

Testimony of Linda Greenwald, Public Hearing FY25-30 CIP, 2/6/2024, Fully Fund Parks Budget

Good afternoon, Council President and members of the County Council. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Linda Greenwald. I am the Rosemary Hills Neighbors' Association, President.

I speak today to urge you to fully fund the Montgomery County Parks Budget.

Parks are an essential service. They contribute greatly to the well-being of individuals and communities. Montgomery County has 420 parks providing this essential service. To remain vibrant, Individuals and communities need tender, loving care and so does the parks system.

Housing in Montgomery County is becoming more densely built, more multi-family, probably more rented than owned with less space for cars. We will have less personal space and likely see less green space around us. We will need parks nearby to see wooded areas, green space, playing fields, courts and wildlife. Parks will become even more essential for the well-being of Montgomery County residents.

We look forward to the development of the beautifully designed Lyttonsville Civic Green. Which will all also serve as a remembrance of the Talbot Avenue bridge and the significance it played during the era of segregation.

A local park is a draw for home buyers but less so if it is not well maintained and improved over the years.

Our park has been in need of some tender loving care. Then, out of the blue last year our State Delegate Jared Solomon secured funding towards the renovation of our local Rosemary Hills-Lyttonsville Park. We greatly appreciate Delegate Solomon's support of parks. He gets it.

I also appreciate the Park Planners who I got to know during their months long process of community outreach. They developed a community pleasing plan for improving our park. They get it.

I, and many neighbors frequent our park with its rolling hills and beautiful trees. You can play a sport, watch a game, meander through, meet someone you know or meet someone new.

Many who live near our park are originally from another country. Our paths to this one of 420 Montgomery County parks might be quite different but one thing that we share is that it improves our well-being.

You get it. Parks are essential. Please fully fund the Parks Budget. Thank you.