



**County Council Testimony of Patricia Harris on behalf of
ProMark Partners
Great Seneca Master Plan
June 12, 2024**

Good evening, Patricia Harris with Lerch, Early & Brewer here on behalf of ProMark Partners, the owners of eight acres of land in the Life Science Center Core, adjacent to the Adventist Hospital. The property is improved with two medical office buildings with the addresses 9711 and 9715 Medical Center Drive. I want to express two concerns we have regarding the Great Seneca Master Plan – the first relates to the east-west connections – both the proposed road and the two proposed bike trails and the second relates to the zoning and allowable density.

The Property is adjacent to and physically and operationally connected to the hospital with many of the hospital’s staff, and hence patients, occupying the ProMark offices. ProMark anticipates that this connection will only expand in the future. Thus, we appreciate that the current draft of the Master Plan shows only one road connection (referred to as Road Z in the Master Plan) further to the north, so as not to create a physical barrier between the ProMark Property and the hospital. I want to thank Planning Staff and the Planning Board for being responsive to our comments regarding this. We are also encouraged that the Plan includes flexibility with respect to the ultimate location of the road.

While Road Z is designated a Downtown Street, the proposed 80-foot wide section, plus the additional 20 feet of frontage zone, is unnecessarily wide from both a vehicular capacity standpoint and from an environmental/imperviousness standpoint. Most importantly, the

unnecessarily wide right-of-way compromises the width of the 9715 Property and makes future development challenging. On the one hand the Master Plan includes language about right-sizing roads and then on the other hand, it recommends an 80 foot right-of-way, when a 60 foot right-of-way would be more than sufficient.

In addition, given that Road Z appropriately includes bike paths on both sides of the road, we question why it is necessary for the Master Plan to also include “bike trails” along both the southern and northern Property lines. These bike trails will run parallel to the bike paths and will be located a mere 200 feet away (an approximate 30 second bike ride to access the bike paths instead of the bike trails). This redundancy is completely unnecessary and we recommend that these trails be eliminated. Most critically, the trails would preclude expansion of the hospital northward onto the ProMark Property or ProMark’s future assemblage of the site to the north.

Finally, in terms of the proposed density, the Life Science’s Center area of the Plan is seen as the heart of the I-270 corridor. The Plan identifies the area as a vibrant live/work community; an economic center for the County. In addition, the Property is identified as an opportunity site. And yet, the Plan continues to recommend the same existing 1.5 FAR of density. While development in excess of 1.5 FAR may never materialize, higher densities should not be precluded now if the market is there to support it in the future. This would be a very good problem to have – more life science uses, more housing, more supportive uses to create the envisioned mixed-use environment. Accordingly, we request that the zoning be revised to at least a 2.0 FAR. While we recognize that the pending Life Sciences Overlay ZTA will provide the opportunity for a potential increase in density with an increased amount of public benefits, opportunity sites should be afforded an increased base density.

ProMark has a long history in the Life Science Center area and is excited about the next chapter in the Property's development. We welcome your support of these comments.