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# Transcript of Public Hearing 

Date: June 17, 2020
Case: Lutes-Briggs Community Sidewalk Proposal, In Re

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P R O C E E D I N G S
MR. THOMMANA: Good evening. It is
Wednesday, June 17, 2020, and the time is approximately 7:00 p.m. My name is Jose Thommana, designee at this hearing for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation. Here with me this evening to conduct this public hearing is Mr. Tim Cupples, Chief of the Division of Transportation Engineering for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and Mr. Frank Kingsley, Manager of the Annual Sidewalk Program in the Division of Transportation Engineering. Mr. Cupples will be providing the information and details regarding the proposed project.

Tonight's hearing is our second public hearing held virtually; we are happy that you are able to join us in this forum. This hearing is being recorded. The recording will be available for viewing by 12 noon tomorrow, June 18, 2020. If you would like a copy of the recording, please contact Lori Main, who can be reached at DTE.sidewalk@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Once the testimony portion of this hearing begins, please be sure to raise your hand by clicking on the Status Icon at the top of the screen. It is
the icon that looks like a person raising their hand. You can click on the drop-down menu portion of the icon and click Raise Hand. You may raise your hand at any time during the testimony portion. You will note your microphones have been muted. We will call on you to provide your oral testimony and unmute your microphone when it is your turn to speak. Written testimony and comments may be submitted as well and will be considered with the same weight as oral testimony. Thank you.

This hearing is being held pursuant to Section 49-53 of the Montgomery County Code. The purpose of a public hearing is to obtain testimony regarding the potential project to assist in determining if the project is in the best interest of the public, and whether or not it should be authorized for construction in its entirety, or any portion thereof. This forum allows you to provide testimony either in support for or in opposition to the project. Your comments should be focused entirely on the project which is the topic of discussion. All interested persons are entitled to be heard at this hearing.

However, this is not a forum for dialogue, questions and answers, or cross-examination. Please
direct your remarks to the specific project that is the subject of this hearing. If comments stray into areas not related to this project, I will ask that you refocus your comments to the subject project.

Following the conclusion of this public
hearing, the record will remain open for three weeks to allow any person who was unable to attend this hearing an opportunity to have their comments included into the public record and be fully considered. The official closing date, by which all comments must be received, is Wednesday, July 8, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. Submissions may be e-mailed or sent via regular mail and must be received or postmarked by the close of the hearing record. Written submissions will be considered with the same weight as oral testimony. Submissions should be sent to Ms. Main, whose contact information is posted on this webcast.

After the hearing is concluded and the record is officially closed, I, as Hearing Officer, will review and weigh all the information submitted into the public record and make a recommendation to the Director of the Department of Transportation, Mr. Chris Conklin, for his final decision as to whether the project has been shown to be in the best public

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interest, and whether or not to authorize the project as proposed or any portions thereof.

And now, to discuss the sidewalk proposal for the Lutes-Briggs community, I present to you Tim Cupples.

MS. MAIN: Tim, we can't hear you.
MR. CUPPLES: I did it to myself. I'm
sorry.
So I was just getting ready to let
everybody know before I started the testimony just that we are recording when I'm -- when you're unmuted, we are recording this, and it will be available for download on our website. So that's one of the things we do need to advise you under Maryland State Law, that we are recording tonight's hearing.

And now I will prepare -- or -- or move to offer a description of the proposal, to construct a five-foot wide concrete sidewalk with a variable zero-foot to three-foot greenspace along the following roads: the north side of Briggs Road from the existing sidewalk to Lutes Lane; the west side of Lutes Drive from Briggs Road to Dressler Lane; the west side of Wilton Oaks Drive from Briggs Road to Mumford Driver; the east side of Ewood Lane from Briggs Road to Victor Court; the west side of Ideal

Drive from Briggs Road to Victor Court; the south side of Victor Court from Ewood Lane [sic] to Ideal Drive; the west side of Disney Lane from Briggs Road to the end of Disney Lane.

For your convenience, we have posted a few downloadable displays that aid in the visual description of this project.

They are: Display A, an aerial vicinity map showing the location of the proposed sidewalks relative to the nearby pedestrian attractions such as religious centers, parks, public transportation, and the existing network of sidewalks.

The proposed sidewalk is shown in red and the existing sidewalks in blue. The total length of the new sidewalk construction will be approximately 7,491 total linear feet.

Display $B$ is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Briggs Road, which has a 60foot public right of way; the roadway being 20 to 23 feet wide. Thus, there is approximately 18.5 feet of public right of way available on either side of Briggs Road.

Display $C$ is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Lutes Drive, which has 40 feet of public right of way; the roadway being 16 to 26
feet wide. Thus, there is approximately 12 to seven feet of public right of way available on either side of Lutes Drive.

Display D is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Wilton Oaks Lane, which has 60 feet of public right of way; the proposed -- or the roadway being 26 feet wide. Thus, there is 17 feet of public right of way available on either side of Wilton Oaks Lane.

Display F is -- oh, I skipped one, didn't I?

Display $E$ is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Disney Lane, which has 50 feet of public right of way; the roadway being between 12 to 19 feet wide. Thus, there is 15.5 to 17 feet of public right of way available on either side of Disney Lane.

Display F -- somehow, I see the slides aren't moving.

I'm sorry.
MS. MAIN: Oh.
MR. CUPPLES: Lori, if you wouldn't mind moving the slides as $I$ continue talking.

I apologize for that.
MS. MAIN: I mean, I -- oh. I -- I've
been clicking on this side card, but, apparently, it wasn't changing. I'm -- I apologize, yeah.

MR. CUPPLES: I tell you what, I will go through a couple -- I'll go back to the beginning of the display testimony, just so that folks can see. And, hopefully, that will resolve the issue there.

Okay, so just to repeat, Display A is a typical -- go back one. Display A is an aerial vicinity map. Display $B$ is a typical section on Briggs Road, which has a 60-foot public right of way. The roadway is 20 to 23 feet wide. Thus, there's approximately 18 and a half public feet -- feet of public right of way on the other side of Briggs Road. Display $C$ is a typical section of the proposed sidewalk on Lutes Drive, which is 40 feet wide with 12 to seven feet of public right of way available on either side, with the roadway being 16 to 26 feet.

Display D is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Wilton Oaks Lane, which has 60 feet of public right of way, the roadway being 26 feet side. Thus, there is 17 feet of public right of way available on either side of Wilton Oaks Lane. All right. This is where we left off. Okay.

Display $E$ is a typical section of the
proposed sidewalks on Disney Lane, which has 50 feet of public right of way, the roadway being 12 to 19 feet wide. Thus, there is 15.5 to 17 feet of public right of way available on either side of Disney Lane.

Display $F$ is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Ewood Lane, which has 50 feet of public right of way; the roadway being 14 feet wide. Thus, there is 18 feet of public right of way available on either side of Ewood Lane.

Display $G$ is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Victor Court, which has 60 feet of public right of way; the roadway being 24 feet wide. Thus, there is 18 feet of public right of way available on either side of Victor Court.

And Display $H$, which is a typical section of the proposed sidewalks on Ideal Drive, which has 60 feet of public right of way; the roadway being 26 feet wide. Thus, there is 17 feet of public right of way available on either side of Ideal Drive.

I will now review the project
justification.
MCDOT evaluates requests for pedestrian facilities based on their ability to serve a public use, as well as their ability to enhance public safety. The main goal for installing a sidewalk is
to remove pedestrians from the path of vehicular traffic and create a separation between the pedestrian and the roadway. New sidewalks on Briggs Road, Lutes Drive, Wilton Oaks Lane, Disney Lane, Ewood Lane, Victor Court, and Ideal Drive will remove pedestrians, as well as disabled persons, from the roadway.

The sidewalks will establish safer access to all areas of the community, including religious centers, schools, parks, the existing network of sidewalks and public transportation. Pedestrian safety will be improved for the entire community.

I will now discuss tree removal and replacement.

The removal of 62 trees is anticipated to facilitate the construction of this entire project. Three trees will be planted to replace each one tree removed. Placement of the new trees is selected by the county's arborist. The Tree Protection Report for each proposed roadway can be downloaded from the webcast platform. So there they are on the downloadable displays on the bottom left.

Copies of the Tree Protection Report were mailed to residents on or about August 27th, 2019 .

I will now discuss costs and assessments.

The estimated cost for installing this entire project is $\$ 930,612.60$. This includes construction, inspection, and administrative costs.

Funding for this project will be provided under the county's Annual Sidewalk Program, CIP Project Number 0506747 . There are no properties which are considered to be specially benefited by the proposed improvement. Therefore, no properties are expected to be assessed.

I will now review the exhibits.
As previously discussed, several exhibits are incorporated into the Public Record binder for your information and consideration.

These exhibits include, one, the Office of Management and Budget; Sidewalk Program Minor Projects P506747; two, the Project Location map; three, Construction Impacts; four, Cost Estimates; five, the Arborist's Tree Evaluation Reports; six, Proof of Publication from the Washington Post and Montgomery County Press Release, each advertising this Public Hearing; seven, Correspondence and Comment Forms supporting the proposed sidewalks; eight, Correspondence and Comment Forms opposing the proposed sidewalks; nine, Written Testimony Received Prior to Hearing; 10, a List of Attendees which will

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be added following this hearing; 11, the Hearing Transcript, which will also to be added following this hearing.

Project-related data and files can be downloaded from this virtual platform. The files will be continue to be available to the public until
the record for this hearing -- public hearing is officially closed.

If the proposed sidewalks are approved, MCDOT will utilize a work order contract currently in place with the Division of Transportation Engineering to construct the sidewalk. If this project is authorized, we anticipate construction in the fall of 2020. The construction is anticipated to take approximately three to four weeks to complete, if authorized as presented.

As previously stated, here with us this evening is Mr. Frank Kingsley, manager of the Annual Sidewalk Program. We will be available after the hearing to answer any questions regarding the construction aspects of this project.

And now I will turn things back over to Mr. Thommana.

MR. THOMMANA: Thank you, Mr. Cupples.
We will now hear comments from those in
attendance who wish to testify.
To testify, please click on the status icon to raise your hand. This is the icon that looks like a person with their hand in the air. You should see it towards the top of the screen.

Once given speaking rights, please clearly provide your name and address for the record, prior to beginning your testimony.

So with that, I'll leave it open to
anybody to raise their hand.
MS. MAIN: We have a list, actually, of
those that pre-signed up. I had e-mailed it. Let me just grab that, really quick.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Tell you what, why don't we do this while -- while you're looking that up, Lori. Folks can --

MS. MAIN: Mm-hmm.
MR. CUPPLES: -- raise their hand to testify.

Why don't we work off the list of -- of folks who preregistered and then --

MS. MAIN: Okay. I have it.
MR. CUPPLES: And then once -- once we get through that, if -- if you have your hand raised up and we call on you, go ahead and lower it after your

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testimony is complete. And then anyone who still has their hand raised after we get through this, the folks that signed up in advance, we'll give them an opportunity.

That just would help us keep track of -of, you know, muting and unmuting folks, if we did it that way. And then, you know, we'll proceed like that.

I will say that just as -- as we get ready
to start the -- the testimony part, I just want to point out that this is really to hear from you.

We don't answer direct questions during
the testimony part. But don't worry, that doesn't mean we're not going to answer your questions, just that this is a -- a public hearing, and we're -we're documenting the comments that we get back.

We will stay on after the -- the testimony portion to do our best to answer all your questions. So just, you know, if any -- no one's ever been to a public hearing before and wonders how come you're not answering the questions, that's -- that's why. It's just kind of the design at this kind of -- of hearing.

So with that, Lori, do you want to work
through the list of folks --

MS. MAIN: Yes.
MR. CUPPLES: -- who signed up?
MS. MAIN: I do. Thank you.
The first resident on our list tonight is Arquilla Ridgell.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Let me unmute.
Arquilla, let's see here.
MS. MAIN: She is our first -- in the
status, she's the first resident.
MR. CUPPLES: Enable microphone. All
right. Arquilla.
MS. MAIN: And now she's the third.
MR. CUPPLES: You should be able to speak
now. Welcome.
Arquilla Ridgell? You may go ahead and testify.

MS. MAIN: Hmm. It doesn't --
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. We might be having some -- he's in here twice. I may have done the wrong person. Let's just see here.

MR. THOMMANA: Her phone is still showing muted. Is that the reason we don't hear her?

MS. MAIN: Oh, yeah. Let me -- I'll unmute this one.

MR. CUPPLES: Yeah, and I'll -- I'm unable
to mute that one. Darn it.
MS. MAIN: All the way at the bottom.
MR. CUPPLES: Yeah. I'm unable to mute
it.
MS. MAIN: All right. It won't let me do
it, either.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Why don't we do this?
Lori, why don't you post the --
MS. MAIN: Why don't we take it --
MR. CUPPLES: -- the directions to -- to
dial-in for Arquilla Ridgell --
MS. MAIN: Okay.
MR. CUPPLES: -- and we will -- don't
worry, we will come back to you. I will find a way to make it work.

And we'll go to the -- temporarily go to the next person online. I do apologize for this. Okay.

MS. MAIN: Okay. Next person is John Gallahan.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. And we will enable Mr. Gallahan's microphone. All right, Mr. Gallahan, are you able to speak?

MS. MAIN: Hmm.
MR. CUPPLES: Huh. Unmute attendee. All
right, let's try again. All right, Mr. Gallahan -MS. MAIN: Oh, there he is.

MR. CUPPLES: -- we can hear you there.

MR. GALLAHAN: Okay. Now you can hear me.
Okay. Yes, I'm John Gallahan. I'm at 13212 Lutes Drive, which is the very bottom of Lutes.

And just a couple points, I am basically, yes, we do need a sidewalk. I mean, especially after the repaving of Lutes and Briggs. We have increased traffic and the traffic can go faster, so they do. And also the street is quite narrow.

Also, I believe on Lutes, I think that we would be better served by a sidewalk being on the west side rather than the east. There are fewer homes affected and there are several areas of undeveloped land, which I don't believe can be developed because it is stream valley buffer.

And parts and -- parts or all of that are, I believe, owned by WSSC. So having a sidewalk there would open this to more public -- I mean, I tend to walk in there, but it's -- I've been -- and opening it up, I mean, I'm sorry, excuse me.

Putting a sidewalk on that side would tend to open this, I believe, public land, although it's quasi-government land, $I$ guess, to actually use by
residents. And it would seem to open up the street, too. It would make -- if we -- even if we don't widen the street, it would widen the area, because it would cut back some of the brush that's there and a few of the trees.

So I -- I think, you know, I think those are good reasons to move it. Also at the other end of Briggs -- or of Lutes, which would be the south end, the west side, when they did redo the street, they had to do a little bit of curb work. And adding a sidewalk, I'm afraid, it's going to cause drainage problems into the yard. So -- but, I mean, that's a minor thing.

Yeah. And pretty much, that's the -- the main things I wanted to say. I have a few issues local, but this isn't probably the place to do that.

So, I guess, basically, I'm really done with my test -- of what $I$ have to say.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Well, thank you. Thank you for your testimony. I'm going to mute your phone.

MR. GALLAHAN: I don't want to get --
MR. CUPPLES: And we'll move on to the next.

All right. We'll just give one more shot
to try with Arquilla Ridgell. Let's see -- enable microphone.

Arquilla, are you able to speak?
All right. We haven't been able to solve that yet. Okay.

We'll continue to work on that. I do
apologize for -- for the technical difficulty there.
Next on the list?

MS. MAIN: Our next (inaudible) is John Silva.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
MS. MAIN: He is --
MR. CUPPLES: How do I --
MS. MAIN: -- responding -- is it there?
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Here we go. All right.

Hello, Mr. Silva. You should be able to speak now.

Hmm.
MS. MAIN: Hmm.
MR. CUPPLES: All right.
This is -- I'm going to try something
here. Just going to go to the -- let's see if we can
leave the -- this mode, Lori. There's 18 folks I
think that we can --

MS. MAIN: That --
MR. CUPPLES: Let's give it a try. And -MS. MAIN: Yeah.

MR. CUPPLES: -- we're going to try
unmuting everyone's microphone and see if that solves
this problem. And if you --
MR. SILVA: Okay. Now it -- mine's been
turned on, I hear.
MS. MAIN: Okay. Hello?
MR. CUPPLES: Okay, yeah. All right.
MS. MAIN: Great.
MR. CUPPLES: All right. Okay. Who's
speaking?
MR. SILVA: This is John Silva. I live at
13 --
MS. RIDGELL: Arquilla speaking.
MR. SILVA: -- 13012 Wilton Oaks Drive.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
MS. MAIN: Oh.
MR. CUPPLES: Great. Great. Thank you.
So what we had to do, if you wouldn't mind me just pausing for just a second, we had to unmute everybody. So with 18 folks on the line, we'll -we'll kind of prompt you to speak.

Just recognize that every mic is open
right now, and -- and so, please, you know, do us a favor, we're unable to manage it anymore. So if you -- if you wouldn't mind, you know, just speaking when -- when you're called on, and then we'll move on to the next one at the completion of your testimony. That would help us out.

MAN: Well, also we can mute our own
phone, too --
MR. CUPPLES: I'm sorry.
MAN: We can mute our -- mute our own phone, too.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
All right. So --
MR. SILVA: Okay.
MR. CUPPLES: -- I'm sorry, Mr. Silva. Go ahead.

MR. SILVA: Okay, yeah. It's John Silva at 13012 Wilton Oaks Drive. I've lived here for 40 years. And many, many years ago, I tried to get a sidewalk program going here, unsuccessfully. And, fortunately, we have a dedicated resident named Mary Ahern (phonetic), who was able to get this ball rolling. And I think a number of us really appreciate what she has been able to accomplish.

I've met personally with Frank Kingsley,
and I understand the issues with where the sidewalks are going because of right of way concerns. And there -- I think the plan that exists right now is the way to go. For the safety of the kids, you know, who -- who walk on our street, and even now, afterhours, we have many people walking up and down Wilton Oaks who are just out for an evening stroll or kids trying to -- to play.

We really need these sidewalks, and I am so, so happy that finally the county is considering doing this.

And I think that -- that wraps it up. I -

- I just had one question about when was this going to happen. I had -- had a blank out on the speaker audio. I think you said it would actually start this year.

So thank you very much.
MR. CUPPLES: All right. Well -- we'll, we'll answer questions at the end.

Arquilla Ridgell, $I$ think $I$ heard you, that you're able to speak now.

MS. RIDGELL: Yes, finally.
MR. CUPPLES: Yes. Okay. I apologize for the -- the earlier technical difficulties.

MS. RIDGELL: No, I understand.

Well, hello. I'm Arquilla Ridgell -MR. CUPPLES: Good evening.

MS. RIDGELL: -- and I've lived on -- with my family on Disney Lane for 35 years. I'm also a member of the Glenmont Exchange Civic Association, which, I think, attended the first hearing.

Josh Goodman is our president, and he attended on behalf of us, because we don't really have -- formally have an HOA, so I kind of attend the Glenmont Exchange Civic Association meetings.

Anyway -- all of the residents that live in my house are elderly residents that are aged 50 and older. And some things that I've noticed -- I had to do pipe repairs, water pipe repairs, and I noticed that the plumbing, electrical, and cable wires are all in my front yard, about where you're going to put the sidewalk. And that would make repairs very expensive.

And I -- they're going to be more repairs needed, because there is an issue with WSSC and pinhole leaks in copper pipes. So because of the chemicals that they're using in the water supply, they've put another chemical in the water supply to reduce pinhole leaks, but they're still existing. And so that means that all of the yards will probably
have to eventually be dug up because there's going to be pinhole leaks in the copper pipes, because most of the homes in that area do have copper pipes.

My neighbor across the street also experienced a leak, and in the same area, in the front of her yard shortly after I experienced my leak.

So it's going to make repairs very difficult if you have slabs of concrete covering our front yards. And although we met with WSSC at the Glenmont Exchange meeting and they basically told everybody to get HomeServe and insurance, but the insurance only covers so much. It only covers about $\$ 3,000$ per year. And that only covered, like, replacing some of the pinhole leaks. It doesn't -it would not have recover -- it would not have paid for the -- like, if a sidewalk was there. So it makes repairs very expensive when you start putting sidewalks.

And I happen to live on a street -- Disney Lane -- 13003 Disney Lane, which is a very short street. It's a cul-de-sac that doesn't really have a lot of traffic -- it has no traffic. I've sat there for days and the only cars that come in sometimes are the people that actually live there. So there -- the
traffic is kind of slow or it's no traffic at all.
And, also, I think that sidewalks, when
you sent out your (inaudible), you did not say who would be responsible for shoveling the sidewalks. I know (inaudible) maintains them. But I think that would be an additional expense and burden on a street such as mine, where there's not a lot of traffic and it's a cul-de-sac, and it's not really going anywhere. And it's a short street.

And I would -- that would mean you would be putting the burden on me and the elderly residents who live there to shovel the sidewalk every winter, and we do get a lot of snow.

Sometimes when I don't shovel my driveway all the way or -- leave part of my driveway, and that's fine. But I know the county has -- will fine me if don't shovel sidewalks. So that's another issue.

And, also, I think that putting sidewalks on my particular street will disturb the wildife. This week, I had about four rabbits in my yard. I had deer. And I can't see them -- I've had deer have babies in my back yard. And I cannot see the wildlife coming up on the sidewalk, because that's their -- that's kind of their part of the front yard.

And even the maple tree that $I$ have in my front yard, deer used to come and rub their antlers on it, and that's why I put protections around it. So I think it would also disturb some of the wildlife on my particular street.

And, let's see, I think that's it.
And, also, I -- I don't like to see trees removed. Yeah, ever since I've lived there, I've had a problem with (inaudible) the yard.

Pepco had to cut down a tree in my back yard because it was touching the wire -- well, while we were on vacation, the trees caught fire because Pepco's wire burned one of our trees.

So I had to have that tree cut down, and I planted the tree in the front yard on my aunt's birthday to preserve my tree life in the area. And even my neighbor said to me, they said, Why did you cut down the tree in the back yard? And I said, Well, I'll plant another one in the front yard.

And I know that you plant three trees per every, like, for every tree you remove, but, I mean, that made -- that tree -- all trees are not equal. I mean, that tree is kind of special to me -- and the other trees in our neighborhood.

So I think we have a pretty street, and I
don't -- I really don't want to see it paved over with concrete sidewalk. And, like I said, I live on a short street that's a cul-de-sac. So if I -- I don't really want to see sidewalks on Disney Lane.

Thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Thank you very much. And I apologize for mispronouncing your name earlier.

MS. RIDGELL: Yeah, that's okay.
Everybody does. Even the people I work with, it takes them two years, they'll finally start saying Arquilla.

So thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. All right, Lori, who's -- who's next?

MS. MAIN: Up next, we have -- well, that's actually it, because Mr. Gillman wrote in the question section that he was happy with his written testimony.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay, so there are -- that's all that preregistered. We have a couple folks with their hands raised.

I will go to Mark Rother first.
Mr. Rother -- let's see, enable microphone.

All right, Mr. Rother, are you able to
speak?
Oh, boy.
MR. ROTHER: I'm here.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Mr. Rother may be
having some technical difficulties. Let's see if we can work on that one.

The next person who has their hand raised is Edward Hogg. Okay, I see your text in there, Mr. Rother. We'll try and give you an opportunity.

Mr. Hogg, go ahead.
MR. HOGG: Hi. Edward Hogg, and it's okay, everybody does that as well.

MR. CUPPLES: Sorry.
MR. HOGG: That's all right. I heard it, like I said, everybody does it. I'm right there with Arquilla.

So, yeah, 13208 Lutes. I'm a firm supporter of sidewalks. I have more personal complains about my own property as drainage has been an issue, but $I$ would definitely like to see these go in.

I've also -- when originally the -- the -the -- some individuals in the community were coming around and proposing or -- or talking about the possibility of this, I had initially asked if anybody
had done a feasibility study on turning the
Lutes/Briggs connection into a -- into a one-way, because that would also prevent -- or also allow us to eliminate the need to expand the street, make it wider, and therefore remove those trees.

It would also allow us a little bit more of a margin of safety, as, right now, when we drive on Lutes and on Briggs, it -- it can get a little bit dicey when you're passing another vehicle, particularly if there are people who are walking on the street.

So I suppose it's more of a question than anything else as to whether or not anybody has looked into the possibility of combining these two -- these -- these two particular projects or if anybody's even thought out that.

But I -- I -- I land -- no matter what happens, I land on the side of -- of adding the sidewalks to Lutes, Briggs, specifically.

And thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. All right.
I don't see anyone else who has their hand raised. Oh, here comes some folks. Oh, they're raising and lowering them.

I know Mr. Rother tried to send some
directions to -- to dial in via the -- the 800 number. Were you able to do so? Are you able to speak?

MR. THOMMANA: I think Mr. Rother has put his testimony in the text box where people type questions.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. All right.
Thank you. We're -- we're certainly happy
to -- to accept that, and if there's anything else that -- that you would like put in terms of written testimony and -- and e-mail that to Lori Main, that's great. Also, I'm sorry we're having the technical difficulties with the microphones tonight.

Okay, Mr. Johnson -- well, he had his hand raised and didn't have it raised. Mr. Johnson, do you have a -- any testimony you'd like to offer?

MR. JOHNSON: Well, yeah. Thanks.
Actually, I have -- this is Robert Johnson. I live on Ideal Drive -- 13117. And I'd like to suggest there could be some cost savings here for what you're proposing.

For one thing, there is an existing sidewalk on the north side of Briggs from Ideal -from Ideal down to Layhill. Your drawing shows there's new sidewalk needed there. I believe it's a
five-foot-wide sidewalk.
And looking at the diagram, this maybe accounts for about 20 percent of the -- I mean five percent of the work. So, potentially, you can achieve a savings there by keeping the existing sidewalk.

Another suggestion I would make is that you seem -- I keep hearing a five-foot-wide sidewalk being talked about, yet the sidewalk segment at the top of our driveway aprons in this area, and also from what I've observed over on Hathaway and across over on the other side of Layhill, is only about four feet wide.

So if you put in a four-foot-wide sidewalk, you could save, perhaps, 20 percent on the concrete as opposed to putting in a five-foot-wide sidewalk. And it would then be consistent with everything else that seems to be in this area, as opposed to being a foot wider than the rest of the ones in the area.

And then, I guess, another question I have is, is there any possibility for routing the sidewalk to go around some of the mature trees?

I know one of my neighbors, who's not on this call, that -- that lives on Victor Court,
there's, you know, at least one mature tree in the right of way that (inaudible). The sidewalk could be routed around that like a semicircular diversion or something, that might save that tree.

I don't know whether that's feasible or
not, though, but -- that's my -- that's about all I have for you right now.

Thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Thank you. And we're happy to address questions after we've heard everyone's testimony.

Susan -- I'm going to -- forgive me, I might mispronounce this one also -- Susan --

MS. ERIM: Erim.
MR. CUPPLES: Erim?
MS. ERIM: Erim.
MR. CUPPLES: Forgive me.
MS. ERIM: Yes.
MR. CUPPLES: Has raised her hand.
MS. ERIM: Thank you. Thank you.
I'm Sue -- Sue Arum, and I'm at 13016
Wilton Oaks Drive.
And my thoughts on the sidewalk project is definitely Briggs Road and Lutes need sidewalks. My concern with both of those roads with the sidewalk is
that they're very narrow, and I'm concerned about people already going so fast on those roads -- it's a cut-through -- that having sidewalks, it makes me nervous, because there are people always walking, and it's always like they're almost having to go into the woods at -- at the bottom part of Lutes as it is anyway.

So and I was curious as to why, if the sidewalk on Briggs isn't -- if the road isn't widened -- or maybe they're planning to do that, and it's not on the same side as the church, which, you know, had that -- all that wooded area, so they wouldn't be taking up people's -- going onto people's properties on -- on Briggs.

But as far as Wilton Oaks, the street I live on, I -- I feel like once you put the sidewalk in, we have a lot of people who -- have a lot of cars and they park in their driveways. I think they will be blocking the sidewalk with their driveway, which is, from what I understand, is not permittable anyway, but $I$ think it will happen.

And I think what will end up happening is more cars will -- will be parking on -- on the -- on the streets, which will make the street even more narrow as you're going back and forth.

And -- and I, too, don't want to spend more money to have my sidewalk shoveled, either, as far as that goes. And I think --

MR. THOMMANA: Okay.
MS. ERIM: -- you know, it's a quiet
neighborhood back here with -- where people are aware of walking on Wilton Oaks, you know, and -- and being cautious of cars coming down. It is a dead-end street as well, as Disney is, too.

So those are kind of my thoughts and my
opinions, and -- and -- and I, too, don't like to have trees cut down as well, either.

So that's -- that's -- that's all I have to test -- for my testimony.

MR. CUPPLES: Thank you --
MS. ERIM: You're welcome.
MR. CUPPLES: -- for your testimony.
So I'll give one more opportunity for anyone who hasn't testified to --

MS. ROTHER: Hello? Can you hear me?
MR. CUPPLES: -- raise their hand. Yes.
MS. ROTHER: Can you hear? This is Lisa
Rother.
MR. CUPPLES: Hi.
MS. ROTHER: I had typed what I need to
say, but now I'm on the phone, and I would just reiterate -- and I see a couple of my neighbors have agreed, $I$ think.

It would be really beneficial to have sidewalks on Briggs and Lutes, as those are through streets and a lot of non-neighborhood traffic traverses those roads, getting between the subdivision behind us and Layhill Road.

On the other streets, including, and most importantly to me, Wilton Oaks, I think the sidewalk would destroy the character of the neighborhood that currently exists. And $I$ walk my dog twice a day, and I do have to be alert, but the street is rarely crowded with cars driving up and down, maybe a couple in -- in an hour. And $I$ just really think that the -- removing all those trees along Wilton Oaks, part of the character here is all these trees, and it would be unfortunate to -- to take them down.

Anyway, and -- and Disney and Ideal are so short and kind of dead-end, and Ewood dead ends also. I -- so I -- anyway, my bottom line is I think it would be terrific to have sidewalks on Lutes and Briggs, but not the other smaller residential streets within the neighborhood.

Thanks for your time.

MR. CUPPLES: Thank you. I'm glad that you were able to connect and offer your verbal testimony.

Okay. I don't see anyone with their hands up right now -- oh, here comes Shane. Come on in.

Shane, you're up.
MR. DUGGAN: Yeah, my name is Shane
Duggan. I live at 13013 Wilton Oaks, and I am in support of the sidewalk program.

My -- my wife and daughter live here. My daughter is about 20 months, and so, you know, realizing how unsafe the roads are taking a stroller on the road to -- to go to the park or to -- to go for walks.

So any -- any additional safety measures for pedestrians would be, you know, greatly appreciated. And we are in full support of the sidewalk program.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Thank you for your testimony.

We'll give a -- a second for anyone else who hasn't testified, the opportunity to raise their hand. Right now, I don't see anyone with their hand raised.

Okay.

MR. THOMMANA: Robert Johnson.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Go ahead.
MR. JOHNSON: I -- am I on? Can you hear me?

MR. CUPPLES: Yes.
MR. JOHNSON: Okay. I -- I've lived here for many years, since 1972, and I would say that the most dangerous, hazardous point in this project that a sidewalk would help is where Briggs and Ideal, the top of that hill, there's virtually no place on the west side of Ideal on Briggs Road for someone to walk and -- and -- and stay out of the traffic -- out of the traffic lane, out of the westbound traffic lane. And cars come over that blind hill, and it can be a hazardous spot for pedestrians.

So I'd just like to testify that I think that's the most hazardous place in this whole project, based on my experience of living here many years, that sidewalks would help.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
Thank you for your testimony.
Okay.
MR. THOMMANA: Okay. If there's nobody
else that wishes to testify at this time, this concludes the speakers who have expressed an interest
in speaking tonight.
If there's anybody else who did not sign in as a speaker or who now wishes to speak, please raise your hand for the last chance, I guess, before we complete the testimony.

So nobody -- no other testimony, correct?
Okay. Well, thank you, everybody. Seeing
that everybody who wishes to speak has had an opportunity to do so, this concludes the oral testimony portion of this public hearing. We will keep the record open for three weeks, until Wednesday July 8th.

Additional written testimony may be submitted by e-mail or regular mail and must be received or postmarked by the close of this hearing record. Submissions should be sent to Lori Main, Annual Sidewalk Program, Division of Transportation Engineering, MCDOT. And our address is 100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor, Gaithersburg, Maryland, 20878.

Our fax number is 240-777-7277, or if you would like to e-mail your testimony, the e-mail address is DTE.sidewalk@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Again, Lori's contact information is posted. Thank you and this public hearing is now concluded.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Thank you, everyone.
And, as promised, we're happy to hang around after the public hearing and -- and now that we've -- we've done the listening part, you know, there were -- there were some of you that had questions, they were typed in the chat pod. We were trying to keep up with them as we'd go. We're happy to stick around and try and answer those as best we can.

And then a couple of -- I jotted down a couple of questions that $I$ did hear in the testimony. So why don't we go with those first, and then I'll jump over to the chat pod.

Frank, the first one that I noted in the -

- in the written testimony was, was it possible to route sidewalks around trees?

MR. KINGSLEY: It is possible. It is a case-by-case scenario. It is something that we have to look at. It also needs to be reviewed and approved by the county arborists. Those are the folks that dictate to us, based on construction, whether that tree can survive if the sidewalk is placed close to it.

So it's something that we would need to
look at specifically to see whether we could go
around it or not.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Going -- going to the chat pod, let's see, I'm trying to keep up with ones that have been answered.

Display A, a new sidewalk on the north side of Briggs, why is it shown there when there's already an existing sidewalk in excellent condition?

I think that answer -- was answered lower.
It doesn't comply with ADA requirements today. Is that correct, Frank?

MR. KINGSLEY: Yes, that is correct.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. All right.
And that calls to mind another one that I didn't jot down during the oral testimony. But folks were asking, you know, could we save money by making the side -- new sidewalks narrower to match the existing sidewalks elsewhere in the neighborhood. Do you want to address that question, Frank?

MR. KINGSLEY: Sure. We have to follow Maryland State Highway and Americans with Disabilities Act. Those are the folks that dictate the width of the sidewalk. So we do have to maintain any new sidewalks at five feet wide.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Okay. Susan had a -oh. I'm sorry.

MR. THOMMANA: This is Jose. I think
there was one question about when this was actually going to happen.

MR. CUPPLES: Yes. That was in the -- in the testimony and that -- that gentleman couldn't hear that part of the testimony. That -- if it is approved, it's slated for fall of 2020 , correct, Frank?

MR. KINGSLEY: Yes.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay.

MR. THOMMANA: Okay.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. Susan has a question
-- several questions.
Who is responsible for maintenance, especially shoveling snow? And she has questions about losing driveway space. And, you know, what happens -- will your taxes go up? And then the fourth question is specific to her particular lot about some -- a Japanese Maple.

Why don't $I$ handle the tax one. That -you guys may not have noticed that during the testimony, that was the section on assessments. And -- and that's where, when we say that no property is specifically benefited, that's specifically for the tax purpose.

And so there is, when we say no -- no property specifically benefitted and there are not anticipated to be any assessments, that -- that's the government speak for, no, your taxes aren't -- aren't going to be raised as part of this.

Frank, would you handle the question on snow?

MR. KINGSLEY: Yep. The -- the shoveling of the snow is the responsibility of -- of the residents. I'm looking at the rest of her questions.

The driveway space is a possibility.
Having loss of it, but, typically, if there is space for people to walk around the back of the car and still not go into the roadway, that typically doesn't cause an issue.

You got the taxes.
Japanese Maple -- will remain and not be damaged. That, I would have to take a look at.

Lori, I don't know if you have the arborist's report handy.

MS. MAIN: Yes. Let me just grab it quickly.

Can I get back to you on that? And I will

MR. KINGSLEY: Yeah. Yeah.

MS. MAIN: -- (inaudible.)
MR. KINGSLEY: Yeah, that -- that
question, we will have to get back to -- to that resident and provide a response.

Lutes and Briggs be the standard width?
Yes. Five feet wide.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay, Frank. The -- the next question, oh, will we be putting in curbs in -on streets like Ewood between Briggs and Victor where there are none at this time?

MR. KINGSLEY: No, we don't have any plans to put curb in unless the community, based on the zero to five -- zero to three feet of greenspace, if the curb -- if the sidewalk is adjoining the roadway and there is no greenspace between the sidewalk and the roadway, we need to put up a curb to make a delineation between the roadway so folks just can't drive off the road onto the sidewalk.

And, again, that would be a case-by-case basis, but we don't have any plans to put curbs throughout the neighborhood. That would cause a whole drainage issue and a whole other construction.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
MS. MAIN: I do have an answer about the
Japanese Maple now.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
MS. MAIN: The -- the Japanese Maple will be safe. It will require air excavation with -Frank, can you explain that?

MR. KINGSLEY: Yeah. Air excavation is --
is pretty much that. I mean, they use an air compressor, which blows the dirt and earth away from the roots so the roots can be trimmed properly, if needed to be, and it also tells us what's under the grass, if you will. So it doesn't cause damage like putting a shovel into the ground. We can blow the dirt away and look to see what -- what is underneath.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay. We have a few
questions about microphones and how to testify. Folks letting you know I've muted myself.

Let's see here. The next project-related question, will sidewalks be aligned with the top of the driveway apron or in some other arrangement?

Mr. Johnson asked that question.
MR. KINGSLEY: It really depends on the placement and the exact location of where the sidewalk runs through an apron. Again, if we go back to zero to three feet of greenspace, if it is closer to the road than the sidewalk section, we'll be closer to the road.

So there's no definite answer, there's no exact pattern for each driveway. They differ.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
Okay. Some folks just pointing out correct street names. Again, I apologize for flubbing them as $I$ was trying to read the script and not get distracted by looking at myself on the little webcam.

Let's see here.
Okay. It -- again another question
related to snow removal -- is there a program to shovel sidewalks?

I'm not aware of any county program to shovel sidewalks for -- for folks.

MS. MAIN: A lot of the homeowners civic associations, I've found, have put village programs together where people sign up to help or volunteer to assist in shoveling.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
MS. MAIN: That might be something that can (inaudible.)

MR. CUPPLES: Yeah. A nice -- nice approach.

Okay. This is a testimony. Let me scroll on through that and see.

Questions. More testimony.
Okay. Here's a question; who does own the undeveloped land on the west side of the 13200 block of Lutes?

MR. KINGSLEY: There are a couple of different owners' parcels in there. One is Park and Planning Commission owns a large portion of it. And then WMATA -- Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority [sic], owns another section in there.

MR. CUPPLES: Yes.
All right. And I see, you know, there might be another question or two being typed in. I see some folks might be typing. We'll -- we'll give it a second, if another question pops up.

MR. KINGSLEY: I guess there was a comment or a question regarding putting the sidewalk on that opposite side of Briggs. Our justification for the side that was proposed was that folks would be walking out of the streets -- Disney, Ideal Drive -out to Briggs, and we couldn't have a mid-block crossing at each one of those locations to cross the street to the other side of Briggs.

That would have caused numerous issues if we led people down just say Ideal Drive on a sidewalk and stopped it on the, I guess that would be east
side of Briggs and they had to cross Briggs to get to another sidewalk.

MR. CUPPLES: Okay.
All right. And then $I$ guess we could get one more question, which is actually just a -- a very good suggestion and maybe something we ought to consider is, when we send out information on future sidewalk proposals, that -- that we get just outline the snow and legal responsibilities and stuff like that.

MR. KINGSLEY: Sure.
MR. CUPPLES: Okay. We did have an ADA question come in.

I've seen sidewalks at the bottom of $a$ driveway apron which make an uneven transition from a flat sidewalk to crossing a driveway. How are these concerns reconciled?

Frank, you want to mention, you know, what the requirement on the slope is -- the crosswalks?

MR. KINGSLEY: Yeah. We have a specific cross slope that the sidewalk has to meet for ADA purposes. And whatever adjustments need to be done for the apron is -- is our responsibility also, so it all transitions properly. So it wouldn't be a -- a bump-up, if you will. They all would be transitioned
properly.
MR. CUPPLES: And, I believe, is that two percent cross slope perpendicular to the direction of the sidewalk?

MR. KINGSLEY: Yeah. Yes.
MR. CUPPLES: All right, that would be, you know, two inches and a hundred inches would be the -- the maximum slope that you could -- could tilt side to side.

Okay. I don't see anyone else typing in the question pod.

So if -- if that's all the questions we have, thank you very much for attending this one. As -- as you mentioned at the onset, this is the second time we've done it. And we're -- we're still in the learning process. We apologize for some of the technical glitches on -- on the audio. I'm glad that -- that we were able to get that squared away and have everyone who -- who wished to speak speak.

And, you know, as Jose mentioned, the -the hearing record does remain open. And, you know, if -- if you, you know, something comes to mind in the next several weeks that -- that you wished you thought of and wished you said, please go ahead and send that in to us and -- and we'll get that included
into the hearing record.
Okay.
MAN: Thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Thank you, everybody. Have
a -- have a great evening and thank you for joining us virtually.

MS. MAIN: Thank you.
MAN: Thank you.
WOMAN: Thank you.
WOMAN 2: Thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Jose, thank you very much.
Oh, he's gone before I could say thank you.
And Frank's gone.
Lori, thank you.
Juan, thank you. You're the only ones
left to thank.
MS. MAIN: Thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Appreciate you guys working
late tonight.
MS. MAIN: Happy to do it.
MR. CUPPLES: All right. I'm going to go
ahead and sign off, then.
MS. MAIN: Okay.
Thank you.
MR. CUPPLES: Take care, everybody.

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Conducted on June 17, 2020
(Recording ends.)

Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on June 17, 2020

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ANDREW HATZIYANNIS

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