and D
would require the displacement of one residential property.

Alternative No. 8 would be a truncated version of
the Master Plan Alternative No. 9 terminating at Watkins Mill
Road and thereby leaving a gap in the Midcounty Highway between Watkins Mill Road and Montgomery Village Avenue. The purpose of this truncation of the master plan alignment is to avoid impacts to the Whetstone Run Stream Valley. The same three northern terminus options that were evaluated with Alternative 9 were evaluated under this alternative.

Detailed engineering drawings for all the project alternatives are now displayed in the cafeteria and in addition, the display boards in the cafeteria describe the ability for each alternative to meet the purpose of each criteria and their impacts to the cultural, natural and social environments. This concludes our remarks. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on behalf of Montgomery County Department of Transportation.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Johnston. Okay. Now that housekeeping is out of the way, we want to hear from you now. The way we’re going to work this is we have about 80 individuals that are signed up so we are going to, MD and the Corps made the decision we’re going to limit the remarks to three minutes. What we’d like to do is as you’re approaching 30 seconds left in your remarks, Jack will hold up a yellow card and then at three minutes, will hold up a red card. If you see the red card, please conclude your remarks with respect to the future people who want to speak. I’d first like to call on elected officials or their representatives,
and we have some who have signed up. I'd first like to call on Delegate Barkley.

MR. BARKLEY: Thank you. I am Delegate Charles Barkley and I reside at 19222 Golden Meadow Drive in Germantown 20876. I am testifying, testifying on behalf of the entire District 39 team, Senator Nancy King who is here in the front row, Delegate Kirill Reznik and Delegate Shane Robinson who are all here with me tonight. First, I want to thank you for having this hearing on the Midcounty Corridor Study.

We strongly urge you to reject the permit applications for M-83 due to the environmental community impacts that this destructive highway project will have in our district. We believe that Montgomery County's Department of Transportation environmental effects report predetermined that the roads will be built regardless to the consequences to the environment and the health of the citizens in the effected area. The National Environmental Policy Act requires you to take a serious look at mass transit alternatives. In the more than 1,000 page EER document, there really are less than two pages of token inclusion regarding transit alternatives.

Of the six proposed alternatives, the only acceptable alternative is Alternative 2. This alternative makes the best use of our existing infrastructure by making
improvements to Maryland 355, it costs the least and it
enables the development of a high-quality bus rapid transit
system connecting Clarksburg to Gaithersburg and points
south.

We really need traffic relief in the Up County and
that’s not going to come by building another road and
encouraging more people to get in their cars. With the
intersection improvements in Alternative 2, we can easily
start bus rapid transit on Maryland 355 from Shady Grove
Metro to Clarksburg. The complete corridor city transit way
needs to be built now and extended through Clarksburg. The
300 million plus cost needed to build M-83 could be better
spent on the CCT.

Since this is an environmental public hearing, let
me address some of those concerns. Your job is to avoid,
minimize and mitigate impacts to the environment. The
compaction of wetlands by bulldozers, excavation equipment
and temporary road construction will have a permanent impact
on the affected area long after construction is complete. It
will destroy habitats for all wildlife and seriously damage
the natural filtration causing a change in water quality.

Your job is to protect aquatic resources and avoid
them from diminishing. I have been told that bridges will be
built over the wetlands to protect them. That does not
address the damage to the wetlands by the actual construction
of the bridges and future pollution from vehicles that will
use the new road. Some of the proposed bridge heights are
designed to be very low, only about 100 feet from the ground,
and also extremely long, 500 feet. Your job is also to take
a look at the cumulative impact of other construction
projects in the same watershed. Please consider the
Clarksburg construction around Ten Mile Creek when you look
at this project. Once we lose the wildlife in the wetlands,
you just never get it back. A temporary impact to wetlands
and streams, in reality, can never actually be restored when
the project is completed.

Let me finish by briefly talking about some of the
other alternatives. We believe that the county is really
only interested in getting support for the master plan
alignment, Alternative No. 9. Some of the evolved
alternatives were actually designed to steer community
support to that alternative. Of all the alternatives,
Alternative 4 would be the most devastating to our community.
Please look at the large number of homes, please look at the
large number of homes and business properties that would be
affected in this alternative. I think you would quickly
agree that this alternative must be eliminated immediately.

I ask you to please review the purpose of the
Midcounty Corridor Study and make sure that your decision
will relieve projected congestions on roadway facilities
between Clarksburg and Germantown east of I-270. The
proposed M-83 will only make congestion worse. Thank you for
listening.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Delegate Barkley. Senator
King?

MS. KING: Yes. I just wanted to add just a couple
things here. Delegate Barkley really expressed the feelings
of all four of us in District 39 but I did want to say to you
that option 4 is, has been such an emotional issue in
Montgomery Village. If that is not something that is
actually seriously going to be considered, and we hope it’s
not, I would request that we take it off the plan. I hear
constantly from residents who live in those homes who have
this hanging over their head about possibly losing their home
to a road like this so if it’s not something that is in the
plan, let’s just take it off the table so that we don’t, we
can let these people live their lives without any worry about
it. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Senator King. Is there
anyone else from the district team that wants to give
comment? No. Okay. Again, I’ll do the best in pronouncing
your name. I am Italian but I’ll do my best. What I’ll do
is I’ll call the first name and then I’ll call another name
to be on deck. If that person on deck could come down to the
front, we have about 80 people who want to speak and so we
want to try not to close down this facility but we want to try to move this orderly along. I want to call Mr. George Albin. Mr. Albin, you can sit if you would like.

MR. ALBIN: Oh, thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Paula.

MR. ALBIN: Thank you, Mr. Spager (phonetic sp.).

My name is George Albin and I live at 21000 Brink Court in Goshen Estates. I have raised my family there. I have -- sorry. I can't read my own writing -- and I am 50, and I have lived there for 50 years. I am 91 years of age and I was the first original president of the, of the Goshen City Association. My neighbor Wade Palmer (phonetic sp.) and I met with all of the residents of Goshen Estates and we were contesting the enlargement of the airport runway enlargement. And we contested that and as a result, the people of Goshen Estates were heard and the powers that be did rescind that, that enlargement at the airport.

Now, I want this, all this body to take and hear and act on my proposal. I am here to give you a small history of the roadway as, known as M-83. I worked at Kettler Brothers for 25 years as vice-president in charge of special projects. Late in 1964, Milton Kettler, Clarence Kettler, Bill Hurley (phonetic sp.), Ed Crowley (phonetic sp.) and an engineer from Dewberry, Neal and Davis, who was named Tom Harley, and I met at the Planning Commission and
offered the easement and right-of-way to have the 
continuation of M-83 construction through a portion of 
Montgomery Village. The easement is behind the complex known 
as the Walkers Choice. No. Walkers Choice.

Milton Kettler, who was in charge of sales told his 
salespeople that even though the easement was on the master 
plan, they should ignore it because as Milton stated, it 
would take a long time for the county to secure the roadway. 
An understatement. The easement and right-of-way on the 
master plan for 49 years is, is on the master plan for 49 
years. If I recall properly, respective clients were shown 
to scale model of M-83 and it was on display in the sales 
office. Obviously, that, M-83 did not interfere with the 
successful development of Montgomery Village.

Since then, the plan has made many studies and, and 
it comes up to this. There will be some streams and 
agriculture lands that will be affected and there will be 
opposition to any plan selected. In my opinion, plan 95, the 
original M-83 should be adopted. It is the least destructive 
and most comprehensive. I support the original master plan 
shown on, you’ve shown as plan 9A. It is my tax money that 
produces the studies and I say enough is enough.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Albin?

MR. ALBIN: Yes.

MR. DAVIA: Would you conclude your remarks?
MR. ALBIN: Yes, I will. Get on with it. Select plan 9A. The county has studied the plan to death and its roadway is, if the roadway is important, don’t delay the project any longer. Apply plan, approve plan 9A. Get it done. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Albin. Mr. Albin, if you’d like to submit your written statement, we’d be happy to accept that. Okay. Next is Ms. Margaret Schoap, and on deck is Richard Wilder.

MS. SCHOA"P: My name is Margaret Schoap from Germantown. I’m with the TAME Coalition, Transit Alternatives for Midcounty Highway Extended. I want to thank the Corps and MDE for your efforts tonight to protect the sensitive high bio-diverse area in the upper reaches of Seneca Creek Stream Valley and wetlands. I’m also very grateful for the work that DOT and their consultants have done with the study to define the wetlands, the impacts of the proposed highway on plants, on animal life and water quality in the forest and stream valleys that would be lost and degraded if this road was built.

The draft EER which we are addressing tonight falls very short of being an adequate base on which to allow this project to be granted the elusive wetlands permit. The environmental impacts are why we are here and are the primary reason not to allow M-83 to be constructed. In spite of many
assurances of mitigation, impacts from major construction
simply cannot be mitigated. To bisect parkland with a six-
lane slot for a highway will essentially eliminate the park.
Disruption of wildlife habitats, introduction of air and
water contaminates in the high bio-diverse areas, eliminating
mature forest canopy, noise elevation and visual impacts,
these cannot be mitigating.

Specifically, on Alternative 9, the claim that .87
acres of wetlands will be impacted for a bridge to cross
Dayspring Creek seems inaccurate and disingenuous. This
figure ignores the additional construction impacts of
equipment access roads and tree removal which will replace,
which will place enormous levels of fill into streams and
wetlands all along the proposed route, and you are committed
to Section 404 to uphold that there isn’t this fill that
happens.

The draft report fails to consider alternatives to
be combined with Alternative 2 such as selective improvements
of roads, adding innovative transit possibilities. The draft
EER only seriously has considered road alternatives and
naturally, that is the favored for this highway. Again, this
huge draft has one and a quarter pages of token inclusion of
transit. It is not seriously explored as an alternative as
required by NEPA.

And finally, the TAME Coalition believes that you
must reject the application for wetlands and other permits. Montgomery County should not follow up with further study of the road options, rather, develop a 21st Century transportation plan. We also support eliminating M-83 from the master plan of highways and to put in its place multiple, viable and available transportation solutions in its place.

Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Next is Richard Wilder. On deck is Jane Wilder.

MR. WILDER: Good evening. I represent Citizens to Save South Valley Park West Stone Run in Montgomery Village. I want to talk about how the, this study biased the Midcounty Corridor study to the master plan Alternative 9 and I’ve got a lot of, a list of biases here. It didn’t provide a transit alternative. This guaranteed that only a road would be selected which is totally unacceptable to begin with.

Limited the study area to only east of I-270 when there’s all kinds of development going to the west of 270. Said that another major highway is needed east of I-270 to complement the Great Seneca Highway but we already have Maryland 355. We certainly don’t need another major highway within one mile of another.

Did not point out that you were relieving traffic in a commercial corridor to provide traffic in a residential corridor. Only allowed one alternative to be selected, not a
combination. Set the public hearing halfway through the 60-day comment period. Set the public hearing in August when most people are on vacation, but required speakers sign up at 4:30 in the afternoon when people can't get off jobs. Did not follow the (indiscernible) process, which requires that upgrading of existing alternatives come first before building a new highway. And also, he had talked about the alignment which was set up before the Clean Water Act. That should stop this alignment right there.

But what if -- I'm disappointed with what's happening in the Corps and the MDE, they can't reject something that was put on there before the Clean Water Act. Did not explain to the public how wetlands will be degraded but not count it as being impacted. I've never heard of that, how you can take forested wetlands and all of a sudden turn them into the lowest form of wetlands and call it gee, no impact. That's wonderful. I wish I could do that with other things. Did not explain to the public how high quality mature forests and wetlands will be mitigated by planting stick trees somewhere else. Put in a poison pill, Alternative 4 modified, which is excessively why, to generate a lot of resident impact and anger. Did not point out how Alternatives 5, 8 and 9 will result in four failed intersections at lower Midcounty Highway, Woodfield, Washington Grove, Miller Fall and Shady Grove Roads. Option
2 does help.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Wilder, can you wrap it up?

MR. WILDER: I certainly will.

MR. DAVIA: Please.

MR. WILDER: And one of the major things is the cost. The cost was underestimated to 350 million and when you put inflation in there since 1992 when the cost was 256 million, brings it up to 504 million, so that should stop it right there. And so what I'm saying is that we support Alternatives 1, 2 and 5 and we oppose Alternate 4, modified 8 and 9. We think Alternate 2 provides the best cost benefit choice and also, we say reject the water, the wetland permit and reject the water quality permit and do your job and protect the wetlands and our water quality. And where is the EPA? EPA should be here because --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Time's up.

MR. WILDER: -- air quality is a factor.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Wilder. Next is Jane Wilder. On deck is Frank Marcus. I'm sorry, not Mr. Marcus. Kelly Blynn. I'm sorry.

MS. WILDER: Yes. Jane Wilder with Potomac Valley Environmental Group, a 27-year-old organization that was formed when we first learned about the M-83 Highway. I spoke with Mr. Dinnie this week about the Watkins Mill School. There's a study done by Hopkins scientists showing the impact
of the school within 500 feet of a major highway. The ball
fields at Watkins Mill Elementary are 50 feet from M-83, a
huge intersection with Watkins Mill Road. Mr. Dinnie told me
they were going to move the stream and, and put a, a
retaining wall in back of it, thereby changing the flood
plane but apparently, that’s not true and I, according to the
planners or the consulting firms, so I had to revise that in
my testimony, but I certainly don’t approve of that. It will
further endanger the children by pushing the flood plane
toward them.

Anyway, I next want to mention the study itself. I
was very disappointed. I foolishly bought it. Well, not
foolishly. It’s always good to have the original thing to
look at, but I could not get through some of the maps. I
found that the legends were very difficult. They had hash
marks on some of the stream areas. I couldn’t tell what that
meant, if that was, you know, removing the stream or
whatever. In other words, this is what I asked Mr. Dinnie
about, what that was. Some of the things, streams just
disappear. All of a sudden, there’s hash marks and then
suddenly it becomes a little line. This is, a lot of this is
near where we are versus the South Valley Park Elementary
Watkins Mill area. I, I just felt previous studies were much
better and I see at least two others, and they were much
clearer on where what was and what was happening.
However, the thing that bothers me most is the false history that’s been going around for years actually, and it was discussed by Mr. Johnston, the history of this project. This project, when I, we moved here in ’86, bought from a private owner, knew nothing about this road. The first study was a comparative study between doing M-83 and widening 355. It was an alternative analysis and it was, I learned, got a document from DOT, not from them but somebody got it from them. It says the preferred alternative alignment is the M-83 alignment. Therefore, the actual analysis between the two alternatives would be a minor task. That’s to the, that’s the RFP.

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Wilder, would you wrap it up? We’d be happy to take your written statement.

MS. WILDER: Well, I did get false information which I had to decry.

MR. DAVIA: We’d be happy to --

MS. WILDER: Anyway, the County Council voted against this project in 1992 unanimously when it was brought up. It didn’t just fade into the blue and it wasn’t a money deal. They did vote against it and only agencies did negative reports on it.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Wilder.

MS. WILDER: Um-hum.

MR. DAVIA: Kelly Blynn, and on deck is Ethan
Goffran I believe.

MS. BLYNN: Good evening. Thanks for the opportunity to speak. My name is Kelly Blynn and I work for the Coalition for Smarter Growth. On behalf of my organization and our 150 subscribers who sent in written testimony last week, I urge you to reject the permit application for M-83 due to the environmental and community impacts that this new highway project will cause as well as the failure to consider real transit alternatives to new highway construction.

My organization has worked to advocate for smart growth and sustainable transportation options in the D.C. region for 16 years. We have over 4,000 subscribers in Montgomery County that are working actively in favor of a sustainable future for the county. We've been pleased to see many cases in which Montgomery County has been a leader in smart growth from affordable housing to investments in transit but believe the M-83 project would represent a major step backwards.

While there are many reasons why this project would harm our local environment, the main issue tonight underlies its potential impact on wetlands and our product resources. Alternatives 4, 8 or 9, alternatives that entail new construction which would travel through wetlands and important stream valleys. While the environmental effects
report says only .9 acres of wetland would be impacted because bridges will be built over and through these areas, the construction process to build those bridges, including temporary access roads to bring in bulldozers and heavy equipment, will necessitate filling in parts of the wetland areas and compacting the soils, and soils are key for filtration and other ecosystem functions. Longer term, new impermeable surfaces directly over the wetlands will drive more polluted storm water runoff into these important resources that are already threatened by potential major increase and impervious surface from developments nearby such as Ten Mile Creek.

In addition to wetland impacts, there are several key environmental issues to consider. Alternatives 4, 8 and 9 would cause the destruction of up to 67 acres of forest, 48 acres of parkland and 31 acres of prime farmland. The report itself admits it may attract additional trips from elsewhere inducing more traffic and causing more air pollution and car emissions. Montgomery County is already struggling to improve its air quality which is in non-attainment with national air quality standards. Today, building this major new highway parallel to two other major highways is unacceptable in the age of climate change.

The only acceptable alternative proposed is Alternative 2 which makes the best use of our existing
infrastructure. It costs the least, has the least impact on
the community in our environment and enables the development
of a high quality bus rapid transit service connecting
Clarksburg to Gaithersburg and points south. The county's
own traffic analysis admits that none of the more costly
alternatives perform any better than utilizing our existing
roadways and in fact, would have more failing intersections
at Alternative 2.

For the same cost of building M-83's favored
alignment 9, $350 million or more, we could build Alternative
2 and much of the county's proposed bus rapid transit plan.
While MCDOT's report says that rapid transit is too early in
the process to consider, I believe it would be an enormous
mistake to move forward without due diligence on a real
transit alternative to this highway.

Thanks for your time. I still just go on to say
that this highway was proposed long before I was born. The
times have changed. People are looking to get around in
different ways and I hope that you will upgrade your plans to
be with the times as well.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Blynn. Next is Ethan,
is it Goffran?

MR. GOFFRAN: Right.

MR. DAVIA: And on deck is Bob, I think, Hydorn
with the Montgomery Village Foundation.
MR. GOFFRAN: Hi. I'm Ethan Goffran speaking for the Montgomery County Sierra Club and for reasons which previous speakers have put so eloquently, we oppose the M-83 extension. Basically, destruction of habitat, destruction of wetlands and stream quality and look at the holistic effects and including developments in Clarksburg and what it's going to do to local streams. I also look at air quality because you are asking more cars, more drivers. We have asthma. We have other respiratory diseases.

And I -- stepping back from it, scientists, climatologists, conservation biologists, not only are they saying there's a horrible climate crisis, so why are we doing a plan that's going to put carbon into the air and make it worse, but there's also less discussed but just as bad of bio-diversity and species extinction crisis, so why are we continuing to pave and cover wetlands and destroy species. We need new thinking. The county is actually, in many ways, moving toward new thinking but at the same time, not moving toward new thinking so -- we have great transit. The county is behind it. The state is also very aggressively, as Martin O'Malley announced, funding for the purple line and many other transit projects.

We need to, we need a new paradigm. We need to do transit and smart growth around the transit, and the plan just desperately needs to look at not only the CCT but BRT on
355, other possibilities like express buses and expanded MARC
service which all of these would serve Clarksburg. And
Clarksburg was promised retail where people could actually
walk or bike to the retail. They never got it, so why don’t
we do all those. Look at the traffic and compare that and
also, the expense of doing that and the environmental impact
rather than building yet another big, destructive new road.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Goffran. Bob, could you
spell your last name, please?


MR. DAVIA: And on deck is, I think it’s Marie
VanWhite. Go ahead, Mr. Hydorn.

MR. HYDORN: Okay. I’m the -- Bob Hydorn, President
of Montgomery Village Foundation, the MVF. The MVF Board and
community have long opposed the construction of Highway M-83.
There is probably no other issue that affects as many aspects
of the quality of life for the approximately 45,000
Montgomery Village residents. As the build alternatives have
emerged over the years, the Montgomery Village community has
carefully considered whether it would support one but the
draft EER only confirms our reasons for opposing this
roadway.

None of the build alternatives will reduce
congestion, contribute to the health of our residents,
especially our children and seniors, or protect the nearby
parks and open spaces that have contributed to Montgomery
Village’s character as a mature green community over the last
50 years.

The data collected by the county show that it is
questionable that the build alternatives provide benefits
sufficient to justify their expense and impact on the
community so in not even achieving the purpose and needs
identified by the county, these alternatives consume the
funding that could be used to build transit projects that
would improve conditions for Montgomery Village residents.

We trust that the county will select Alternatives
1, 2 or 5. These alternatives comply with the principles of
the National Environmental Policy Act which prefers an
alternative that makes improvements to an existing road
rather than building a new highway. Our objections to
alternatives 4, 8 and 9 are based on their negative impacts
on three areas of great concern to our residents, traffic
congestion, health/quality of life and natural resources.

Alternative 4 will produce new volumes of traffic
on Wightman Road which because of the local road character,
has developed over the years with many residential and
commercial access points. Alternative 8 would create new
very heavy traffic volumes on Stedwick Road, Christopher
Avenue as travelers come down to Watkins Mill Road and turn
onto Watkins Mill. Alternative 9 will increase traffic on MV
roads as drivers seek to access and leave M-83 at connecting
roads within Montgomery Village. And we can’t forget that we
have four schools on Watkins Mill Road.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Hydorn?

MR. HYDORN: Yeah.

MR. DAVIA: If you could conclude?

MR. HYDORN: I will. I will send the written
testimony in, but please consider the 45,000 residents. And
we understand that our neighbors to the north need to move
down county as well as we do from our area. However, not on
this. Let’s do alternative transportation.

MR. DAVIA: Marie VanWhite, and on deck is
Elizabeth Greene.

MS. VANWHITE: I’ll correct you on the last name.
It’s Marie VanWhite.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you.

MS. VANWHITE: I have, I’ve been a resident at
Christopher Court for 23 years and that is the first link in
M-83. My presentation is going to center on three questions,
the ecology that M-83 will destroy, the noise pollution M-83
will generate and the housing and parking M-83 will
eliminate.

What about ecology? M-83 has been on the county’s
books for a long time. When it came up for approval the last
time, the proposed highway was deemed to be an ecological
disaster. What's made these alternatives viable now? Anyone
can take a walk down Hellingly Place, that's the road that
borders my home, and see that there are many, many
attractions, a stream bordered by a dog path, bunnies,
squirrels, lots and lots of trees. It's really bucolic. As
a community, we've taken on fixing up our place. By that, I
mean we've put in walkways. We've even corrected the
buildings that had stucco on them, made them better, planted
and put many trees and replaced those that died.

Now, what about the noise? Early on, we were told
that noise caused by the extension of a highway would not
bring about sound variance. We didn't qualify because this
was not an interstate highway. Well, there's a lot of noise
right now from Montgomery Village Avenue. Surely there's
noise requirements that prohibit excess pollution.

Christopher Court has four buildings that face the four-lane
highway that's proposed. They are buildings 1, 3, 4 and 5.
Building 5 faces a double whammy because not only does it get
the noise from Montgomery Village Avenue but if you put in M-
83, it's going to get it from the four-lane highway that's --

MR. DAVIA: Ms. VanWhite, if you can concluded, please.

MS. VANWHITE: Yes, sir. What I'll do is --

MR. DAVIA: Submit your statement.

MS. VANWHITE: I'll submit the statement.
MR. DAVIA: Thank you. Elizabeth Greene, and on
deck is Kathy Hulley.

MS. GREENE: Thank you. I'm Elizabeth Greene, and
I thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm both a
homeowner in Montgomery Village and I have a doctorate in
planning. In short, I'm here to speak in favor of options 2
or possibly 5 but I'm opposed to any of the other
alternatives.

It's been difficult to dispassionately analyze the
options not only because I'm personally impacted but also
because the criteria for judgment, although it's been listed,
it's not clear which criteria will weigh more heavily in the
final outcome. Nevertheless, given the information that I
have, clearly, Alternatives 2 and 5 do the least damage to
our wetlands and the environment and they also cost the
least. They do not improve the community as much but they do
not impact private property as much as Alternative 4.

But of all the alternatives listed, the three that
give me the most distress are the three under option 9. When
I first saw these alternatives, I was shocked at the
destruction and the damage to the environment. For example,
the flood plane impact of Alternative 9 is 10 times greater
than that of Alternative 5. The stream mitigation required
for these three alternatives under 9 is three to six times
greater than under Alternative 5. But forest impact is
greater, the wetland impact is greater and it would cost $350 million to do this damage.

I am a Montgomery Village resident and as I said, my property will be negatively impacted by Alternative 4 but I am more concerned about the destruction and the damage of the three alternatives under 9. I'm here today to urge you to consider the ecology of our Up County countryside. When these areas are paved over, they will be changed forever. I urge Montgomery County planners to preserve the beauty of the county, its wildlife and its vegetation. Every day we lose more tree cover affecting not only the wildlife but our, the air we breathe. Every day we destroy more habitat. When was the last time any of us ever saw the Baltimore Oriole?

The problem with all of these alternatives is that they cater to the privately-owned automobile. If we have any hope of preserving the ecology and the beauty of Montgomery County, we have to start thinking differently. We have to start planning for and putting our money behind mass transit. This is how the towns all over Europe preserve the beauty of their countryside. If we allow the automobile to drive transit construction, the inevitable result will be the loss of flora and fauna. If we put in more mega highways and bridges, we can look to the mixing bowl in Virginia or L.A. for a vision of our future.

In conclusion, I'd like to just point out that
there's a place on Route 355, there's a marker there put up
by the county that shows where George Washington stood and
took his leave with his troops. It's a beautiful site and if
we aren't careful, that view will be gone in 50 years or
less. I hope that our great-grandchildren will be able to
see the same view that George Washington saw. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Kathy Hulley, and on deck is Jenn
Schiller.

MS. HULLEY: My name is Kathy Hulley. I live at
21809 Dilleu Lane, Boyds. You will hear something a lot
different from me. Montgomery County plan Clarksburg is the
last corridor city in the county. The area was deliberately
targeted for intense growth which has arrived and will
continue. It was projected that the Clarksburg area would
have 40,000 residents. To enable these residents to travel
in the county, new roads and transportation were planned in
multiple master plans surrounding the town. How can
Montgomery County, in good conscience, allow Clarksburg to be
built whilst not providing these planned roads and transit,
not either or, it's both, now that the residents have
arrived?

Transit was to be direct from Clarksburg to Shady
Grove. Now it's diverted around Science City and will not
ever be coming to our town center as planned. Observation
Drive has been delayed and our town relies heavily on a very
limited number of overburdened roads and commonality of our larger roads is their lack of connection or unbuilt status. This is totally unacceptable. M-83 is the link for Damascus and Clarksburg for Shady Grove. It is the north-south spine, the eastern arterial. Part of it is already built. Snowden Farm Parkway in Clarksburg at the moment is a road to nowhere. M-83 is not merely an additional road. It’s the life that was chosen carefully decades ago to avoid historic Prathertown and the Dayspring Center.

M-83 was a big selling point when Montgomery Village was built. We all had the obligation to view the master plans when we bought our properties, and I’ve lived here since 1980 so I know well, so it should have been obvious to all the road was to be there. Clarksburg pays the highest impact transportation fees in the county. It’s over $20,000 for a single-family detached house. Whilst we suffer the most from the increase in the gasoline tax due to our lack of transit options, lack of recreation, retail and employment options, we do not have the option to take transit or shop local. It does not realistically exist. Clarksburg needs M-83. It’s a road along the planned alignment. Our town is being built with a road in mind and our transportation transit network relies heavily upon the master plan alignment.

We understand the focus is Montgomery County
changes but that does not mean the plans already made can be abandoned. Clarksburg asks that we have M-83 be built along with alternate 9 as soon as possible. Please take into account the emissions from cars that are slow moving for long periods of time, long periods of time on 270 and 355 and that will continue if you don’t build this road.

Transit is fine. I lived in, near Wembley Stadium and my town was built after the stadium was built and the, along, the transit was built first.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you.

MS. HULLEY: So we got out of our cars. Clarksburg will never be like that. We’ll always have to rely on the roads.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Hulley. Jenn Schiller.

MS. SCHILLER: Yes.

MR. DAVIA: And on deck is Barbara Knapp.

MS. SCHILLER: Hi. My name is Jennifer Schiller.

I live at 9402 Gentle Circle. I think the wrong address is there because my neighbor had to come at 3:00 or 3:30 to sign me up. But I was sitting at my kitchen table last night thinking about this event and I had some prepared remarks and then I thought I should just introduce you to some of my neighbors at Overlea so that, that’s what I have here. One of my neighbors just had their second baby girl. Another neighbor, his kids call it meatless Monday because he’s been
on furlough from his federal job. My other neighbor actually
across the street from me works three part-time jobs and
takes the Ride-On bus to work every day. On Saturday, you
can see a lot of my neighbors walking to the Giant and to the
Safeway and on Sunday, a lot of folks walk to church.

This is my neighborhood on the Overlea subdivision
within Northgate Homes Corporation, and I’m here this evening
to speak on behalf of my many neighbors that are opposed to
Alternative 4. My neighborhood is unfortunately situated
next to Wightman Road, the road that Alternative 4 would turn
into a six-lane highway meaning that walking or taking the
bus would be terribly dangerous, not to mention the noise and
other dangers of living next to a highway. My neighborhood
was also hit very hard by the recession. Many people work
nights and weekends just to pay their basic bills.
Alternative 4 would further destroy what is left of our home
values which have yet to recover and Alternative 4 would
really just turn the road in front of my home into a six-lane
highway that’s not part of a master plan.

We bought into a pledge of a planned community and
we’ve kept up our end of any bargaining of being good
citizens so we ask you, our government, to honor the pact
that we have kept for over 30 years and please stop
Alternative 4. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Barbara Knapp, and on deck is Virginia
Nuta, N-U-T-A. Go ahead, Barbara.

MS. KNAPP: Yes. My name is Barbara Knapp. I live at 21900 Davis Mill Road, Germantown. I've lived here since 1957 when the road was unpaved and my complete address was Route 1, Germantown. Now this narrow curvy road, which is officially a rural rustic road, has become, for many people, a way to avoid the ungodly traffic backed up elsewhere so it is increasingly dangerous to drive on Davis Mill. It's scary to go around the curves except at night when you can tell someone is coming.

Over the years, I've been involved in numerous environmental and civic activities including membership in the Clarksburg Citizens Association while it was contributing its ideas to the master plan. That plan included the right-of-way for a direct route east of 270. I strongly urge you to stick to that plan. We've had it long enough. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Knapp. Virginia Nuta, and on deck is Sarah Albert.

MS. NUTA: Hello. I'm Virginia Nuta from the Northgate Homes Corporation in Montgomery Village. I'm here, we oppose Alternative 4 for several reasons but I'm here to ask to take into account how Alternative 4 would invade more than one area of historic interests in our neighborhood, and one of those is more than 200 years old. That would be Brink Road.
Brink Road is one of the oldest roads in Montgomery County and Maryland, was created in 1793. It's part of the Old Baltimore Road that was running from the Potomac River at Monocacy River running to Baltimore to help the farmers get their goods to port. Brink Road has retained its rural appearance for more than two centuries. It edges and then it enters the county agricultural reserve. It was never included in the master plan as an extension of M-83. I'd ask you to consider that a beautiful tree-lined grove that retains the character of a rural landscape is not less important to us, to our environment and our way of life than new growth woods.

There is further history to the road. In 1862 when General Lee invaded Maryland, there was concern he might invade D.C. down the Baltimore Road, Brink Road, and then down Georgia Avenue. Troops were sent out to Old Seneca Bridge. That's where Brink Road meets Wightman. On September 6th, the first New York Cavalry arrived. Two days later, 5,000 troops came from General Burnside's 9th Corps. Then a Canawa division, then the first Ohio artillery. All of these troops, they camped out in the area around Seneca Bridge which if Alternative 4 went through, would become a four-lane highway.

Leaving that bridge, Alternative 4 -- oh, and I should add that is a designated Maryland historical site.
Leaving the bridge, all corps would travel up to Prathertown, which is one of the oldest remaining communities in the county. That community was established by freed slaves and one of the few remaining communities in the county where descendants of those freed slaves still live today. Some of them are here tonight and are going to speak here.

The historic houses in that neighborhood, Alternative 4 would remove yards, separating the road from the Thompson Wightman House and the Johnny Benson House. They were respectively built in the 1860s and 1880s. It would strip those houses of their historic settings. It would strip the character of the community. Worse, the Sarah Posey House, which is also on that road, would be completely demolished by Alternative 4. The Sarah Posey House is one of Maryland inventory historic properties.

I'd just like to mention another historic area where I live. That's Montgomery Village. I say Montgomery Village is historic because to my knowledge, it was the first planned community in Montgomery County. 1970s when the area around Wightman Road was being built, certainly Wightman Road was never on the master plan as an extension of M-83.

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Nuta, if you can conclude.

MS. NUTA: Yes. I will.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you.

MS. NUTA: We never thought it could be widened to
105 or 120 feet and the attractive trees and green space would disappear creating a ghetto-like city atmosphere in a green community. Thank you. I have already offered my written testimony.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Nuta. Sarah Albert, and on deck is Wallace Garthwright.

MS. ALBERT: Good evening. My name is Sarah Albert. I'm a member of the Northgate Board of Directors and an elementary school teacher. I'm here to speak against Alternative 4. Both as a member of the homeowner's association board and as a teacher, I'm concerned about the safety and welfare of the children living in the communities along Wightman, Brink and Snouffer School roads. Alternative 4 would create a highway along roads that have multiple school bus stops. I do not believe this was factored into the analysis of Alternative 4. It is impossible to imagine children crossing a four and six-lane highway in order to catch their school buses. That alone should eliminate Alternative 4 from any further consideration.

It is impossible to imagine the teens in our community who work at Lake Forest Mall trying to cross a four and six-lane highway to get to the Ride-On buss that takes them to and from their jobs and home again. It is impossible to imagine the children attending Camp Courage at the Northgate Community Church next to Wightman Road not being
impacted by a six-lane highway during their outdoor program, programs which help motivate them in their personal growth with educational activities about nature. It is impossible to imagine children in the Terrific Twos preschool program at the Covenant Methodist Church on Wightman Road having their playground directly next to a six-lane highway.

I’ve been told that people move into neighborhoods and expect that their roads will never change. Change and development are part of living in Montgomery County. However, Alternative 4 would have a devastating impact. Under Alternative 4, more than 350 properties would be destroyed and more than 400 others would be subject to noise impacts. The demands of Clarksburg should not fall on Montgomery Village roadways or beltways. Clarksburg was seemingly developed without thought to the impact on schools, natural resources and roads.

Alternative 4 was never in any master plan. Our neighborhoods were built around the roads as they exist. Alternative 4 endangers our community and our children. I am here tonight that you consider it no further. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Albert. Mr. Garthwright, before you proceed, let me just make a quick announcement. Thin, rectangular glasses, teal color, were left at the registration table so if you can’t see, your glasses might be there. Mr. Garthwright, and on deck is
Charles Tilford.

MR. GARTHWRIGHT: Thank you. Can you hear me all right?

MR. DAVIA: Yes.

MR. GARTHWRIGHT: I don't need --

MR. DAVIA: Can you get a little closer?

MR. GARTHWRIGHT: Good. All right. Yes. I want to direct my comments very much to the Army Corps of Engineers about the permit. I want to suggest that they deny the permit for M-83. I concur with all the objections to the build alternatives that have been made tonight very eloquently. I especially concur that Alternative 4 has been so vastly over-designed with unnecessary paths on each side and huge overblown medians that I see it as a poison pill and an insult and I regret the fact that for four or five years, people wanting to sell in that area have undoubtedly had their homeowner's values depressed. I think that was very unfair.

Now, all of that said, I think there's something fundamentally wrong with the study of alternatives, and the reason I want to talk to the Corps is I believe the Corps required that if the permit were to be granted, that alternatives had to be studied. Now, Mr. Johnston came about two months ago to the day to Montgomery Village to give us a briefing of what was involved and it was a very nice briefing
and after it was over, I was still reeling because I had gone
on the internet and I had looked at the plan and I didn’t see
something that I expected to see.

For over 15 years of my professional career, I did
cost benefit and cost effectiveness studies to federal
agencies in the military, so I’ve done this kind of thing
before. When we did cost benefit, the Army Corps of Engineer
studies were the only textbook we had. They were the gold
standard. They still are.

We got the presentation and when it was over, I
asked this presentation of Mr. Johnston. I said you know,
you showed us that there was road improvements to be made on
the east side. Although they helped, they weren’t really
enough. Road improvements could be made on the left side but
although they helped Clarksburg, they weren’t really enough.
That was the end. I said did you ever consider doing an
analysis on the computer of being both sets of improvements.
The east set and the west set in no way interfere with each
other. Remember, I don’t like Alternative 4 and its
evermextremely absurd widths. But the principle is Mr. Johnston
looked at me and said, no, we never really considered that.

Now, if you think about it, if you’ve looked at
these studies and I’ve looked at them and I’ve lived with
them and I’ve done them and I’ve seen people put their thumb
on the scales in a complex study. What I’m telling you is if
they didn't even, if this is something that an undergraduate traffic training engineer would do in his class, you'd say we haven't answered the question of what can you do without M-83 unless they say what if we do all the other alternatives. We haven't answered the question. Can Clarksburg be certain. I'm sorry. I never saw the yellow sheet. I'm sorry. I never did.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Garthwright, can you wrap it up in a few seconds?

MR. GARTHWRIGHT: Yes.

MR. DAVIA: Okay. Thank you.

MR. GARTHWRIGHT: So I think the rest of my point is very obvious but I'll just state it anyway. I have to call into doubt that there was ever a sincere attempt to find an alternative when they wouldn't even do that and therefore, I do not think you can grant the permit. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Garthwright. Mr. Charles Tilford, and on deck is Bonnie Bell.

MR. TILFORD: I'm Charles Tilford speaking on behalf of the Greater Goshen Civic Association. Since the 1960s and introduction to master planning in Montgomery County, about 400,000 people have moved into the Up County area which was largely rural with very little infrastructure. An early and important part of master plans was inclusion of two new major roads referred to then as the Western-Eastern
1 Arterial. Western Arterial is now Great Seneca Highway.
2 Master plan process has many successes but one of the
3 failures is the failure to complete the Eastern Arterial.
4 Eastern Arterial includes the Midcounty Highway and the
5 infamous gap. This has been, had a significant detrimental
6 effect on life throughout the county because we are no noted,
7 nationally noted, for our gridlock traffic.
8
9 Now, I’m glad to hear all of the new adherence we
10 have to blocking Alternative 4 because it truly is a horrible
11 solution to this problem. The -- I’m glad particularly to
12 hear the previous speaker agreed with this because it was
13 only recently that he was encouraging the, both Alternative 5
14 and Alternative 4 be built.
15
16 The only alternative that gives us significant
17 improvement to help out with the 400,000 people we have is
18 the master plan alignment, Alternative 9A. This is, this was
19 superior for several reasons. First of all, it has a
20 reserved right-of-way so it does not have the impediment of
21 recent development. Secondly, it is, it will or whilst
22 importantly, it will connect the road systems into a system,
23 it will complete the Eastern Arterial and pull traffic off of
24 the congested area roads which range from small rural roads
25 to I-270.
26
27 And that’s right. It will increase the traffic on
28 Big County Highway. That’s the intention because this allows
for smooth flow of traffic. One of the biggest factors in generating carbon dioxide in our kind of environment is congested traffic, and that's what we have is stop and go which can double and triple the amount of CO2 emissions.

There are environmental consequences related to Alternative 9 or M-83 as there was with any development. These have to be placed in context. You don't house 400,000 people without doing a lot of environmental damage. You're talking about square, tens of square miles where the trees were cut down, the ground was leveled and then it was replaced with impermeable surfaces.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Tilford --

MR. TILFORD: The -- yes.

MR. DAVIA: Would you please --

MR. TILFORD: The effects of alternative of M-83 are minor compared to this and will improve the entire area.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Tilford. Bonnie Bell, and on deck is Royal Buyer.

MS. BELL: Good evening. I'm Bonnie Bell. I'm with the Coalition for the Seneca Creek Greenway Trial and also on the board of the Greater Goshen Civic Association. I would like to address a couple of things that we have talked about here. Everyone's talking about bus and bus routes for transit. I'm also very interested in transit, and that's a wonderful alternative and I have been to many of the meetings
and hearings and presentations about rapid transit and bus transit, et cetera. What I find is when I ask that there is no parking at any of the stations for the bus rapid transit so from where I live, I have to get into my car even to get to the bus. So telling me that I just, I can’t walk to the bus. I have to get into my car. When I get there, there’s no parking. Oh, well, maybe you can park in a parking lot at a store.

So transit alternatives are not as easy as they seem. I’m going to have to get in my car. And you cannot expect me to get into a bus in Clarksburg and spend 45 minutes to get to Shady Grove Metro, which is what the estimation is, and then get on the Metro, so people are going to want to get on a road. What happens when they get on a road if you don’t give them unlimited access? They sit in stop and go traffic and air pollution goes up and up and up. There’s noise pollution for everyone around.

And with all due respect to Montgomery Village, whose population from the time that I moved here in ‘91 has gone from 35,000 to 45,000 without a lot of building, I don’t understand that, they have numerous four-lane roads in and out of their community. Clarksburg has no four-lane roads in and out of their community and they have planned for 40,000. What kind of people put 40,000 people on the ground and then tell them well, you can take the same route that Abe Lincoln
took and it's just about as much room as his carriage took
going up 355.

Alternative 4, said right now, two homes will be
lost. There are numerous examples of wells and septic
systems. All of Brink and the beginning of Wightman run well
and septic systems. If you lose your well or your septic system,
you lose your house unless you're going to run WSSC service
down that road. If you do that, there's a big church that's
waiting to build a 4,000 seat sanctuary, a K through 12
school and a retirement community on Brink Road. We would
rather not have that. Thank you very much.

And finally, unlike most of the people I heard here
tonight, I want to give my hat's off to the Department of
Transportation. The original plans here, there were going to
be 10 acres of wetlands affected. They have done a
tremendous amount of work to mitigate that. Is it going to
be -- yeah, lies. They do not lie. I'm sorry. That's a
rude comment. The Department of Transportation has tried
very hard. Have you ever heard of end on construction? We
can do this without destroying the environment, and I hope we
will do that. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Bell. Royal Buyer, and
on deck is Andrea Butler.

MR. BUYER: Good evening. I'm Royal Buyer, 15109
Sunflower Court in Rockville. My daughter, who is sitting
next to me, has a home on Bell Bluff Road in the center of this corridor area. I -- Alternative 9, the master plan alignment, has guided development in the study area for many years. To select another route negating the adopted master plan for this area puts lack of credibility on our planning process. I would like to say this, that I think applause and cat calls are entirely out of place at a public hearing.

This should end.

Effect of the alternative on the environment has been reduced and minimized. As stated earlier, the 40 acres that were affected by this road have been reduced to one acre. The completion of Snowden Farm Parkway will provide relief to M-355 in the upper quadrant of the study area.

The, this alternative presents an improvement over other alternatives, this being Alternative 9. In that, it will, number one, enable drivers to select the least congested of M-355 or I-270 by way of the Watkins Mill Road whose interchange with I-270 has recently been funded, thus achieving the purpose of the proposed project. And two, allow the possibility of in the future of the extension of M-83 to --

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Buyer?

MR. BUYER: Yes.

MR. DAVIA: We'd be happy to accept your written statement. Could you conclude, please?
MR. BUYER: Yes. I have just one sentence here. This will provide the extension of to Redland Road of, M-83 will provide a direct route to the Shady Grove Metro Station.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Buyer.

MR. BUYER: Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: You’re welcome. Thank you. Andrea Butler, and on deck is Robert Nelson.

MS. BUTLER: Good evening. I’ll try to speak quickly so you don’t have to pull me off of the microphone.

My name is Andrea Butler. I live at 2112 Kaul Lane in Germantown. I am on the corner of Kaul Lane and Brink Road so our property is one of the properties that will be substantially affected if Alternative 4 is chosen so needless to say, I am against Alternative 4.

I will focus a little bit on the human impact in my discussion, and I support all the eloquently articulated comments of my friends and neighbors who have outlined some of the reasons why Alternative 4 would be such a bad choice but given the time constraints, I’m going to focus on two areas, safety and the well and septic issues.

Safety standpoint, there are more than 120 driveways or street accesses from cul-de-sac communities that border Brink Road. The only way out of our homes would be turning onto Brink Road into oncoming traffic, presumably traffic that would be going approximately 50 miles an hour.
There are no stop lights planned at these intersections. The residents will only be able to make right hand turns into oncoming traffic. This would mean that, for instance, a 10 minute right to the middle school or high school if you make a left hand turn now becomes a 20 to 30 minute ride because you have to take a right hand turn and go all the way around and back up to the school. Residents returning home will have to slow down and make turns on their streets and into their driveways which will presumably slow down traffic and potentially cause accidents. School bus routes will be affected. The buses will either have to stop on Brink Road to pick up children or turn into the communities and then pull back out into oncoming traffic again.

The proposed road will look much like the Great Seneca Highway placed in the middle of an existing community. The road will run right up to the doorstep of many homes. There are no jersey walls or other barriers planned for the road to protect homes from speeding cars that lose control or vehicular accidents that force cars off the road or overturn.

In addition, the impact on this area in terms of well and septic. Most, if not all of the homes, on Brink Road corridor have wells and septic and for some reason, this issue seems to have been glossed over but the impact cannot be ignored. The wells will be contaminated or potentially dried up. Septic tanks will have to be dug up and drainage
fields affected. None of the information or reports to date have fully vetted this issue or discussed how these issues will be addressed. Will the County run public water and sewer to the homes on Brink Road? Will they dig new wells? Will they provide new septic tanks or septic fields for each property? Surely, this is also an economic consideration for building this road.

I’d be remiss if I did not mention the personal impact of this project. We lose a significant amount of our property. The road comes precariously close to our house, almost to our driveway, but not close enough to be considered a taking. By all measurements, it comes within a few feet of our well which is likely to be contaminated or otherwise compromised by this construction project. We lose a line of pine trees that are on average of at least 30 feet tall and I urge these to be considered, even though it is not considered to be a forest.

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Butler?

MS. BUTLER: So -- I’m done. Again, so as I was saying, I’m against Alternative 4 because I believe it will destroy the community both environmentally and economically.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Butler. Robert Nelson, and on deck is Jane Hatch.

MR. NELSON: My name is Robert Nelson and I’m a resident of Goshen. I support the original master plan route
for the Midcounty Highway. I'm holding up today's Gazette newspaper which in its lead story announces Watkins Mill project gets key funding. I-270 interchange to receive $125 million from gas tax increase. This headline highlights the confused state in which we find Up County transportation infrastructure planning. While the state of Maryland thinks that Watkins Mill Road is a major highway, DOT removed Watkins Mill Road from consideration, Alternative 6, when 11 options were reduced to the current six alternatives. When completed, the Watkins Mill interchange will dump interstate traffic on what DOT apparently considers a residential street.

When Montgomery Village was built a half century ago, the existing streets along the perimeter dating back many centuries were preserved as two-lane country roads but the DOT now considers these streets viable routing for the major Midcounty Highway in a proposed Alternative 4. They envision a four-lane divided highway which completely destroys the character of the Goshen area. Goshen has been a very special part of Montgomery County history bordering on the agricultural reserve. Is a possible reason that Alternative 4 has been proposed is to open the agricultural reserve to major development?

As part of my career at NASA, I performed trade-off studies. I find this trade-off study of the six alternatives
very misleading. For example, a wrong assumption in the
study is that a widened Goshen Road already exists when
construction has never even begun. If one adds the cost of
the Goshen Road widening to the estimate for Alternative 4,
then it is clear that Alternative 4 is the most expensive
option being proposed.

I find that the proposed cost of the master plan
route is Overlea exaggerated. When the Intercounty Connector
was built, destroyed wetlands were recreated. One of these
wetlands is just around the corner from my home in Goshen
Branch Stream Valley Park. The state of Maryland paid 2.6
million to recreate 25 acres of wetlands and restore the
banks of Goshen Branch, about a mile of bank. Thus, the
approximate cost of an acre of new wetlands was $100,000 but
DOT has forced all options of the Midcounty Corridor study to
impact less than an acre of wetlands. Thus, the cost of
avoiding impacting about 15 acres of wetlands could well be
$150 million. What county planner would possibly select an
option that would cost $10 million to avoid impacting one
acre of wetlands when the cost of recreating an acre of
wetlands is $100,000?

Development in our Up County region has been
predicated on having the Midcounty Highway in place. The
people of Goshen are horrified that DOT would seriously
consider Alternative 4 as an option for the highway. We want
the Midcounty Highway built on the original master plan route.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Nelson. Thank you. Can you conclude?

MR. NELSON: Just one more --

MR. DAVIA: Please. Thank you. Jane Hatch, and on deck is Neil Lerner.

MS. HATCH: Good evening. Thank you for your patience. My name is Jane Hatch and I'm President of the Northgate Homes Corporation, a community of 1149 homes in Montgomery Village. I'm here to ask you to remove Alternative 4 from consideration. Portions of Northgate are directly adjacent to Wightman Road and Alternative 4 would have a devastating impact on the livability of my community. We ask that the community impact surrounding Alternative 4 raised her tonight be thoroughly considered, particularly in light of the fact that our 40-year-old neighborhoods were developed around existing roads and Alternative 4 has never been part of any master plan.

Alternative 4 would remove green space owned by Northgate and would literally run a highway to the fences of homes in our neighborhoods. A four and six-lane highway would isolate us from our neighbors and amenities in North Village such as Kaufmann Park, walking paths and churches. Access to critical commuter bus lines would be negatively
impacted, affecting the working poor who rely on them to get
to their jobs. The majority of Northgate residents affected
by Alternative 4 is of modest means and would not recover
from the decline in property values the highway would cause.
Alternative 4 is already having a negative impact on our
property values and it is very important that you reject it
as soon as possible.

Alternative 4 would change the character of our
community, our quality of life and our access to public
transportation. It would have the worst noise impact of any
alternative. The greatest number of residential property
impacts and the greatest potential for accidents because of
the multitude of intersections.

Northgate residents have the perfectly reasonable
expectation of continued quiet enjoyment of their homes.
Along with our neighbors in East Village, North Village,
Prathertown and Goshen, we have a longstanding claim to our
quality of life and preservation of property values based on
decades of planning decisions made by the existing master
plan. The infringement on these rights should not be
undertaken when the benefits for the public obtained by
Alternative 4 are nonexistent or minima and accomplished at a
disproportionate expense and disruption to our community.

Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Hatch. Neil Lerner, and
on deck is Kevin Linck.

MR. LERNER: Neil Lerner. I'm in the Northgate community of Montgomery Village. For the past 30 years, I've made my living as a consultant and researcher in the field of roadway safety. I routinely conduct studies for the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Cooperative Highway Research Program and many other agencies. Over this same 30 years, I've also been a resident of the Northgate community. So I come to you today as someone with expertise in roadway safety who also has eminent personal knowledge of the roads in communities that would be affected by Alt 4. I'm here to explain to you some significant safety concerns that exist for Alt 4 and ask that you delete it as an option.

There are three main concerns. First is the excessive number of access points. The current road is a minor two-lane road accessed by many residential driveways and minor roads. It will be very difficult to access Wightman Road from these access points if a higher speed highway, especially at peak periods. Since traffic entering the road here would only be able to turn right, there will be a need for numerous U-turns on this high speed road as well. Local traffic would also be mixed with longer distance commuters resulting in more conflict. So we can anticipate movement conflicts, speed conflicts and gap acceptance
issues.

The second concern is pedestrian safety. There's bus stops on both sides of the road serving the Shady Grove Metro and other destinations, and this results in many pedestrian crossings, often mid-block. Elsewhere, on one side of Wightman Road is Kaufmann Park which generates a lot of cross-road pedestrian activity, including many dog walkers who use that park. On the opposite side of Wightman Road is an access point to the Seneca Creek Trail with a lot of hikers and families there.

The third concern is the large number of intersections from this type of planned road. All forward features about 35 intersections. That's several times the number in the original plan. Intersections, even if they're well designed, are natural conflict points and they have crash rates far higher than tangent road sections.

So in summary, Alt 4 presents problems in traffic conflicts, pedestrian conflicts and numerous intersections. The public safety concerns are significant and more significant than other options and it should not be considered. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Lerner. Kevin Linck, sorry about the pronunciation there, and on deck is Michael Brown.

MR. LINCK: Members of the MDE and COE, my name is
Kevin Linck. I represent the East Village Homes Corporation, a homeowners association in Montgomery County whose purpose is to provide for the maintenance and management of the community property. All of our East Village properties, including streets, green spaces and recreational areas, are open to the general public. Many of East Village’s 1,389 households are low to moderate income.

We request your support to prevent the destruction of our community by stopping or removing the development known as Alternative 4 modified. We all feel that the option would greatly impact our community with added noise and it would be a failed approach for improving the relief for both Up County traffic congestion and environmental needs of the community.

We request that you place all your efforts in supporting the development of the master plan route Alternative 9A or M-83. This plan was included in five area master plans and many of our residents originally purchased their homes based on this information within the master plan for each community. It does not make sense, any business sense, to create a working master plan that everyone has followed for many years, to now just throw it away and create a new route system that is headed for complete disaster.

Just last week and the County Exec. CIP open public meeting, Mr. Ike Leggett stated that he is opposed to
Alternate 4 to all attendees. He stated that if a road is built, he would support the master plan. Based on the data that I've reviewed at the public hearings on the Midcounty Corridor study traffic analysis, that data shows that Alternative 9 master plan alignment would provide the fastest north-south travel route through the study area during the a.m. and p.m. hours. However, one area that needs additional study and analysis is the wetlands mitigation estimations of the size of acres to the cost per option.

And if the objective of M-83 is to provide the greatest transportation benefit while providing the best transportation choice, enhance economic competitiveness, support existing communities, value communities and neighborhoods, then you must support and serve our neighborhoods and complete a transportation solution.

Last but not least, why not support a new solution for M-83 to Frederick? Or even better, why not support the continuation for the Metro to Frederick? I thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. That's all I have.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Linck. Michel Brown, and on deck is Barbara D-U-C-H-E-Z.

MR. BROWN: I will correct that name as Brown, B-R-O-W-N.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN: I am a resident of the Northgate
community of Montgomery Village. Thank you for the
opportunity to speak. I echo the sentiments -- is there a
question? No. Sorry. I echo the sentiments previously
expressed by all those in my general area against Alternative
4 and because most of those reasons have been said better
than I could myself, I will speak more to the personal impact
of this.

Four-and-a-half years ago, my wife and I bought our
first home in this neighborhood. It was a foreclosure. We
have spent this time fixing that home, putting our time and
energy and finances into improving our home and subsequently,
the neighborhood. We have seen the birth of two children in
that time and all that time, we have had Alternative 4 over
our heads not knowing exactly what will happen. I need to
mention, I forgot to mention this earlier, that our home is
right along Wightman so it would be directly impacted by
this. And so with that, I formally register my opposition to
Alternative 4. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Brown. Barbara, and on
deck is Dominic Gonzalez is it?

MS. DUCHEZ: Good evening. My name is Barbara
Duchez. I am, I live at 21304 Long Court, and that's in
Germantown, Maryland. It is a cul-de-sac right off of Brink
Road. Everyone before me, I can certainly empathize with the
people of Clarksburg who have a difficult commute. I can
also empathize with the people who bought property 23 years ago who looked at the master plan and didn’t see Alternative 4, 8, B, D or 9B, D. I want to just say I concur with the, what the people who previously have testified and now I’m going to speak now on a personal note.

Mr. Johnston mentioned there was only, proudly mentioned there was only one home that would be impacted by some, by Alternatives 8 and 9. I am that one home. Thank you very much. That’s all I wanted to say.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Duchez. Dominic Gonzalez, and on deck is Martha Mallard.

MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you for being here tonight, and it looks like a lot more than 40 people or less so thank you for sticking it out even if you aren’t speaking. My name is Dominic Gonzalez and I am here representing my wife and young children who can’t be with us and my neighbors who are too busy working or maybe too discouraged by this process to speak. I’m grateful for the opportunity to live in a free country where we can speak to these issues civilly. No cat calls, but I’ll take cheering.

I want to echo our elected representatives at the state level who earlier called on you and our county elected officials as well to stop scaring Montgomery Village residents with an unworkable alternative. I think that is irresponsible. I also want to address our current elected
officials and let you know that you can see here tonight there is a committed, passionate community in Montgomery County that wants to stop M-83.

I can try to list for you environmental, social and cultural impacts. I could list, for instance, the fact that in Montgomery Village, we stand to gain only 75 households projected by 2040 and less than 3,000 jobs. I could describe in detail the impacts of Alternatives 8 and 9 that have a direct impact on my home, that it is, when you account for Middlebrook development, the most expensive set of alternatives, that they’re the second most residences acquired, between 96 and 149, the most parkland impact, the second most pipe stream feed, the most relocated stream feed, the most wetland fill and conversion, the most forest impact, but I won’t because you can read that in the report.

What I will say instead is this. I want to describe for you quickly one of the neighborhoods that Alternatives 8 and 9 will cut through and change forever. It’s a small community of older homes on a quiet street. Like our friends in Northgate, my neighbors walk outside in the evenings, we talk on the front porch while our kids play together, we watch each other’s houses when someone’s away, we watch our kids grow up, we watch the 4th of July fireworks together. At dusk in my neighborhood and on my street, you can see the occasional deer, listen to the cicadas and the
bullfrogs down by the creek and almost hear them completely
drown out the traffic on 270.

Some folks who grew up on my street still live in
the same house that they grew up in. In other words, when we
moved here, we believed that this would be an ideal place to
live and raise our children so my wife and I carefully
planned and spent our life savings on our first house for a
young, growing family backing up to green space that county
officials, as late as last fall, said would not be developed.
We made the decision to buy this house based on their
assurances in public. Maybe we should know better since we
live this close to D.C.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Gonzalez, if you could wrap it up,
please.

MR. GONZALEZ: We are watching, county officials,
how effectively you will oppose M-83. Not how loudly, how
effectively. And I urge the Corps and Maryland Department of
Environment not to grant this permit. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Gonzalez. Martha
Mallard, and on deck is Marianne Dolan. Is Martha, Ms.
Mallard here? Marianne Dolan, and on deck is Rosemary
Arkoian.

MS. DOLAN: My name is Marianne Dolan and I live in
Montgomery Village, Ash Hollow Place, and my home backs up to
Wightman Road. I come tonight to give you my 36 year lived
experience of living on Wightman Road and what I see as one of the human environmental impacts of Alternative 4. Before we moved here in 1977, my husband checked the maps and the plans for future development in the area. We knew of the master plan so a major transportation corridor was not our concern for Wightman Road. Our concern was noise and we did have to adjust. The traffic was light then but we could hear the cars in the morning and in the evening, and there were some lulls during the day.

I don't need to tell anyone what has happened in the last 36 years with growth and development in this area, and especially Up County. Now, the heavy traffic begins earlier, trucks barrel at high speed usually around 4:30 to 5:00 in the morning. There's lots of disturbed sleep, few lulls any time of the day. We do have a transportation problem and Alternative 4 can't be the answer. That plan, after acquiring 353 properties, bulldozing through established communities that were never planned as a major transportation corridor, then building four-lane and six-lane highways to accommodate this double-door, who knows, traffic, the noise level for 417 residences that are in close proximity to the highway would be unlivable. The economic impact of declining property values would only add to the deterioration of long-established communities.

There was a plan. The master plan has been
publicly disclosed and reserved for all these years, and we
do need a plan to provide safe and sane solutions to our
transportation problem, but I urge you to remove Alternative
4 from consideration in that endeavor.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Dolan. Rosemary
Arkoian. Sorry about the pronunciation.

MS. ARKOIAN: Arkoian.

MR. DAVIA: Okay. And on deck is Dennis Barnes.

MS. ARKOIAN: Pretend the I is a Y, rhymes with the
author Saroyan. Hi, Mr. DaVia. Nice to see you again.

MR. DAVIA: I remember you, yes.

MS. ARKOIAN: You remember me I’m sure.

MR. DAVIA: Now I do.

MS. ARKOIAN: Now you do. I don’t know how this
works. Don’t count my three minutes.

MR. DAVIA: Just --

MS. ARKOIAN: I don’t know. I’m not -- I’m

technologically challenged.

MR. DAVIA: Okay. Just stand close so we can hear
you.

MS. ARKOIAN: Stand close. All right. I have a

loud voice however.

MR. DAVIA: There we go.

MS. ARKOIAN: Okay. Thank you. First of all, my
name is Rosemary Arkoian, 20816 Bell Bluff Road,
Gaithersburg, Goshen, Maryland. I'm a proud resident of Goshen. It will be 35 years August 22nd of this year. I am against modified Alternative 4 and I am for the original master plan 9A for a myriad of reasons. My husband and I did our due diligence with our two young children. We checked the master plan. I feel badly that some of my fellow residents in Montgomery Village did not do so and now perhaps they have buyer's remorse. One -- most importantly are the following reasons, but I will be sending you a detailed e-mail or letter.

The first thing that really speaks to me as an individual, I am speaking as an individual, we need to honor the master plan that people, businesses have looked at before buying their homes or setting up their businesses. This is a travesty if the citizenry cannot count on the master plan. I urge you to issue these permits to our DOT who is trying to make sure they dot there is and cross their Ts so there will be no appeal regarding this long overdue road.

Secondarily, I want to say the historicity is, needs to be preserved regarding the historic homes and especially in Prathertown. That is one of the oldest African American communities started by freed slaves in 1883. In 2003, we had a 150 year anniversary and we had lots of people there. You cannot allow us to be like our fellow residents in Frederick where they built a playground on cemetery of
African Americans and they had to turn around and dig it up. We, in Montgomery County, are better than that. We cannot do that.

Thirdly, this is the last frontier, Clarksburg, and I want you all to know that the developers were told they could do this because Arterial 8305, which then became named Snowden Farm Parkway, was going to hitch to Middlebrook Road. There was only the 5.7 miles that went through Montgomery Village. We already have Midcounty Highway from Shady Grove to Montgomery County. The developers are doing that now. We're going to have a road to nowhere? I mean, please, give me a break.

The other, the other situation is what people have alluded to, the safety aspect. Getting in and out of the driveways. People are going to have to take a right and a new turn. The stop and go traffic. Congestion. I can't get out of the Bell Bluff Road and I'm taking my life in my hands.

Wells and septic. This is a very big problem. We cannot allow our wells and septic to be compromised. In general, the quality of life. I know you all are Army Corps of Engineers and MDE but today, irrespective of what you heard earlier from some of our earlier speakers, there are ways to mitigate and I think we need to look into all those ways.
MR. DAVIA: Ms. Arkoian.

MS. ARKOIAN: All right. All I --

MR. DAVIA: Please, you can submit a written statement or e-mail.

MS. ARKOIAN: All right. I want to leave you with one statement.

MR. DAVIA: Okay.

MS. ARKOIAN: FDR said, President FDR said repetition of a lie doesn’t transform it into a truth, and I would like you all to trust what you’ve heard from the various people here today but I want you to verify it because there have been commission and omission are two ways to not quite tell the truth. Thank you very much.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Arkoian. Thank you.

Dennis Barnes, and on deck is Claudette Lease.

MR. BARNES: Good evening. I’m Dennis Barnes, 9709 Breckenridge Place, Montgomery Village, Maryland here to speak against, also, Alternative 4 from a little different viewpoint. The intersection of Goshen Road and Wightman Road, also Snouffer School, under Alternative 4, if approved, will create a crushing amount of vehicles, approximately 26,000 vehicles passing through that daily. This information comes directly from a memorandum from the Deputy Council Director to the Montgomery County Transportation Infrastructure Energy and Environmental Committee, part of

This congestion at this intersection would have an immediate negative impact on a stretch of Goshen Road, about three blocks, which would impact on two churches, significant membership, that's Rockville Road and Goshen. Two churches there and a school of 200 students plus the private property negatively impacted by the widening of what would lead into that intersection. The widening of Goshen Road all the way to Midcounty Highway would be 26,000 vehicles, according to that memorandum, passing through that intersection. That would bring negative impact on a, a minority church, African American minority church in that particular part of Goshen Road, a large county park and considerable private property. All of this as a result of widening Goshen Road all the way to Midcounty Highway.

So the environmental impact of 26,000 vehicles on this community would have an absolutely sadly and overwhelming impact on us. Thank you very much.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. Claudette Lease, and on deck is Bob Portinova. I'm sorry about the pronunciation.

MS. LEASE: I live in North Village Home Corporation which abuts Wightman Road and South Snouffer School Road. I am the President of the North Village Home Corporation. We have 888 homes. How will we be able to
access our homes with only one stop light? And the rest of
our roads only right hand turns to get out of our
communities, all our roads will be affected by M-83 Alternate
4. Morning traffic will back up on Highland Hall Drive and
Pleasant Ridge Drive. Pollution will happen in our
communities. Our residents will have more health problems.
Sound walls next to Essex Place in their backyards will
isolate our residents and devalue our homes. We will lose
our buffer to the road from Picton, Pleasant Ridge, Essex
Place, Salem’s Grant and our beloved Kaufmann Park.

Our road, Wightman Road, was never in the master
plan. If this road goes through, it will affect our quality
of life, it will devalue our homes and our health. You
have a big decision to make. Say no to Alternative 4. Thank
you.

MR. DAVIA: Next is Bob, I’ll try this again,
Portinova, but before Bob goes, let me just read a statement
that the county asked that I read. The county does not have
a verbal translator at tonight’s meeting but if you would
submit a written statement in Spanish, or I’ll add for any
other language for that matter, it will be translated for the
official record.

MR. PORTINOVA: Hi. Thank you for letting me
speak. I live in Montgomery Village, been there since ’87.
My name is Bob Portinova. I live about 100 yards from the
Jh

I proposed Option No. 9. I am against Option No. 9 just for the record. I just wanted to say about the process of including first generation immigrants who many of them, thousands live along route, Option No. 9. The clusters at the top, at Midcounty and Montgomery Village Avenue, it is on either side, there are thousands of residents in the Christopher Court complex and the Normandy on the other side. Home to many first generation immigrants that are not represented here. I think you guys in the future need to think about getting your message out to people who may not speak English, may be first generation and I think they’re not represented here for that reason. You have to find a way to get this message out better to these working class people.

It’s not fair because they live along this route.

Let me explain the route to you. First of all -- and another thing, we’re not pros at this. I didn’t go to college for, you know, fighting against roads so this isn’t my profession. I’m a landscaper and I’m a landscape designer and installer. This is not what I do so this isn’t our profession. DOT can set up these meetings and we have to scramble around trying to do our best, nervously, to put together something.

I don’t know what this road looked like, Option 9, back in 1960 or whatever the hell they had it on the thing but I’m telling you. Now, there are parts of it that need to
be in the National Geographic that are absolutely gorgeous.
That's the historic part of this. We talk about history. We
forget about the pristine gorgeous beautiful firs, 100-year-
old sycamores, 130-feet tall sycamores on parts of this
route. This route is home to an abundance of wildlife. It
is absolutely beautiful. It is home to a vast waterway
system. It's a wetland flood plane, a big part of it behind
my home which backs up to the Pepco property, okay?

But before we get to that point, let's start to
talk where we come through a 30-yard strip of forest, on
either side there are condominium complexes very close to
this strip of forest all the way down to the pool that they
swim in, down to their tennis courts that they use. Then we
come down to South Valley where there are ponds and there,
and then we come down to the softball field, then we come
down to the football field, then we come down to a
condominium complex on the other side of the football field.
On the other side of the football field is something called
Heron's Cove. It is another townhouse complex. Next to
Heron's Cove, you've got Watkins Mill Elementary School,
okay?

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Portinova, could you please
conclude.

MR. PORTINova: Sure.

MR. DAVIA: Please submit your written statement.
MR. PORTINOVA: I will. I will. My point is this.

This route is packed with residents and it is packed and loaded with an incredible wildlife habitat that is a critical buffer that we have to maintain.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Portinova. Next is Carol Tilford, and on deck is Greg Czajkowski.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Kathleen Sentkowski?

MR. DAVIA: No. It’s Greg. It’s Carol Tilford and then Greg Czajkowski.

MR. CZAJKOWSKI: Czajkowski.

MR. DAVIA: Czajkowski. 9540 Wightman Road.

MR. CZAJKOWSKI: Okay.

MR. DAVIA: Please.

MS. TILFORD: Hello. My name is Carol Tilford and I support sticking with the 50 year planned completion of Midcounty Highway, M-83, also known as Alternative 9A. I would like to comment on the no-build option that some citizens are advancing. There seems to be a feeling among some of us, not me, that roads are bad and while we cannot tear up funds we currently have, we should not build new ones anywhere.

People advocating this no-build position are thinking, I assume, that it will save trees, decrease future development, force people onto bicycles, buses and into carpools and thereby decrease our carbon footprint. I
respect these sentiments. However, I would respect them more if I saw any reasons to be hopeful that car use would decline, thereby making the need for more roads unnecessary. By the way, I had trouble parking this evening because the parking lot was entirely full. I did not see very many bicycles and to be frank, I didn’t see that many people or anybody getting off buses.

I would be willing to buy into this argument of a no-build if I saw large numbers of people with briefcases waiting for buses or if I saw thousands of bicycles parked at Metro or if the bike paths were crowded or if riding the free school bus to high school became the fashionable green thing to do. I would congratulate anyone who prepared their teenagers for a future with few roads and only commuter transportation by refusing, if they refused to buy them a car and required them to use public transportation. I submit that it’s naive to suggest that a no-build position would decrease traffic and reduce CO2 emissions.

An inconvenient truth is that having M-83 on the books for the past 50 years has allowed Park and Planning to approve significant new development in Clarksburg, Damascus and Germantown. During the same time period they failed to build the very road upon which these developments were predicated. In other words, the county approval housing projects in these areas has assumed that this road would be
built. The county did not stipulate that persons moving into
these new developments were required to ride a bike to work,
to take a bus to the Metro or even to carpool. On the
contrary, they were reassured that M-83 would be built, would
link them to the Midcounty Highway and would enable them to
drive safely and quickly to shopping centers, daycares, jobs
and metro.

I would like to see the communities west and north
of Gaithersburg enjoy the same access to the Midcounty
Highway as do the residents of South Montgomery Village. So
please. So please stick with the plan, finish the job, close
the gap in this planned 50-year-old roadway. So no to no-
build and say no to the ridiculous Alternative 4.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Tilford. Greg.

MR. CZAJKOWSKI: Yeah, hi. My name is --

MR. DAVIA: On deck is Beth Dally. Go ahead, Greg.

MR. CZAJKOWSKI: My name is Gregory Czajkowski. I
live at 9540 Wightman Road in Gaithersburg. I’m in
Prathertown. A lot of what I was going to say has already
been brought up tonight. I think that with my house being
right across the street from Kaufmann Park and I have a well
in my front beautiful landscape, I’m a horticulturist by
trade, landscaper, very unusual plants, pine, walkways, the
whole nine yards, all of this will be gone. The impact of
what was said before because of my well, you’re going to have
to buy my property. Well, if Alternate 4 goes through, I
hope that they do buy my property because my property value,
if the house is left alone, it won’t be worth a nickel.

Secondly, when I moved into that house 27 years
ago, it was woods across the street and I could literally
stand on Wightman Road, in the middle of it, on a Sunday and
blow leaves back into the woods. Now, because of the
development in Clarksburg, in Germantown, the road has just
become so dangerous. It’s taken on so much more traffic that
we do need relief somewhere else.

When my kids come to visit with me and they’re
going back to school, I literally have to walk out to the end
of my driveway now and look both ways with the window down
telling them okay, hold, hold, hold, okay, now go and you
like have to go like a bat out of hell to get out of there.
And this is just the two-lane country road. I can’t imagine.

If I wanted to go to Germantown with the Alternate
4, I would have to cross three lanes of traffic coming one
way, this is a turn lane, and you go two lanes coming this
way. I’m not an idiot. I still have to turn right and go up
and make U-turns like everybody else has been talking about
tonight.

So therefore, I’m totally in favor of Alternate 4.
I’d like to see my property values destroyed and I think it
will be a great idea to have a highway right in front of my
house with, when I walk out my front door, there will be a
wall there to block that noise. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Greg. Beth Dally, and on
deck is Ann Smith.

MS. DALLY: I need my reading glasses here. Sorry.

Good evening. My name is Beth Dally, and I live in Dickerson
which many of you might now is in the Ag Reserve for
Montgomery County. For the, for the past 14 years, I’ve been
commuting to work and running errands along Route 355 from
Comus Road south through Clarksburg, Germantown. I’ve seen
firsthand the impact development without infrastructure
improvement has had on local roads and I am concerned about
the increase in traffic congestion but I do not think that M-
83, Midcounty Highway, extended is the solution.

I am here, I am here this evening to urge you to
reject the permit application for M-83 and to support
Alternative 2 which improves traffic flow by improving our
existing infrastructure, particularly at intersection choke
points. And most importantly, instead let’s use the dollars
to invest in public transit. Yes, the Up County needs
traffic relief. It is the fastest growing region in the
county, yet many of its residents are not served by a nearby
Metro station or any comprehensive transit system, but
building a road is not a long-term solution. We need a plan
with vision.
The estimated 700 million county dollars should instead be utilized to construct transit options to get Up County residents and commuters in Frederick County and beyond off the roads and to work centers, social destinations and back home. For that reason, I support the 355 North Corridor of the rapid transit extended all the way to Clarksburg as well as a third track on the Brunswick Marc line which as you probably know, serves points north of our county and goes all the way down to the more densely populated southern Montgomery County and all the way to Union Station in D.C.

If we do not have the dollars to extend the Metro’s red line, which it’s frustrating to me because it seems like Virginia can find money to do this, then we must provide effective, convenient ways for residents to get to Shady Grove. In fact, the development in Clarksburg was predicated on public transit, and page 22 of the Clarksburg Master Plan states transit is an essential feature of this plan. Without it, the plan’s vision cannot be realized. How can the county, in good conscience, go forward with existing development and expect to attract good jobs to the Up County without this essential feature?

As a resident of the Ag Reserve, I’m also concerned about the environmental impact of M-83. Particularly, it’s long-term effect on the aquifer. Montgomery County residents in the Ag Reserve and elsewhere get their drinking water from
underground wells. Clarksburg, which borders the Ag Reserve, is expected to go to 40,000 residents and serve the work center for others. That’s a lot of pavement. Pavement forces rain water to become overland runoff depriving the aquifer of recharge volume.

The ongoing Clarksburg development, coupled with the construction of M-83, would increase imperviousness and ultimately affect the quality and quantity of underground water sources and degrade the water quality for the entire region. The U.S. ACE and MDE should carefully consider and study the cumulative factor that may lead to construction in conjunction with the already approved development.

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Dally.

MS. DALLY: Oh, thank you. The one -- thank you. And finally, there is no study that can explain the pain of having your home and your property bulldozed. This is especially unfair to residents who consulted the master plan and Bob Collins with the understanding that M-83 was not part of the neighborhood. It’s 2013. Montgomery County has the opportunity to do new transit.

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Dally.

MS. DALLY: Just building a road isn’t going to do it. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Dally. Ann Smith, and on deck is Cherian Eapen. Sorry about the pronunciation.
Ms. Smith.

MS. SMITH: Hi. I'm Ann Smith. I'm the President of Seneca Creek Watershed Partners. It's a new organization. We're the seventh watershed group in Montgomery County. We're assisted by the County DEP. They have assigned employees who work with the watershed. Our group had a board meeting, there's 11 of us, and I want to mention that five of our board members have spoken tonight. We have different views, and they've all spoken clearly. Bonnie Bell, Richard and Jane Wilder, Margaret Schoap and myself. So I want you to know that we are very serious about the Seneca Creek Watershed.

It starts at Ten Mile Creek. We're part of the Ten Mile Creek Coalition. It's our source water for most of Montgomery County. So you hear a lot about well water, but you don't hear very much about, city water, okay? So of the watersheds, I picked four today. I have a graph. I'm sorry -- I'll just show it quickly. The green is the poor quality water. This is data from the 2012 DNR IBI studies for water quality with invertebrate. You see at the top with Seneca where there's red, so we are only two-thirds of the poor category. We're the best stream in Montgomery County.

We oppose, the Seneca Creek Watershed proposes 8, 9 and 4 the way that it's been described. We would like improvements of a lot of roads in Montgomery County and we
would like the transit system to be very effective for the
to people in Clarksburg, especially for their children. That’s
it. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Smith.

MS. SMITH: Um-hum.

MR. DAVIA: Cherian E-A-P-E-N. I’m sorry about the
pronunciation there, sir. And on deck is Mary Jane Goodrick.

MR. EAPEN: Good evening. Thank you for this
opportunity to testify today. Again, my name is Cherian
Eapen. Cherian Eapen. I’m a resident of Clarksburg and I’m
here to support Alternate 9A which is master plan alignment.
And I’ve heard other people talk about other alignments and
I’m here to say, to say build Alternate 9. And the County
has done a fabulous job with the, with the study and the hope
it will look at the study and consider all alternates and
approve the finding that the county has, the Board of
Transportation has made as far as the alignment.

And as a resident of Clarksburg, I just wanted to
say in terms of all the transit alternates and other no-build
alternates that were suggested or recommended by speakers
here today, we didn’t really look at the geography of where
Clarksburg is located and the 40,000 people that ultimately
will live in Clarksburg. M-83 is the only real alternate for
getting us residents of Clarksburg down to Shady Grove Metro
station and ultimately, to the connection to ICC to BWI. And really, it's a quality of life issue for all of the residents in Clarksburg and the surrounding communities so I again urge you to look at the facts in the report and, and build Alternate 9.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Eapen.

MR. EAPEN: Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Mary Jane Goodrick, and on deck is Laurie Wallace Lanham.

MS. GOODRICK: I'm Mary Jane Goodrick, a homeowner in Goshen, Maryland. My family and I oppose Alternative 4 modified and support Alternative 9A. The public notice for this hearing stated that the agencies would base their decision for the permit on various considerations but the last phrase, which I consider the most important, is that you'll consider the needs and the welfare of the people, so I hope that that will be a part of every single decision that you will base upon.

For example, Alternative 9 will affect a lot of trees but I think it's important to think about how the trees got there. You set aside the land for a highway, you build thousands and thousands of homes based on that highway and then you come back 50 years later and there are a lot of trees on that land. I like trees. In fact, I love trees. We have trees on our property. But one thing about trees, as
you environmental people understand, is that it’s a renewable resource. You can plant trees other places. And the study says that all of the trees will be mitigated either one to one ratio or one to two ratio. And trees are important but they’re not more important than people.

Alternative 4 modified presents unacceptable noise levels for about 417 homes, the largest number of all in the study by far. Many of the homes will have ugly sound barriers in front of them because of this noise. What does this noise level mean practically? To people who live on a semi-rural two-lane road that would become a four or six-lane highway, the road that the lived on that was two-lane was never planned or developed to have a four or six-lane highway running back all of the residences of those homes. And if that road it built, it will be a nightmare for all of us who live around that road, for all of us who live elsewhere and will be traveling on that road.

Noise adversely affects people. According to the study with Alternatives 8 and 9, increase of noise levels would be the greatest within parklands and open spaces of Alternative 8 and 9. By definition, there will be fewer homes in the parklands and in the open space to affect but thousands of tax paying Montgomery County residents live year-round on Alternative 4 modified proposed route. You can plant more trees but you cannot make whole households along
the route of Alternative 4 modified if that alternate is chosen.

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Goodrick?.

MS. GOODRICK: My family and I hope you will grant a permit for Alternative 9A. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Goodrick. Laurie Wallace Lanham, and on deck is Sharon Dooley. Is Laurie here? Okay. Is Sharon Dooley?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. She’s here.

MR. DAVIA: Okay. Kathleen Sentkowski is on deck.

MS. DOOLEY: Good evening. My name is Sharon Dooley and I’m testifying for the group I represent, Up County Action, which concerns the Southland park with many issues on environmental concerns. The proposed road, M-83, is one of those concerns. Much of the land involved in the chosen route is in environmentally sensitive areas. Several streams in the Seneca Creek Watershed have already been damaged by construction in Clarksburg with creeks showing a decrease in bio-diversity, an increase in overall water temperatures and pollution damage from construction and road runoff. Today I ask of your panel to really look at the problems facing this proposed construction. What is the balance here between the needs of the fragile environment and the desire to some in the community to shave a few minutes off a commute but at what cost?
In 2007, according to the documents on the transportation website, the EPA comments were submitted on all the alternatives present at that time and on 1/29/2007, the statement was written, the EPA supports the efforts to accommodate and promote mass transit high occupancy vehicles and alternative designs to address the need to reduce congestion. We look forward to seeing alternatives incorporating the above ideas as discussed in December 2006.

Concerns about not building roads or repair are subsequently disregarded despite this information. Oddly, since expansion with rapid transit vehicles along 355 in the CCT route are very much in play today, why have not these choices been further explored? Even the expansion along 355, with much lower cost, has never been adequately or appropriately given an equitable hearing.

Montgomery County Department of Transportation apparently sees its mission was road building and never developed a viable transit solution, but the transit solution is more environmentally palatable and will not destroy forests, farms or wetlands so why not look at it seriously.

The MCDOT solution to wetlands is to bridge or create culverts for streams or creeks which change allowed free-flowing stream into a water channel which no longer can support aquatic life. The claim that less than an acre of riverbed is impacted is disingenuous where there are multiple
places in separate streams that are very much involved and
destruction will occur. Each one of these encompass many
stream valley habitats and necessary considerations for the
requisite stream creek bed buffers are not being considered.
Runoff from bridges and construction still harms the waters
underneath.

The county hopes to build the purple line, the RTV
system and the CCT. All are moving forward as systems for
the 21st Century. All --

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Dooley.

MS. DOOLEY: All of them are environmentally
designed with little air pollution or damage. So in
conclusion, please do not issue a permit for this road to be
built as the master plan alignment. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Dooley. Kathleen
Sentkowski, and on deck is Mark Firley.

MS. SENTKOWSKI: Hi. I'm Kathleen Sentkowski. I
live in Goshen, Maryland and I am on the Board of the Greater
Goshen Civic Association. I'm just going to comment on a few
things that were mentioned tonight. First of all, I find it
very amusing that the people who really pressed the County
into doing this study are most against your report. Probably
because it shows that the M-83 is the most logical road that
we need in the county.

As you can tell, I'm for the M-83. I am against
Alternative 4. But I'm also here to ask you or point, and
point out to you that we feel that the testimony, and the
written testimony in particular, from the residents of
Montgomery County should bear more weight than visitors to
Montgomery County. And that, what I'm talking about is
visitors to Dayspring who do not live here, commute here, go
to school here, shop here, vote here or pay taxes here. They
aren't vested in how long it takes to get to Shady Grove
Road.

There's many things been said tonight that are not
true but what is true, there is 15,000 residents in Goshen.
There's going to be 35,000 more residents, or more residents,
in Clarksburg and they need a road to get to work. Someone
said we need a 21st Century transportation plan. Is that a
bus? Because I have to tell you with all due respect to the
politicians and other people who have said this tonight about
transit, a transit way, if you have a child you have to get
to school or to the baseball game or baseball practice or go
shopping, you're not getting on a bus. We need to get there
on the road. You can look the other way and think that we're
going to get there by bus but I agree with Bonnie Bell,
you're going to get in your car and we need M-83. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Sentkowski. Mr. Firley,
and on deck is Phillis Copeland. Mr. Firley.

MR. FIRLEY: Thank you and good evening. I will
ask permission to submit extended remarks.

MR. DAVIA: Absolutely.

MR. FIRLEY: I come before you today as a private citizen to share some concerns and objections to the proposed extension from its terminus in Montgomery Village into Clarksburg. I should point out that at the outset, at least two flaws in the process which I may, which I believe may result in serious concerns.

First, that the purpose in these documents originally offered have both methodological and substantive defects which cause me to question the validity of any conclusions drawn from them.

There were numerous examples, and I will not tax you with the entire list tonight. Two of the most serious are that at no point the traffic model or the assumptions used to craft it were made transparent or even exposed to the public. The second, as we know from experience, traffic flow can be analogized to a balloon. Squeeze a section and constrict the flow, it bulges out elsewhere to form backups accordingly. The belief that we need this road in this way is belied by a flaw that is inherent in the final projections.

Time and words are spent indicating the horrors of backlog in the middle of the Clarksburg/Rockville Corridor. That's very fair. But if this road were to be built in this
way, this constriction appears at what theorists would call
the terminal node of the network. That is there isn’t
sufficient inner-connectivity at either end, either at Shady
Grove or in Clarksburg, to allow the increased volumes the
middle section would drive so we have to build more roads to
keep up. We haven’t actually solve Clarksburg’s problem but
we’ve moved it around at great public expense. We are doomed
to repeat ourselves like some modern Sisyphus with a concrete
mixer instead of a rock. We have to rework most of
Clarksburg’s streets, Shady Grove, SRV-55 and bits of I-200
to make it all work. Where are the costs in the plan?

Another class of objections concerns the insistence
of a false dichotomy between road building and doing nothing.
There are other ways to solve the problem. Demand
management, the most deprecated and orphaned solution
includes, among other things, strategies as simple as
intelligent signalization. For 10 to 15 percent of the cost
of the road, the entire county signal grid could be
coordinated and moved toward adaptive timing. Where this has
been tried, traffic flow improvements of 15 to 20 percent are
common. If you run the numbers through any available
simulator, you come to a rather astonishing conclusion. If
we were to do adaptive signaling, we would eliminate the need
for building this road in its entirety.

In this area, we often pride ourselves on forward
thinking but when it comes to transportation, we haven’t even
made the 1990s elsewhere.

    MR. DAVIA: Mr. Firley.

    MR. FIRLEY: The same county that trouts smart
growth around transit when the construction is renewal and
in-fill reverses its emphasis when it’s closer to green
fields.

    MR. DAVIA: Mr. Firley.

    MR. FIRLEY: Thank you.

    MR. DAVIA: Thank you. Phillis Copeland, and on
deck is --

    MS. COPELAND: Good evening.

    MR. DAVIA: -- Tricia Pisara. Go ahead, Ms.

    Copeland.

    MS. COPELAND: Good evening. My name is Phillis
Prather Copeland and I am the eldest daughter of the late
Reverend James E. Prather and Edna May Prather who is 95
years old and still resides in Prathertown. And I stand here
and I, I’m reminded as I stand before you this evening that
when God created the Heavens and the Earth, he made man to be
caretakers of that which he had created and that included his
land. So I’m standing today as the caretaker for the rights,
the protection of the, an apostle of land along Brink Road
and Wightman Road and in particular, the Prathertown
community which was brought and built on the blood, sweat and
tears of my ancestors who were slaves on the Blunt Farm off of Brink Road. And for the first five years of my life, I lived in one of the log cabins with my parents on the plantation.

For the record, any plan to widen, widen Wightman at Brink Road or to erect a wall in front of the homes along Wightman and Brink Road are strongly disapproved of. More importantly, it would hide the historical plat that has been erected along that stretch of roadway and it would take away from the land and the homes that along, that's along that stretch of road. And for once, it was, it was looked at as being a beautiful countryside. Now -- it was, it was also seen as very peaceful and quiet. Now, that stretch of land is like the 500 Indy Speedway with the two lanes. What would it be like with four lanes. Oh, I forgot. You want to erect a wall and take some of our land, and I do not think that this is the proper way to go so please reconsider your plan.

Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Copeland. Tricia, could you spell your last name, and on deck is Martin Wenk.

MS. PISARA: My last name is P-I-S-A-R-A.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you.

MS. PISARA: My name is Tricia Pisara and I live at 20611 Highland Hall Drive in Montgomery Village, and I've got to say it's a shame that the county built Clarksburg in the
first place. They should have never built Clarksburg when
they want to make the rest of the county suffer and build
more roads and take away houses for a community that
shouldn't have been there in the first place.

Second of all, I'm against Alternative 4. I don't
think that Wightman Road or Goshen should be turned into a
four to six-lane highway. You're going to take away people's
houses? Where are they going to live in this county with the
housing prices so high? They can't afford to go elsewhere.
You're going to put up sound barriers? That's not going to
do anything. I drive on Wightman Road every day to work as I
live in Clarksburg and there's not a lot of traffic right now
but there will be. Build the roads and they will come.

I'm also against Maryland, M-83. It is not our
fault you decided to build Clarksburg and people need roads
out that way. Therefore, you should not take people's houses
and build through Montgomery Village, M-83, to destroy other
people's homes for the county's mistake. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Pisara. Martin Wenk,
and on deck is Wendy White.

MR. WENK: My name is Martin Wenk. I live at 9740
Wightman Road. I belong to the Greater Goshen Citizens
Association and being at the end of the presentation. I must
say that a lot of the points I wanted to make have been made
already but let me give you a personal perspective on it from
my point of view just as an individual, and I'm sure a lot of
other people are in this position too.

I come here with the impression that one of these
roads will be built. There is no denying that there's a
problem with the existing population as it exists now let
alone the expanded population expected in the future. I have
personally traversed Route 270 over a career of 39 years
traveling fortunately in the last portion of it only to
Rockville and to the beginning years to Bethesda. 270 is
overloaded. It must be relieved. One of these roads will
have to be built. I do not believe, for reasons already
presented, that public transportation will be a real answer
within the new future, at least the near future necessary for
the county to relieve existing congestion and that congestion
that will build even before mass transit is available.

I oppose Alternate 4 for many of the reasons that
were expressed already but personally, I live at 9740. It is
a property that would lose one-third of its total acreage.
On that acreage is a large number of trees that act as a
buffer to the noise on Wightman Road. Obviously, nobody
speaks of it much but I am not sure who to address here that
would be cognizant of it and responsible for it.

Many people are afraid of loss of their property
value, which has occurred already, from the possibility of
this route and might ultimately even be greater if the route
is built that way, and I'm sure people in other alternatives have the same gripe but let's call it like it is. I fear that reduction in the value of my property. Some day I will sell it and I will live on the profits of that property. It will affect my life and the quality of my life. I do not believe -- I feel sorry for you folks in your position. A lot is being made of the environmental card, a lot is being made of the historical card and various group cards, be it ethnic or religious. I would think that, certainly for reasons offered already, I am strongly opposed to Alternate 4 as I said and I would not like to see this road be built anywhere but I think it will be built. It has to be a limited access road that significantly decreases the time you travel and does not decrease safety.

MR. DAVIA: Mister --

MR. WENK: At the expense of saying anything else, I'll end that by saying I am strictly opposed to 4 but if the road is built, I would stick to the original plan of establishing M-83 which does not bring forth the problems as Alternate 4 does.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Wenk.

MR. WENK: And let me say one more thing just --

MR. DAVIA: Quickly.

MR. WENK: Mitigation does work. We should look at the south side of Shady Grove Road by ICC and you should look
at the street. There's wetlands along Brink Road on the, at
the intersection of Brink and Goshen. You'll see what
mitigation does.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Wenk. Next is Wendy
White, and on deck is Denver and Peggy Saunders.

MS. WHITE: Good evening. Thank you for the
opportunity to speak. I live at 10717 Wayfarer Road in
Germantown, Maryland. I'm as scientist by trade. I've
worked in pharmaceutical development for over 20 years and so
I'm very data-driven, and I question really what the data is
here. And the reason I do that is I'm looking at your
purpose and need for the first thing is to reduce congestion.
I personally don't understand how moving the traffic from one
place to another reduces the congestion, okay? You're going
to take a ton of traffic and you're going to move it from one
place to another place.

The existing roads are not meant to handle this
increase in traffic, so I echo the concerns that another
gentleman very eloquently brought up, that this is just going
to be the beginning. You're going to have to widen and
increase all these other roads, okay, because they're not
meant to handle this traffic.

The second thing is that's on a number of your
documents is we're going to ease ability to get to Shady
Grove Metro. Am I the only person that reads the state the
Metro is in? Okay. The Metro keeps announcing that they’re close to bankruptcy. They don’t have money to increase the number of cars on their trains, okay? Plus, am I the only person that ever goes to Shady Grove Metro? There’s already no place to park. So how is adding more cars to a place where there’s no place to park going to help? They’re going to get there, they’re going to have to go drive somewhere else. There’s no place to park, okay?

So then there’s the issues of the planned growth. Someone else brought up that Clarksburg was supposed to have its own places to shop. Okay, I’ve lived in Germantown for close to 20 years now. I’ve seen the terrible impact that Clarksburg has put on the shopping communities within Germantown because Clarksburg residents don’t have their own place to shop. So we’re not sticking with the plan of providing them with the community that they need so they’re always traveling to other places in the county to do their shopping, right?

Additionally, it’s improved commute time. I’d like to know by how much. How much are we improving commute time for $350 million of our hard-earned tax paying money? I mean, then there’s all the data that other people have brought up that’s in your own documents. I mean, the most favored alternative, based on your documents, is 9, the 9s, but the 9s impact the greatest amount of the environment
which has been echoed by a number of people here and, yes, I agree we can replant trees but we can't re-purify the water, okay?

And additionally, those of you that live along Brink Road, a lot of people have spoken about Brink Road, Wightman Road, everything else like that, we have hunting now three times a year for shooting the deer and the big reason that they shoot the deer is because of all the accidents.

MS. SAUNDERS: Ms. White.

MS. WHITE: Where are the deer going to go now? You're destroying more land.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. White. Next is Denver and Peggy Saunders, and on deck is Sylvia Lake.

MS. SAUNDERS: Good evening. We are the Saunders, Denver and Peggy Prather Saunders. Our address is 9520 Wightman Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland, and our home is the gateway to the historical community of Prathertown. We have in our hands here this booklet as we all came together, Prathertown then and now, a collection of memories, that was written by my sister, Sharon Prather. This book represents our life and our love for this community.

Prathertown is not a community built by investors but it was founded by and homes built by my ancestors, three slaves in 1883. To build a four-lane highway with a five to nine foot retaining wall on Wightman Road would be a disaster...
to the community and horrifying to us who live along this
stretch of highway. Already, we have witnessed numerous
accidents resulting in deaths and many close calls because of
the speeding vehicles, curves, heavy traffic now on this
road.

We live in fear each day when we exit or enter our
driveways. Someone has even ran into the back of our
neighbors when they were trying to enter their driveway.
There have been times when we have tried to enter ours and
look and see cars speeding down the highway and out of fear,
pass our own driveway to avoid a deadly collision.

If a retainer wall is built, how will we exit our
drives? How will we make left turns? How will we see around
the curve? I once heard someone speak against M-83 say to
build this road would interrupt established communities, but
I ask you this evening how can anything be more established
than the community of Prathertown which was built in 1883,
and family members and the founders still have homes and live
in this community today. Several houses are over 70 years
old and my mother, at 95, still lives in the home that she
built with my dad.

We realize that the community has changed some over
the years. However, the solid foundation of this Prathertown
community still stands today. Every town should have some of
what we have in Prathertown where you see children playing
outside, where you see kids playing in the creek, where you see the joy of living and experience walking through the woods to grandma's house. Every community should have what we have. We have several years ago, we released balloons into the air to just thank our ancestors for what they did and how we hope to have this community for years to come.

We, yes, we are for M-83 but we are strongly against Alternative 4. We value exactly what we are and we love this community called Prathertown. May God bless you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Saunders. Sylvia Lake, and on deck is Robert Dyer.

MS. LAKE: Good evening, and thanks for this opportunity to express opposition to M-83 but particularly, the Alt 4 alternative. I just want to say that I seem to remember that not long ago, the corridor city's transit way was the looming road infrastructure improvement bringing people to jobs, technology, evading traffic congestion, linking communities in the I-270 Corridor to industries that we want to see growing and thriving in Montgomery County.

Now here, it's almost 20 years since I bought my house in Montgomery Village, joined the Board of Directors and had a family. We've been confronted with the prospects of the webbed light industrial track, the Goshen Road widening, Wightman Road widening and the building of high rises on our golf course track. M-83 was always that 20,000
pound gorilla hiding in the back room but all residents were
in agreement that the destructive impact of this cross-
cutting highway would have to our neighborhoods. No one
could understand the necessity to bisect an established four-
year-old community with another road to nowhere, at least for
our residents. What would it do to promote employment and
low impact living, yet, each time it was shaded with a dotted
line because the road itself was just not tenable.

So I've walked through the trail and all the roads
and the backyards that take us through the neighborhoods of
clusters 1, clusters 2, the Ridges, Seneca Whetstone,
Breckman (phonetic sp.) Ridge, Normandy 1 and 2, and one
other. I think there's one other community in Montgomery
Village that's impacted directly because it abuts the road
pathway, and a couple of adjustments need to be made to those
homes and the tracts of public ways adjoining those homes.

I've walked those paths and I can just say I can
see the destruction it will cause. These are exclusive,
moderate income-living neighborhoods that have become
accustomed to the peace, the quiet, the tranquility that we,
I think, deserve because we give up some of the stronger
selling points of other communities. Montgomery Village,
again and again, residents have given up the choice between
having sexy and sellable spaces and retail to having a green
and remote way to live. So we fought hard to maintain our
quaint, green, quiet living. We don’t want a Starbucks and a
Target but we want walking paths and we want links to our
neighbors’ backyards without getting in a car. So we bought
into what we would, what I would call an intentional
community that is centered around getting our children to
school and to the pool without the need to get on the freeway
and in this case, to have to run across it either.

So please consider, please, when you consider the
revised engineering scopes that say less surface area will be
impacted and will allow a quote, unquote, greener alternative
route, consider the impacts of cutting the thousands of trees
that it’s going to take to get there. The erosion alone, the
increased salinity to the creeks is going to have such a huge
impact on the Seneca Creek Trail and --

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Lake.

MS. LAKE: -- then the noise and the highways of
course. So I encourage you to oppose this permitting. Thank
you very much.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Lake. Robert Dyer, and
on deck is Susan Wenger.

MR. DYER: Thank you. I’m Robert Dyer, a life-long
resident of Bethesda, and I’m here to ask you to issue a
permit for master plan alignment 9A for M-83. This is the
master plan alignment and that’s very important here this
evening. Every person who purchased or rented property along
the M-83 right-of-way had a chance to look at the master plan and know that this long planned road might affect them. The other alternatives violate that public trust. The county allowed all the development in Clarksburg and the Up County but they never built this road to support it. Residents of Clarksburg have been lied to for years by developers and county politicians who promised the town center, light rail and the M-83. So far, they got none of those. With M-83, Alternative 9A, the county can finally deliver on one of those forgotten promises.

The hard data on transit use shows that no transit alternative will move as many people as the M-83. The failure to build another Potomac River crossing, the Rockville Freeway and M-83 are responsible for the severe traffic congestion between the American Legion Bridge and Frederic, congestion that pollutes our environment with unnecessary emissions proven to cause thousands of deaths each year. Alternative 9A is the first of three positive steps we can take toward ending gridlock in the county and protecting existing homeowners and the rural character of the Goshen area, agricultural historic properties and rural roads. Nothing is more green than our fantastic rural areas.

And finally, as someone who has studied history, I know in Bethesda, we have a kinship community not far from where I grew up. There’s nothing left of it. There’s no,
not much history known about it. To have this great resource and legacy of Prathertown, would be criminal to do anything that would affect that or diminish it so I would ask you to look at the facts, look to the hard data. And I know these are difficult decisions and no one's going to be satisfied 100 percent but I hope you will look at these hard numbers and then the final equation is to put the residents and citizens first because they're the highest priority when we have to decide between all the options, so I thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Dyer. Susan Wenger, and on deck is Win Wenger.

MS. WENGER: My name is Susan Wenger. I live on Perry, Perry Place, North Village in Montgomery Village, Maryland and I'm here to oppose Alternative 4 or 4 modified. I want to abandon my prepared comments and point out that no one has been in favor of Alternative 4. It's not a practical solution. It appears to be in there just to divide people, one neighborhood against another, but to circumvent any kind of path and route traffic in a great big U shape around just doesn't make any sense. It doesn't alleviate traffic. It won't speed up commuting. It's just going to encourage people from elsewhere in Montgomery County to come over maybe from Olney to take this road and it will not alleviate traffic. It will provide noise pollution, air pollution and it will divide Montgomery Village.
I've lived in Montgomery Village since 1980 in the same house. I've raised two lovely, intelligent daughters in my home and now I have three grandchildren. And when they come to visit me, we walk to North Creek Park. We will not be able to walk to North Creek Park if, if this road is built. We will not be able to walk to the tennis courts. We will be cut off from Montgomery Village. They won't even be able to walk to high school. My daughters both walk to Watkins Mill High School. They won't be able to walk if there's, if there's a four-lane or a six-lane road there.

And in addition, I live near the baseball field at Hurley Park. It primarily serves the 9 to 12-year-old boys and they mostly run around the base paths because the fielding isn't good. They don't catch the ball well. So anyone who can lay bat on the ball gets to first and then steals second, steals third, steals home and runs around the base paths and they're, we don't want polluted air in their little 9 to 12-year-old lungs. On the other side of me is the new Milton Kaufmann Park with the soccer course. That's going to be a whole bunch of kids running back and forth and back and forth and back and forth, and we don't want polluted air in their little lungs either. So I oppose Alternative 4.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Wenger. Win Wenger, and on deck is Cathy Hekimian. Sorry for the pronunciation. Go ahead, Mr. Wenger.
MR. WENGER: Thank you for the opportunity, and I'm Win Wenger and my spouse was preceding me. We are homeowners in Perry Place at Gate Court and have been for a number of years. The beginning of the session, you reported a long list of considerations that had to be juggled in arriving at your plans and I think we can all appreciate deeply what a challenge it is trying to balance these things and come back with a resolution that does the most good and does the least harm.

And but I noticed that one thing was not on your list of considerations and this is something that you might want to take from this meeting regardless of the decision as to which road goes where, and that consideration is how many children live in and would be affected by the chosen path and along alternative 4 are extraordinarily high portions of children whose lives and safety and health and well-being would be impacted were that unfortunate choice made.

I'd like to focus your attention on just one, one intersection, one corner to illustrate a little bit of the disaster that Alternative 4 is posing. That corner, that intersection is where the end of Montgomery Village Avenue crosses Wightman and vice versa. On two sides of that crossing and right on it are two substantial church schools, and the park is adjacent also. And just a few steps away is a daycare center and so on. You can see that there's a fair
number of children impacted. And my concern as a human being obviously but also, a concerned taxpayer, is who and which agencies will be likely to be embarrassed and what are we taxpayers, what are we looking at if for health reasons, the health people start closing down or forcing these schools and playgrounds to move?

And so I'll confine my remarks to that just because of the time factor, but I do hope that one thing that you carry away from this session and the things that you've heard here today is that we need to figure the impact on children into the considerations that such planning boards and sessions are directed at.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Wenger.

MR. WENGER: Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Cathy Hekimian, and on deck is Cindy Snow who had a question mark as to whether you want to comment or not.

MS. SNOW: I'll comment.

MR. DAVIA: Yes?

MS. SNOW: Yes.


MS. HEKIMIAN: Hi. I'm Cathy Hekimian and I live on Brink Road. I am very strongly opposed to Alternative 4 as you might imagine, and I hope that it would be removed from consideration. I can't say anything more eloquently
than everybody who's said these, these things before me but it seems like at the beginning when you had like the goals up there, you had reduce congestion, improve vehicular safety, improve commute time, improve quality of life, enhance network of roads and connecting feeder roads. And then earlier, you had the poster session and the poster for Alt 9A said lowest projected accident rate, so there's your safety, shortest travel times, you know, there's your lower commute time, and a wetland impact of less than one acre.

On the other hand, all four have the greatest number of failing intersections, it was the furthest from the Technology Corridor, it had the greatest residential property impacts of 242, it displaces two residential properties and the greatest potential noise impact for 417 residences and the greatest amount of pipe streams, 1,202 feet. So I'm kind of wondering why it's still even under consideration.

What you need is a limited access highway, and that's what master plan will give you. The development rose up around the right-of-way and I think that you really shouldn't penalize the people who did consult the master plan before they purchased their property. So if you have the -- the current stretch of Midcounty Highway is a great smooth moving road and then it abruptly ends in Montgomery Village Avenue. A limited access highway is what is needed to continue a safe and efficient flow of traffic with minimal
interference from existing roads and none from private
driveways.

Alternative 4 has been projected to impact 90
driveways, 90. That is not acceptable. Alternative 4 would
also impact 25 unsignalized intersections and 13 signalized
intersections leading to 125 access points. This will not
promote safe, efficient, high-volume 50 mile per hour traffic
flow. Why is it still an option? That's what I don't
understand. It's the least safe for pedestrians or vehicular
traffic. If you're looking to improve the safety and fuel
efficiency on the road as well as accommodate future growth,
you should rule out Alt 4 and stick with the master plan
alignment. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Hekimian.

Cindy Snow, and on deck is Carlo Crucino (phonetic sp.).

MS. SNOW: Hi. Thank you. My name is Cindy Snow.
I live in Germantown. First, I want to thank you for your
continued attentiveness during this long hearing. As it has
been mentioned earlier, times have changed since the master
plan M-83 was first proposed. The value of open space and
wetlands have become more obvious. It is increasingly
apparent that building more roads doesn't reduce congestion.
Providing alternatives to driving does. M-83 is intended to
provide traffic relief for Clarksburg which is supposed to be
a transit-oriented community but no sufficient transit has
been provided to date. One Ride-On bus does not cut it.

The major flaw with this project is that no realistic transit alternative has been considered by Montgomery County Department of Transportation. I have repeatedly commented that a full-fledged stand-alone transit alternative needs to be developed. Before tearing down trees and paving valuable environmental systems or disrupting communities with expensive road widening, I request that you deny any permits to build M-83 and send it back to the Montgomery County Department of Transportation with a mandate to design and implement a sufficient transit system for Clarksburg before any further consideration of road alternatives be made.

Transit can't work if we keep putting our efforts into building roads. It's time to put that effort into building effective transit systems. Please say no to M-83 and yes to transit.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Snow. Carlo Crucino.

He has a question mark or she. Okay. Next is Paula Sayers.

MS. SAYERS: I decided not to speak.

MR. DAVIA: Not to speak. Okay, Ms. Sayers. Bill Salvatore. Is Mr. Salvatore here? And on deck is Sam Fanning.

MR. SALVATORE: Good evening. My name is Bill Salvatore. I live on Wild Cherry Lane in Germantown. I have
lived in that house for 27 years now and we bought it because it was possible to, for our children to walk to the schools. My wife came over and signed up but she warned me about the parking so I took the bus here. I’ve happy with the transit options and walking and stuff like that, and I am kind of in favor of no build because I really don’t see what’s in it for me being in Germantown.

I feel sorry for people in Clarksburg who were told that they would have transit but, and are apparently not getting transit, so I am especially against Option 9B because the spring retreat centers (indiscernible) the agricultural reserve in our, in our area. I happen to go there from Germantown. I’m not aware of people coming from all over the county just visiting and not being locally connected but I don’t, I don’t have details about that. Regarding the business that Goshen will grow from 15,000 to 35,000, maybe if roads are not built, people will say well, maybe I shouldn’t go there after all and maybe it won’t grow to 35,000. So roads are the past. Transit is the future. That’s, that’s my central point.

Somebody who lives in the Whetstone area of Montgomery Village told me today that she’s really unhappy about the possibility that the road might come right behind her house, that she, she tried to check into it but the realtor somehow legally assured her that there would be no
problems with roads being built in that area. So I’m not
sure how that could have happened but I just wonder whether
people really had the opportunity to inform themselves. So
that’s the end of my disconnected remarks.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Salvatore. Sam Fanning,
and on deck is Dominic DeBiase. Mr. Fanning?

MR. FANNING: Yes. I’m a resident of Montgomery
Village. I am Sam Fanning. I’ve traveled all around the
roads that are affected by Alternate 4 and there doesn’t
really seem to be a problem to me. It doesn’t seem
congested. The main problem seems to me is when you funnel
traffic through that area from other regions. If we could
just be left alone, it would be all right. And so I say if
you got to do any plan other than no-build, stick with the M-
83 if you have to do something. And then while I’m on it,
also, too, this expansion on Goshen Road, I don’t think
that’s necessary either. Actually, left the way it is as it
is now it’s part of the countryside, especially that area up
by Warfield and Goshen. It just makes it awfully awkward for
access and to the churches that are there so I’d say I think
no-build is the best thing.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Fanning. Dominic
DeBiase. Not here. Okay. Steve Henry, and on deck is
Timothy Harums.

MR. HENRY: Good evening. My name’s Steve Henry
and I'm on the Board of Directors (indiscernible). I'm also the precinct chair in 97 which represents over 3,000 homeowners. I am totally against M-83 simply because I live in that area where you're talking about and I've got thousands of senior citizens who also live in that area. We are trying to upgrade the property in that area and by you building M-83, you're going to destroy our tennis courts, you're going to destroy our swimming pool, you're going to destroy all the wetlands and the trees and everything else involved in there.

But I'm not against everything now. As I talked to Erna Miller (phonetic sp.) over there and George Wang (phonetic sp.) who, I guess he's not here, I have asked several people to send in letters opposing M-83 but I do agree with Alternative 2. That's all I have to say, and thank you very much.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Henry. Timothy Harums?

Mr. Harums is not here. Okay. Maureen Johnson, and on deck is James Kempf.

MS. JOHNSON: Hi. I'm Maureen Johnson. I live at 9510 Dunbrook Court, and that's in Essex Place right off of Wightman Road in North Village and the Alternative 4, the way it's designed, would come right literally up to my backyard. But I want to -- so I am opposed to, obviously, and for my neighbors too because we would lose all our green space that
we have, the little bit we have, but I'd like to echo Mr.
Fanning because I've lived there, I have a townhouse. I can
see Wightman Road from my living room window. I've lived
there 27 years so I've seen the traffic on Wightman Road. I
can see it daily, and I use Wightman Road, obviously, a lot.

And if there is a positive to it, really, there is
a lot of traffic on it, especially through these years, but
the worst times of the day for traffic is obviously the
morning rush hour, 7:00 to 9:00 about, and the evening rush
hour, 4:00 to 6:00. I mean, I can literally, in the morning,
see the cars backed up from Montgomery Village Avenue to in
front of me and in the evening, it's reversed but the rest of
the day, the traffic flows both ways. There really is not,
it's not like people are stuck in traffic the rest of the
day. Those are the worst two times of the day, those short
times.

So instead of -- it just occurs to me that if those
two choke points, like at the Avenue and Wightman and the
three-way stop sign down near Brink and Wightman, there's a
stop sign so traffic backs up, if those could sort of be
improved to make it flow, there is no reason for a four and
six-lane road for the, it doesn't make any sense just for
these two short times in the day there's congestion. And I
just would like to see some -- it just doesn't make any sense
so I'd just like to go on the record as opposing the
Alternative 4, and thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Johnson. James Kempf?

Is Mr. Kempf here? No. Bill Rymer (phonetic sp.)? Mr. Rymer? Tina Slater? And on deck is Michael Branch.

MS. SLATER: Good evening. I'm Tina Slater and I'm president of Action Committee for Transit. We're a Montgomery County based transit advocacy group with 500 members and we urge you to reject the permit for M-83.

Midcounty Highway extended is being offered up at a time when we can consider real transit alternatives to new highway construction to help plan for a sustainable future for our county. The example of Clarksburg's population growth represents the perfect opportunity for Montgomery County to be progressive in implementing viable mass transit systems that will connect activity centers. For that reason, we support the 355 corridor to Clarksburg. Not only would a solid new transit system serve our own Up County residents. It could also serve through commuters from areas north of our county.

Regarding tonight's hearing in particular, the most pressing issue is about constructing M-83 and the potential impact on wetlands and aquatic resources. In addition to those impacts, other alternatives of the M-83 various routes could destroy acres of forest, parkland and farmland. While building M-83 may provide traffic relief for a few years,
after that, it too will become congested. And further, we need to pay attention to the regional effects of highway expansion on suburban sprawl.

Rather than build M-83, we should approve and upgrade the existing Maryland 355. It will cost much less, has fewer environmental impacts and fully supports the development of the high quality rapid transit connecting Clarksburg to Gaithersburg and points south. While MCDOT’s report says that rapid transit is too early in the process to be considered, a serious bus rapid transit plan is being considered by the County Council as we speak. It would be a mistake to not evaluate that real transit alternative to M-83.

Maryland is committed to smart growth. Just two weeks ago, our governor reiterated Maryland’s goal of a 25 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. In a time of scarce monetary resources and rising environmental challenges like climate change, we cannot afford to make the wrong investments for our future. We urge you to oppose this permit. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Slater.

MR. BRANCH: Hi.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Branch. On deck is Jim Lucey.

MR. BRANCH: Hi. My name is Michael Branch and I live in Montgomery Village, Maryland and I happen to live in
Walkers Choice where M-83 would probably hit or come near to hitting. Now, it’s probably obvious I have some opposition to that for a lot of the reasons that have already been detailed and listed and explained and well-explored. However, the thing is, I understand everyone’s viewpoint. I understand. I have friends that live in Clarksburg that deserve to have what was promised. I understand that. But the thing is, if you look at Northern Virginia, roads don’t work. At least they don’t always work. And every time a new road is built, you get, you get more congestion.

I happen to work at the FDA and one of the things they provide are transit. Now, transit doesn’t work for everyone but there are, there are vanpools that go all the way to Clarksburg. I happen to take one of them because one of the stops is on my way home so they stop, drop me off and then they drop the rest of the folks off. So that’s one of the things I honestly strongly believe, that I know that one of these things are going to be done but that has to be taken into, into high consideration.

I -- someone actually just mentioned widening 355. I’m more in favor of that than anything else because that one thing probably unites us all is that all of us are using that road at some point rather than the other way around, rather than using M-83 or any other -- that, 355, I mean, everyone gets there, uses it so if we add a few more lanes to it, that
gives us, that gives more unity to all of us as a community, all of us as Montgomery County citizens. It gives Clarksburg a lot more access to the things that they can get to and probably will allow more exploration into other alternatives to, other alternatives to getting to 270, getting to, getting to the ICC, getting to the places that allow them to get to D.C., to Silver Spring, to the places where they may be working.

But I don’t think destroying the places that I live and the community -- there was someone, someone talking from Prathertown, talking about community. Well, we’ve got a pretty tight community what we have. I mean, my kids have been raised, two kids that went to Watkins Mill Elementary and I’ve got one at Watkins Road, at Montgomery Village Middle School. We’ve got two dogs we walk every day in that area and many, and many do. We don’t want to destroy one neighborhood in favor of another. Thanks.


MS. MCMICHAEL: Hi. My name is Melanie McMichael. I’m representing the rest of my family who is not, who has left early. I’m from Wayridge Drive in Montgomery Village. Twenty years ago, my family was drawn by the amazing beauty
of the state parkland behind these homes. We bought the
house even more because of the parkland than the actual
house. Honestly. For the last 20 years, I've joined
Montgomery Village residents and countless others in having
been blessed to no end by the beauty of this magnificent
forest which includes deer, fox, chipmunks, turtles,
woodpeckers, hawks, many kinds of owls and even an all white
deer.

Furthermore, I'm here to represent hikers, bikers
and mountain bikers and I oppose M-83 in all of its highway
building forms for the sake of the preservation of wildlife
and for aesthetic and recreational purposes of our people.
This proposed highway will have a terribly negative effect on
hiking, biking and mountain biking on the Seneca Greenway
Trail. I encourage and challenge each person in this room to
go and experience this awesome trail just north and west of
Watkins Mill High School on Watkins Mill Road. This amazing
beauty for all of us, this amazing place is beautiful and
it's for all of us to experience and enjoy, and please do not
turn it into concrete. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. McMichael. Alfman Atay.
I'm sorry about the pronunciation.

MR. ATAY: That's good.

MR. DAVIA: And on deck is Joanne Atay.

MR. ATAY: Good evening. Thank you for giving the
time to address the Council. My name is Alfman Atay. I am a resident of the Goshen community. I am here to recommend that the Alternative 4 should be removed from the consideration. I moved to Montgomery Village with my family in early 1972. Montgomery Village was in its early stage of development. Actually, we had to wait for our home to be constructed. As years passed by and more communities continued to grow as part of the approved county plan in order to connect Upper County to the Metro station. First leg of approved connection, Midcounty Highway was constructed. Continuation of the road M-83 was not to be completed.

All the housing development around M-83 was developed in accordance with the county-approved plan. In the meantime, we moved to East Village for a short time and then to our present home on Brink Road. We had all the assurances by the county that Brink Road will not be impacted by any future development. Constructing a highway through Wightman and Brink Roads will result in irrevocable changes in the entire area.

Historical impact like Prathertown in the oldest African American community in Montgomery County. I call it a living historical community. The descendants of this community still live in the area. Several houses have been designated by the county as historical buildings. There have
been archaeological activities conducted by the county along
Brink Road for early American settlements in this region.
Sites are marked for future studies. During the American
Civil War, President Lincoln stationed Union Army troops
along the Brink Road, around the Great Seneca Creek to
prevent invasion of the Washington capital. At the time,
Brink Road was the only connection between Baltimore and
Goshen area.

Environmentally, wetlands between Brink Road and
Goshen Road are the lifesaver for the Montgomery Village.
There have been fatalities due to flooding in the past.
These wetlands prevent flooding in the Montgomery Village due
to recent construction of the bridges and the developments of
the wetlands, reduce the flooding in downstream into the
village by holding more water in the upstream along the Brink
Road. Considerable amount of trees will be cut down. Most
of these trees belong to the individual properties and may
not be accounted for. Part of this area is designated as
reserved agricultural land.

MR. DAVIA: Mr. Atay?

MR. ATAY: I'm almost done.

MR. DAVIA: You can submit your remarks to us as
well.

MR. ATAY: May I just finish, because I --

MR. DAVIA: Just if you can wrap it up in 10 or 20
seconds, please.

MR. ATAY: Yes. The serenity of the family neighborhood will be lost forever. The people who live in the Wightman/Brink Road Corridor put their faith in the government. They planned their long-term family decisions in accordance with the county, county planning. These plans cannot and should not be altered to satisfy individual grievances, especially if the individual was fully aware of the original planning before they move into the neighborhood.

I strongly urge the county to stop this wasteful effort of alternative studies and return to the original plan to construct M-83. It is time to stop the waste of time, money and valuable resources. If we had proceeded with the originally planned M-83, it would have been finished a long time ago and would have provided much-needed relief in the surrounding communities.

MR. DAVIA: Okay, Mr. Atay. Please.

MR. ATAY: Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you. Ms. Atay. On deck is Destiny Dryley. There's a question mark as to whether you want to comment or not. Ms. Atay.

MS. ATAY: Good evening.

MR. DAVIA: Stand a little closer.

MS. ATAY: Okay. Good evening. My name is Joanne Atay and I'm President of the Goshen Historical Preservation
Committee. Thank you. Before moving to Goshen in 1986, I called the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to find out if there were any plans to widen Brink and Wightman Road. I was assured that there were no plans to widen these roads. I was told that they weren’t on the master plan and that they would stay as they are. Now its 27 years later and we have this so-called Alternative 4.

If this highway is built, Prathertown, of course, one of the oldest African American communities in Montgomery County, will be destroyed. Prathertown is a living historical community. The Sarah Posey house would be demolished. Sarah Posey was one of the first Montgomery County minority women property owners. She was the mid-wife of Goshen, and she purchased her unique house, the Posey house, in 1913. The house still has its original structure, the original roof, tin roof, and the original windowpanes. This house is really still in its original state. The highway will also come up to the doorsteps of the other sections of Prathertown on Wightman Road. Who could live in a house with a highway right up to your front doorsteps.

Other areas would be adversely affected. At the Great Seneca Creek bridge, Native American artifacts were discovered. Some of them are thousands of years old. The artifacts were related to a Native American community living on the eastern shore. Brink Road was the old Baltimore Road
and the bridge at Great Seneca Creek was the only bridge in
this, over this waterway for several centuries. The original
wooden bridge was initially built by the Dorsey family whose
son served in the American Revolution. During the Civil War,
President Lincoln had 5,000 troops stationed at the bridge
after the Battle of Antietam for fear that there would be an
invasion of Washington.

Highways are built to take the traffic out of
our communities. This highway would not alleviate traffic into
our communities but it will literally destroy our Goshen
community. Please do not support Option 4, but I have a few
more things to say. At one time, there was severe flooding
from Great Seneca Creek but we have all of these flood planes
now which really have spared Montgomery Village. They've
been like a sponge.

MR. DAVIA: Ms. Atay.

MS. ATAY: Yes.

MR. DAVIA: If you can conclude, please.

MS. ATAY: Yes. Of course. I'm just saying that
the flood planes have been, have acted as a sponge preventing
flooding from, from Montgomery Village. In the past, I guess
at least even or eight people have been killed by these
floods. If it was -- the county had planned to build a dam
there to prevent this flooding but it was discovered that
there were too many historical houses would be destroyed by
this dam so they scuttled the project. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Atay. Destiny Dryley?

I’m sorry about the pronunciation. Is Destiny here? No.


on deck is Michael Weiler.

MS. CAMERON: My name is Diane Cameron. I am

Conservation Director for Audubon Naturalist Society located

in Chevy Chase, Maryland and our focus is on local clean

water protection and restoration. On behalf of the 10,000

members and supporter of my organization, I urge you to

reject the permit application for M-83 and our reasons center

on the water resource, environmental and community losses and

damages that this highway project would cause and we support

Alternative 2 which makes the best use of our existing

infrastructure by making improvements to Maryland 355. It

also costs the least and enables the development of a high-

quality rapid transit service connecting Clarksburg to

Gaithersburg and points south.

And I want to give you a couple of more water

quality-related points. The Seneca Creek Watershed would be

degraded by the construction of any of the other alternatives

other than Alternative 2. Since Seneca Creek, including

Little Seneca Reservoir, is a crucial part of our region’s

drinking water supply, we need to make source water

protection our top priority for land use decisions in the, in
the region, including transportation decisions, specifically
in the Seneca Creek Watershed.

As the Save Ten Mile Creek Coalition has recently
been pointing out, we need Little Seneca Reservoir to be
ready to serve three million people in the greater
Washington, D.C. region as our emergency drinking water
supply in the event of severe drought. We know from the
experts that there will be more frequent droughts in the
future due to climate change.

So part of my point to you is that in decision
making about M-83 and again, we ask that you reject the
permit application, it's not only Montgomery County interests
that are at stake. It's also the entire region's interests
regarding Little Seneca Reservoir an Seneca Creek itself
which are part of the entire Washington, D.C. region's
drinking water supply.

I also want to note that Seneca Creek is listed by
MDE as impaired for sediment pollution and is subject to a
final approved sediment total maximum daily load, and that
was approved in 2011. This sediment TMDL calls for a 44.5
percent, roughly a 45 percent sediment loading reduction,
from storm water sources to Seneca Creek and so we want to
pose the question to you, to both MDE and the Corps of
Engineers, how would the project managers demonstrate that
this high way project will be in compliance with this
MR. DAVIA: Ms. Cameron, if you could conclude, please.

MS. CAMERON: Yes. So in conclusion, Audubon Naturalist Society requests that you reject the permit application and on the basis that this highway project is also not, not necessary to, and also would cause unacceptable levels of damage to Little Seneca Reservoir and Seneca Creek.

Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Cameron. Michael Weiler.

MS. WEILER: Yes. And I am a woman. Good evening. I don’t live in the area, I live closer to Flower Hill, but I have a daughter that has recently moved into the Highland Hall area. But I’m against the Alternative 4 and I’m also against most of the building of more roads. I’m in favor of rapid transit and I feel that, that the county has been letting the residents down because they allow building to go on. Like even with Montgomery Village, they should have allowed land to be put aside for the roads so that they wouldn’t have to take anybody’s property in the future. They should look to the future to know that there’s going to be growth and they should have planned for the public transportation before they even allowed places like Clarksburg or other places. And when you’re looking at
places like the small town in Gaithersburg of the Kentlands, they can walk everywhere, they don’t have to take a car.

And I understand people have to get to doctors and other places but if you have like in New York City, every other block there’s a stop for you to pick up the public transit, then it would be easier for people to take it and they wouldn’t have to drive their car on major roads or, which I live, 10 minutes from the Metro., but they would be able just to walk out their door and pick up the public transit and that would benefit everyone all over the whole county.

So they should look to the future before they build the communities and allow the developers to build. They allowed developers to build right up where they know the roads are going to be and suspect, unsuspecting on citizens who, who even they change the plans all the time on people even when they’ve looked up what the roads are supposed to be because I bought and they told me they were going to build Shady Grove further down and that Muncaster Mill wasn’t going to be very busy and that hasn’t panned out at all and I looked up the things before I bought. So even people who do, things change on them and then they’re stuck. My community didn’t go up in value and it was supposed to be the next big thing because we’re close to the Metro, close to 370.

So I just wish that the, I just want, like, people
to think ahead and build the roads or build the, put aside the thing for the Metro going down 355 all the way to Frederick because people work all the way to Frederick and it's backed all the way up. So I would like to just see that they do better planning instead of building bigger roads because they're never going to be big enough when you keep adding more people. But if you have rapid transit that has stops everywhere so people don't have to drive their cars to the Metros, then that would solve a lot of the problems.

Thank you for your time.


MS. BIVENS: Thank you. It's like the Price is Right. I finally got down here. We're the diehard fans here, right? I'm actually opposed to Alternate 4. I have been a Montgomery County resident my whole entire life. I grew up in Bethesda. I moved to Montgomery Village in the '80s and now I live on 21026 Blunt Road, Germantown, Maryland. We're on the corner of Brink and Blunt. We will be having a wonderful four lane highway within six feet of our house with a retaining wall so of course, I'm very much opposed to Alternative 4.

I have here when I moved from Montgomery Village to Germantown, the Germantown Master Plan. I actually went to
Park and Planning and I picked this up. And not only did I read it but I actually talked to someone at Park and Planning and it says here it's approved and adopted. Our road wasn't even in the study plan or the master plan. I spoke to people at the Park and Planning and they told me that I would be a great-grandmother before I would have to worry about our road being widened. Although this process has aged me, I do have my eight-year-old son with me tonight so I don't think that we're at that point. I can tell you that they said that the only thing that might be added is turn-off lanes and I think that's a phenomenal idea.

Unfortunately, we love our property but the intersection, I'm sure the officer that's behind us here can attest to that, we probably have close to 50 accidents per year at that intersection and we call the police or the fire department emergency. We just have to say the name Bivens and everybody knows where we live. So it is definitely not a very good area and if you make it a four-lane highway, I don't even know exactly how that would work.

So anyway, positives. The reason why we moved there was first of all, because we were not in the master plan area. We were far enough from ICC that it would not interfere with us. We lived in Montgomery Village as we love the countryside. We live on a two-lane road, which is Brink Road, and we live on a two-lane road which is Blunt Road. We
live on two-and-a-half acres of wooded lots. Part of it is not wooded, part of it has mature trees. We liked it because we got to see deer every night, we got to see chipmunks, we get to see groundhogs. We have just now seen the return of hawks and owls that we didn’t have.

You know, we picked our place because of the school system. Our school actually got redistricted and we paid a premium to live where we do and now, unfortunately, our son won’t even be able to get to the high school that we wanted him to. And we also like that we were located across from Seneca Creek. We wanted a place to be where our son could grow up and he could bring his children to, and I would invite all of you to come sit on my porch and watch the beautiful sunrise and watch the sunset from our back.

Unfortunately, we are situated on a very steep hill. Even the police officers of Germantown that we requested to have a camera light set up. It’s too dangerous of an intersection and too dangerous because people don’t go 40 miles an hour down our road. They go 60 and 70 miles an hour. You make it a four-lane highway and you’re talking about probably 70 on an average. The decibels are already at 70 and 80 in the morning and I understand that they feel that a four-lane highway can go above 70 to 80 decibels.

The only other thing that I can say as, again, I’d like you to come also on a snowy day. It is a snow emergency
route right now and my husband and I are out there in winter pushing all the cars up the road because it’s too steep so they would have to completely re-grade the entire road. So again, I feel that Alternate 4 is definitely not the right choice and I ask that you please take it off of the plan. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Bivens. Duane Bivens, and on deck is John Yoscaik, Y-O-S-C-A-K. Mr. Bivens?

MR. BIVENS: Hi. How are you? I appreciate your time and everybody coming out this evening to listen to everybody. As my wife pretty much covered a lot of the key points that I was going to bring up to, grew up in Montgomery County my whole life. Moved from Kensington to Montgomery Village where I met my wife and we lived there for about 10 years. Ran across the property that we own now and, at Blunt and Brink Road. The whole concept was we were upgraded, going to pay the extra money to have what they call an estate home which is basically a lot of property, you know, you don’t want to hit your neighbors if you throw a rock, that kind, that kind of concept. Now we’re talking about looking at this Alternate 4 plan where basically from our living room, we could pretty much throw a rock and hit the wall that is going to be going through our, the corner of our property if this is approved which is definitely not in my favor.

Looking at all the other concepts as far as the
well and septic issues, I mean, I've tried to get permits
with the county before just to put up either a fence or to
re-grade my property and I've been told that that's not
possible because you're not allowed to change the topography
because of the environmental impact. Now you're going to put
a road like this through there. It's not a problem. It's
going to reset your wells, going to cut your property level
down, put your well and septic, going to get replaced, it's
not a big deal. Try to get a permit through the, to do that,
it's not going to happen.

So I have a lot of issues in that, in that concept
as far as the environment, the impact it's going to do on the
storm drainage. We have a lot of storm drainage issues now.
If you start re-grading and changing the topography of the
land, you're going to have a lot of runoff and a lot of
additional stuff running down into the Seneca Creek and not
to mention the roadway without putting in some type of major
drainage system. So I, I'll make it short and sweet. I just
definitely oppose. Went out to this type of area, this type
or property to get away from the hustle and bustle of
everything because the environment and now they're talking
about altering it. My, You know, my wife and myself did a
lot of research into this will never happen and like she
said, my eight-year-old son, and we would be grandparents,
and that's not going to happen probably. So I'll just cut
off with that. I appreciate your time.


MR. MIHMESTER: Mihlmester.

MR. DAVIA: And on deck is Patricia Shuster (phonetic sp.) is it? Sir?

MR. MIHMESTER: Hi. Thanks for sticking around so late and listening to all of the different views. First, I want to go on record. I live in Middlebrook Manor. This would be a subdivision that would be directly bisected, cut in half by 8 and 9 alternatives. I strongly oppose that. I strongly oppose Alternatives 8 and 9. The only alternative I can really endorse, along with my elected delegation as evidenced by Delegate Barkley, is Alternative 2, and I would say a couple of things in support of this and things I think the Corps needs to do and the county needs to do.

You know, a lot of talk about the master plan. Master plan was developed before every major environmental statute in the United States. It was developed before the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, it was developed before the Clean Air Act of 1970 and it was developed before the Clean Water Act which was 1972. Thank you very much. So the Army Corps of Engineers, as an organ of the United States
Government, is obligated by law to enforce the statute to the United States as currently written, as currently on the books, and the master plan has no such legislative requirement. So I would strongly encourage the Corps to read the statutes and enforce the law as it's currently written.

And, you know, I can understand why people go back to the, to the master plan but, you know, in the 1960s, we could build houses out of asbestos. Guess what? We can't anymore. In the 1960s, we could build coal fire power plants that had no environmental controls. Guess what? We can't anymore. So there's a set of environmental statutes and I think they need to be closely adhered to and enforced.

A couple of other minor points. The DER has no consideration of climate impacts or greenhouse gas impacts. Recent federal NEPA documents, including the Department of State's NEPA document, Affecting the Keystone XL Pipeline, and the Department of Transportation's NEPA document, Affecting the Mileage Standards, both consider climate impacts and I believe that that is now national policy for NEPA documents to consider climate impacts and need to be considered in this document.

And a couple other minor points. I think I read a time statistic that the Alternative 8 and 9 options would save a grand total of commuting time of eight minutes on a commute from Rockville to Clarksburg. Eight minutes?
Please. You know, eight minute sin this area is in the
noise, okay? You’re going to spend $350 million and tear up
half the environment to save eight minutes on a commute?
It’s a joke. Deer population. The county has not been told
the deer population, the accident rate from building
Alternatives 8 and 9 would result in how many deaths, and I
don’t know if you’ve covered that in your safety analysis.
Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Mihlmester. Patricia
Shuster? Is she, Patricia here? 21137 Hickory Forest Way,
not here? Okay. Question mark next to Martin Haber. Martin
Haber? Okay. Mr. George Mencinsky? Is Mr. Mencinsky here?

MR. MENCINSKY: Sure. That’s me. I guess you
should know me. I’ve written to you back and forth.

MR. DAVIA: And on deck is Brent Taylor.

MR. MENCINSKY: Hello. My name is George
Mencinsky. I’m a professional engineer. I’ve been in this
business for 40 years. I’ve done many environmental
statements throughout my career for the utility industry.
I’ve been on both sides of the fence, on the federal side and
on the utility side and on the consultant side. I also am an
active professional planner which was licensed in New Jersey
too. But anyway, I came here only because I don’t want to
see the repeats of New Jersey Housewives or Orange
Housewives.
But really, what I came here basically is to say that Alternative 4 is not an acceptable option. I’ve sent you something different, a video, of what was to be construed as destruction of Brink Road and Wightman Road and since I couldn’t give it to you directly, the file was too big, I posted it this Monday on YouTube. So anybody in the audience who wants to see what kind of damage Alternative 4 causes to the local community, just type in proposed Midcounty Highway abbreviated Brink Wightman. And that’s something that I just sat down in a car with my wife, I just videotaped it, went down from the west side of 355, showed you what Brink Road used to look like when I moved there 20 years ago, what they did after they crossed Route 27, Ridge Road, then what happened after they finished the four-lane highway, what was back to what was originally there. And what you’re going to see right after Ridge Road is basically what this highway’s going to look like, and it’s going to be a mess. A total mess.

So as far as I’m concerned, this is a totally unacceptable alternative and I don’t understand why anybody in their mind was even thinking about it. Speaking about Prathertown, speaking about the historical significance of Seneca Creek, okay? The destruction of the Montgomery Village where the houses are just basically all on Wightman and you’re going to put in a four-lane highway. It’s nuts.
I don't understand how people of some level of intelligence come to a decision to put something like that on a, on a plan, on a study.

And one other thing that I'm really thought somebody from the Council, Mr. Rice, would be here, who represents our community, would have some words to say about what's going on and I don't see him here. I realize we have some people generally here from the government, right, but somebody as important as that who represents our community wasn't even interested to come in here and give us our thoughts, what was on his mind about this whole project and listen, listen to his, to the people who voted for him, all right?

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Mr. Mencinsky.

MR. MENCINSKY: Okay.


MS. DANCIS: Hi. My name is Ronit Bita Dancis. I actually live Down County and I did take the bus here tonight for the record. Although I don't live where exactly, you know, I don't know where my front yard or my neighbors will be affected, affected, the fact is that traffic and transit are county-wide problems. These are county-wide issues. You know, I have friends and family who live in Gaithersburg and
Germantown and Clarksburg. Certainly what happens to them affects me but the fact remains again is that traffic and transit affect all of us.

We need really regional solutions. We need area-wide solutions and those solutions need to be effective and they need to be long-term. As we see with I-270, if you build it, they will drive on it. They will drive on it and they will drive on it until you have congested traffic. It is possible that M-83 will alleviate some traffic in this area but not for very long. We live in a time of very scarce government resources. In this county, we have cut back a whole bunch of things. We cannot afford to waste money on a solution that will only work for maybe three or four years.

We need a permanent long-term solution. Mass transit is that solution. Building this road is not. Thank you very much.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Dancis. Terry Lamotte, and on deck is Terry O'Grady.

MR. LAMOTTE: Hi. My name is Terry Lamotte. I live at 22401 Wildcat Road. We -- I'm going to give you a little bit of background. When we moved to the area, we were just enamored with the landscape and the environment and the wildlife that surrounded where we live now. We bought about 21 acres and we had the land at first before we built our house and we've since built our house. Of those 21 acres, we have about 11 acres of pristine old-grove forest that are
about 100-year-old trees which we actually work with the
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation with the
county to protect. We’re also surrounded by parkland and the
Seneca Creek stream beds. We also live on Wildcat Road,
which is a rustic road and we are on the cover of one of the
most recent Rustic Road Reports.

So sort of just giving you all this background, we
moved here because we really wanted to come to a place in the
county where we would be protected from over-development,
overgrowth. We really wanted a place where we could have
peace and quiet and value the kind of lifestyle which we
really wanted which was we wanted to be surrounded by
wildlife, we wanted to hike, et cetera.

So I say all this because even though we do live on
a rustic road, our road is a cut-through for people trying to
get through Damascus. And rather than sit on 27, which has
not been expanded as the Department of Transportation has put
in their report, they cut through our neighborhood instead
and every day we have lots of very fast, speeding traffic on
very curvy roads and have numerous accidents. We’ve actually
lost our dog. My children have almost been hit by cars. We
can’t even go to the mailbox without taking our lives in our
hands so it’s, it’s a problem.

So I give you all that background because I really
appreciate you all being here tonight and listening to
everyone's opinions and thoughts on this because I think it has to be a collective effort. I don't think, you know, we can say it's got to go one way or another in terms of you're a community.

My point of saying that is I would hope that in your looking at all the different solutions, that when you consider the personal impact to people, that not only do you consider their houses, their homes, their livelihood, but you also consider the environmental impact in terms of how it affects their drinking water and the air that they breathe, and I would just encourage you to really look closely at all of the data that you have before you to make a very good choice in that respect. So in that, I will just say that I do oppose Alt 4, Alt 9 and Alt 8, and I would encourage you to make improvements on your existing roadways such as 355 and 27. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Lamotte. Thank you. Terry O'Grady, and on deck is Lori Bernstein.

MS. O'GRADY: Okay. I'm Terry O'Grady and I'm actually a resident, East Village, a past president of East Village and also with Midcountys Citizens Alliance Group. I've been sitting here most of the evening and I'm really shocked that our communities are all so close but we're all kind of saying hey, not in my backyard and it's kind of really shocking. And I'm going to say something Steve
Silverman a long time ago said. Along time ago, said why should you destroy one community to make another community to look better and I think you really should consider that this evening.

Just about a week ago, Governor O'Malley just announced funding for the purple line and for the CCT and was very actively involved in the Science City being developed in the web tract of the county service. And one of the stipulations for the Johns Hopkins Science City was that the CCT would be developed before they would even break ground for their science city because they felt transit was very important to the science city. And it was kind of interesting that they're only going to do five miles of the CCT. They're not going to do the other six until they feel that Up County has the population to grant the other six miles which is kind of interesting.

So again, of course, I do Metro every day and I was thinking Alternate 5, widening of 355, that is already there, and I believe there was only a relocation of three businesses if you use Alternate 5, 355. This would go all the way from Frederick, almost to all of Clarksburg, all the way down to Bethesda and they have looking, been looking at, for bus rapid and for light rail but this could be setting the foundation for this. This is 2013/2020. We need to get off the roads and get back into transit and hence, Clarksburg was
granted transit. I think that the county needs to look and
provide transit for the county, for Clarksburg.

    I ride Metro every day. Shady Grove, there's no
parking. If we're going to be feeding all of this traffic
into Shady Grove, what is Shady Grove Metro going to do to
accommodate these residents? And if you're coming down
Midcounty Highway, Shady Grove Road and Midcounty Highway has
already failed. How are you going to handle this traffic
coming down Midcounty Highway into Shady Grove Road? That
intersection is failed, so what are your plans to have this
intersection. Okay.

    Again, transit is the answer, not building these
roads. And I want to see the communities come back together
again and work as a team, not as not in my backyard. Let's
go -- I've talked to a couple folks in the village and
they're all in favor of 1, 2 and 5. I think 5 is your
answer, 355. It's there. You're only relocating three
businesses. You're not going to take somebody's home.
You're not going to go in the wetlands. You're going to be
relocate three businesses which will be a lot cheaper. Thank
you.

    MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. O'Grady. Lori
Bernstein.

    MS. BERNSTEIN: Thank you for taking notes and
listening to us in this late hour. I live on Lake Landing
Road in Walkers Choice, and M-83 would go speeding right through there, and I really like what some of the people have said. A lot of people have said really wonderful things. Not in my backyard. It goes so far beyond that but it's partly that.

I want to urge you to reject the permit application for M-83. I am in favor of Alternative 2 for many reasons. Demographics is kind of like a chicken and eggs thing where you build the highway because they need it but then really, the highway draws the populous, it draws traffic, it draws people and so in the long term, it makes the problem worse. I strongly endorse Alternative 2 though because it's already planned out and I think it's minimal impact on the environment. The plan was -- I also like what someone else said and endorsed about the environmental impact and the laws of the United States have changed since the 1960s. This isn't 1971, 1968 and there are laws now to protect the environment that didn't exist then.

On a more personal level, I fear my property value will go down. We're going to be very nervous. My husband's been furloughed. We're, we're dying as it is and then if our property value, we've poured so much equity into our house. What's going to happen to it? How am I going to send my kids to college? I really worry all the time now. Our property value would go down. And then how am I going to tell my -- I
had to come here tonight. I have two young children. I couldn’t look them in the eye and say well, I didn’t care. They’ll build a highway. You won’t see that blue heron anymore. What’s a blue heron? A symbol of Maryland. It’s a state bird. We love that heron.

We love those bullfrogs. Maybe those bullfrogs that are frogging at 2:00 a.m., maybe you can fool us and we won’t hear that highway so well or so they say, but you won’t fool them. They’ll know and they’ll leave, and they’re not renewable. Maybe you can cut down a tree and another one will grow back in its place. So I’m endorsing Alternative 2 and mass transportation and, please, don’t grant a permit for M-83, especially Alternatives 8 and 9. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: Thank you, Ms. Bernstein. Well, again, thank you for your comments. Would anyone else like to comment? We’ve covered everyone on the list. Would anyone else like to comment?

MS. BELL: May I as a question?

MR. DAVIA: You’re going to, ma’am, you’re going to have to, if you’d like to comment, you’re going to have to come down to the microphone to get on the record.

MS. BELL: Hi. I --

MR. DAVIA: If you could state your name and address.

MS. BELL: Bonnie Bell. Goshen, Maryland. I just
wanted to know if the transcript will be available on line, tonight’s transcript.

MR. DAVIA: Bruce, do you know if that’s -- will the transcript be on a county website?

MR. JOHNSTON: We can make it available, yes.

MR. DAVIA: The county indicated they can make it available, Ms. Bell.

MS. BELL: Thank you very much. Thank you.

MR. DAVIA: You’re welcome. Ma’am, in the back, if you’d like to comment, please come down. Okay. Well, I’d like to remind everyone that the public comment period extends to August 21st, 2013. Thank you for attending this meeting and for your attention. This public hearing is adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 10:51 p.m., the proceedings were concluded.)
Digitally signed by Josephine Hayes

ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATE

DEPOSITION SERVICES, INC., hereby certifies that the attached pages represent an accurate transcript of the electronic sound recording of the proceedings before the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/Department of the Environment/Department of Public Works and Transportation in the matter of:

PUBLIC HEARING

Midcounty Corridor Study

By:

Josephine Hayes, Transcriber