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Chief, Property Acquisition Section  
**Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT)**  
100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

CC: Cynthia Green [[cpgreen@verizon.net](mailto:cpgreen@verizon.net)], Springfield Civic Association

**Dear Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT),**

This letter is in regard to the Montgomery County Department of Transportation's (MCDOT) **Public Hearing on Dec. 15 for Abandonment of Portions of Westbard Ave. and Ridgefield Rd. in Bethesda, AB 773** to seek resident views regarding the **2016 Westbard Sector Plan: Abandonment of Portions of Westbard Avenue and Ridgefield Road** (*titled Right-of-Way Abandonment, AB-773, Portions of Westbard Avenue and Ridgefield Road*).

Our family has resided at 5521 Westbard Avenue, Bethesda, MD since 1997, and are blessed to be a part of this neighborhood. Our home is at the end of the Westbard Avenue intersection with River Road. We are longtime patrons of the local neighborhood stores, knowing many of the individuals in these stores by name and friendly face.

While we understand and support upgrading several aspects of the neighborhood with planned development, we have also raised concerns about the negative impact from very large increases in the neighborhood's density. We appreciate the efforts of everyone to try to minimize the negative impacts.

One of the key parts of the plan that we fully support as a mitigating factor is the **Right-of-Way Abandonment, AB-773, Portions of Westbard Avenue and Ridgefield Road**.<sup>1</sup> Even before the new construction has begun, we have seen over the years increases in the amount of morning and evening cut-through traffic passing in front of our home, irrespective of the signage restrictions turning right from River Road in the mornings and turning left on River Road throughout the day and especially in the evenings.

We are negatively impacted by that through traffic in multiple ways listed below:

1. Dangerous speeding cars & trucks disregarding the speed limits and speed bumps: several times while walking we have had to cross quickly to evade the danger, sometimes scolding the driver that they need to slow down
2. Non-residents in cars parking/waiting on the road just past our home as they face River Road to either:

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<sup>1</sup> The Sector Plan endorses permanent closure of the residential portion of Westbard Avenue between River Road and Ridgefield Road end.

- a. rest/nap in the daytime: we've seen drivers (sometime cars with Uber/Lyft signage) waiting there for over 15 minutes; we've seen some drivers recline their seats and take a nap in their cars; several times we have had to go out and ask them if there is anything wrong, after which they drive off; or
  - b. eat lunch: we've frequently seen drivers pull up and stop to eat lunch while in their cars (e.g., from the nearby McDonald's; this would likely increase with the planned new stores); very concerning is that some throw their trash out of their car window on to our grass without any regard; our family ends up picking up the trash and putting in our trash or recycling bins; or
  - c. discard empty beer/alcohol bottles or cans: similar to above, although in the mornings, my family has had to pick up discarded beer/alcohol bottles or cans and sometimes food from the previous night and put in our trash or recycling bins
3. Large trucks illegally (above the weight limit) passing through that:
- a. cause undue noise/rattling: the loud trucks either from their engines or when they go over the speedbumps create undue noise whenever they pass our home; I am even more disturbed by this while working from home
  - b. disrupt cable lines: we have had large trucks inadvertently pull down the cable line that connects from the light pole across the street to our home, impacting our telephone and television service

We are very concerned that both during and after the new construction, we will be even more negatively impacted along the lines above. Our home being at the end of Westbard Avenue before reaching River Road already gets much of the downside from non-resident cars driving, stopping, and throwing trash. There is also a security concern as more non-residents pass through and can monitor our home and yard.

Based on above, to help minimize the negative impact to our family and our home value, we strongly urge the Board to accept and approve the 2016 Westbard Sector Plan's recommended **Right-of-Way Abandonment, AB-773, Portions of Westbard Avenue and Ridgefield Road**.

Sincerely,



Michael & Adrienne Chen-Young