

3/4/2022

Dave Sowers
709 Holden Road, Frederick 21701 &
3917 Chaucer Court, Monrovia 21770

Sam Tressler III, Chair
Frederick County Planning Commission
30 N. Market St.
Frederick, MD 21701

Subject: Knowledge Farms rezoning from Office/Research/Industrial (ORI) to MXD (Mixed use).

Dear Chairman Tressler,

It's come to my attention that the Knowledge Farms development (address 3280 Urbana Pike, Ijamsville) is pursuing the above subject rezoning. Further, I understand that the intent is to include an age restricted (55 years and older) residential component within the development, if the MXD rezoning is approved. Additionally, there could be other ancillary uses that are allowed within the MXD zoning. Please consider this letter as being in support of the rezoning. From a long term perspective, the MXD zoning on that property better serves the needs of our community, versus the various uses allowed in the ORI zoning. As a long-time resident of the county my wife and I hope to find a restricted age neighborhood soon but may end up out of the area (Delaware of course) if such neighborhoods are not made available. Thanks in advance for your consideration!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dave Sowers", written in dark ink.

Dave Sowers

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [Barbara Rosen](#)
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: R-21-02 Knowledge Farms - Rezoning Request
Date: Thursday, March 10, 2022 2:21:21 PM

Good afternoon:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: Barbara Rosen <barbara.a.rosen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 5:45 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Cc: davidmrosen1 <davidmrosen1@gmail.com>
Subject: R-21-02 Knowledge Farms - Rezoning Request

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Planning Commission,

I am writing regarding the application by Knowledge Farms Partners LLC for rezoning of the property located at 3280 Urbana Pike. My husband and I own a house on Herb Garden Drive that backs up to the steep west slope of the property.

When we made a decision to purchase a home in the Woodlands and selected our specific lot, it was based on research to find out what the plan was for the adjacent property, which at the time was for two additional low profile medical office buildings. While we certainly respect the right of the property owners to develop and achieve maximum value from their property, we are concerned about the impact to the established neighborhood and property values, not just in terms of the dollar value, but quality of life and enjoyment of property.

Rezoning from Office Research Industrial to Mixed Use Development, with emphasis on residential, seems to be a good move for the area, but the proposed concept plan does raise some questions. Here are some of our observations.

The self-storage business does not seem compatible with a residential neighborhood, especially given the proposed proximity to residential backyards. The concerns are with 24 hour access, lighting, and destruction of features of natural beauty. After looking at maps and driving around Urbana, we see no similar businesses that are situated in such close proximity to homes.

There have been multiple concept plans submitted, with the current plan showing three different types and locations of senior resident facilities - some of which will require 24 hour shift staffing that will create additional traffic throughout the night.

It appears there would be sections of Thornapple and Herb Garden where the view out the back of those homes would be completely blocked by multi-story buildings. There is only a tiny amount of open space designated and that is on the 355 side of the property.

With one street in and out of the proposed development through an already busy intersection, it is hard to see how this would not create a serious safety and congestion situation, with the potential to divert unwanted traffic through the neighborhood.

There is a reference to phases of the Woodlands that are similar to the proposed plan. Assuming this is in reference to the Woodlands condominium buildings, those buildings are not such that they block the views of homeowners in the surrounding area. The Urban Green rental apartments are the only other residences that are within sight of the condominium buildings. The Woodlands condo buildings are suited to their location as multi-story because they are similar to the Urban Green apartments. Residents who bought into the Woodlands Villas in that area were aware of the plan for those Woodlands condos and made their buying decision accordingly.

We respectfully ask the Commission to request, and the developer to submit, specific plans for how the impact to the Woodlands neighbors will be managed to balance the interests of all. Here are some suggestions:

- Build an alternate, additional entrance off of 355
- Push all buildings toward 355 positioned on the east side of the property
- Orient all streets and parking lots toward 355 with no visibility from Woodlands homes
- Limit the height allowed for the residential properties so as not to block the view of the sky and the rolling hills on the horizon
- Maintain more open, natural space between the Woodlands and the proposed buildings
- Eliminate the plan for the self-storage facility and replace that with planned residential units

In summary, low profile senior residential units would be a welcome addition to the area and meet the needs of the community, the developers, and current residents who have made a significant investment in the Woodlands, and meet those needs in ways that contribute to the goals set out in section C of the Approval Criteria as follows:

"The proposed development is compatible with existing or anticipated surrounding land uses with regard to size, building scale, intensity, setbacks, and landscaping, or the proposal provides for mitigation of differences in appearance or scale through such means as setbacks, screening, landscaping; or other design features in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan, and any applicable community or corridor plans;"

Thank you for your consideration of this input,

Barbara and David Rosen

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [Dan Rosen](#)
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: R-21-02 Knowledge Farms Zoning Request
Date: Thursday, March 10, 2022 2:15:12 PM

Good afternoon:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

-----Original Message-----

From: Dan Rosen <dan.rosen153@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 9:19 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: R-21-02 Knowledge Farms Zoning Request

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

I am writing to you regarding the application by Knowledge Farms Partners LLC for a rezoning of the property located at 3280 Urbana Pike. My wife and I own a house in The Woodlands and our property is located on Herb Garden Drive, directly adjacent to the Knowledge Farms property. We have concerns regarding the compatibility of the proposed project as described in their application with the existing surrounding community and appreciate the opportunity to share our comments with the Commission.

When we bought our house in The Woodlands, it was based on our understanding that the adjacent property was zoned for the addition of two low rise office buildings similar to the building currently on the property. While we recognize that plans change, we believe the size, scale, and composition of the revised proposed development plan will create compatibility issues with our adjacent neighborhood and have a negative impact on the existing homeowners in The Woodlands as to quality of life and property value.

To begin with, the proposed project seems likely to create traffic issues. As proposed, the three proposed new buildings along with the existing building will all access Urbana Pike / Route 355 via Thornapple Drive. Thornapple Drive is already being used by the residents of The Woodlands. The additional traffic flow from the two proposed four story apartment buildings (including the personnel that will be working in these buildings) and the proposed storage facility in combination with the existing residents in the Woodlands may be unsustainable for the one road leading onto Urbana Pike / Route 355. We trust that the Commission will undertake a traffic study to determine if this will work or not or whether the project needs to be reduced in scope to better fit the existing road infrastructure.

Another concern we have is with the scale and placement of the two rental apartment buildings on the property. As proposed, these buildings will be four stories high and will be placed on a section of the property where they would be quite close to the existing homes in the Woodlands. The scale of what is being proposed does not seem compatible with the houses immediately adjacent to them. With the size and height of the proposed apartment buildings, they will loom over the existing homes. It is unlikely that any of the existing homeowners expected that

four story buildings would be built immediately behind them when they decided to purchase their homes. We would ask that the Commission consider the size and scale of these buildings as they determine what should be approved in this space. Some potential ways to address this would be: 1) to limit the height of the proposed apartment building so the scale better fits the environment and 2) to shift the placement of the buildings up much closer to Route 355. Based on the proposed placement of the buildings shown in the application material, there is considerable area left between the buildings' parking lots and Route 355. It would seem quite feasible to shift the buildings and parking lots forward by a substantial distance towards Route 355 and by doing so would help reduce the scaling incompatibility with the existing homes in The Woodlands. It looks like the side of the apartment buildings facing Route 355 could be built so they are even with the side of the proposed storage facility building facing Route 355 and still leave them well set back from Route 355.

We also have concerns of whether a public storage facility is the right type of business operation to have immediately adjacent to a residential community. Will the public storage facility be accessible 24 hours a day? Will it be lit all night long? If so, that does not feel compatible with an adjacent residential community.. We are not aware of any other residential homes in the Urbana area specifically or Frederick County more broadly that are situated so close to a similar type of business operation.

One last comment is that we did not see anything in the proposal regarding landscaping of the Knowledge Farm property upon its development. We believe it would be appropriate for a significant amount of trees and other landscaping to be planted around and adjacent to the buildings in hopes of maintaining some more of the existing natural landscape of the land and also to provide additional bordering between the new Knowledge Farms buildings and The Woodlands community. We would ask that the Commission require specifics from the applicant on their plans in this regard prior to any approval.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to following this as you move forward.
Regards,

Dan and Stacey Rosen
3017 Herb Garden Dr.

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [Kip James](#)
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: Knowledge Farms proposed development
Date: Friday, March 11, 2022 6:16:02 AM

Good morning:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: Kip James <1kipster@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 7:32 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms proposed development

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Commissioners,

The purpose of this email is to register the James family's displeasure with the Knowledge Farm zoning change application and the character of their proposed development on their remaining property between Rt 355 and The Woodlands residential community.

It is our understanding that the proposed development would include two senior living apt buildings and everything that would entail (parking lots, public 24-hr lighting, dumpsters, 24-hr traffic), plus a possible public storage facility with all of the same "features".

As residents of The Woodlands who live on Herb Garden Drive, we must protest this planned development. The Woodlands is being built as a tranquil and secluded community providing a quiet and peaceful retirement for the 55+ age group. The community already includes many existing residents whose homes are directly adjacent to the KF property and the quiet, uninterrupted view it currently offers.

The drawing we've seen appears to place the two sizable apt buildings on or near the highest undeveloped part of the KF property, in the direct line of sight of many perimeter Woodlands homes and indirectly visible by many more. With their considerable height and footprints, these two proposed buildings make for a complete obliteration of the existing natural view so many Woodlands residents currently enjoy. The proposed buildings would replace the existing view with a "developed" or commercial view that destroys our existing neighborhood character and compatibility.

My neighbors have already weighed in on the likely increased access and egress traffic on

Rt 355 and Thornapple Drive, an additional significant negative. And the possibility of a connecting pathway between communities doesn't add any appeal. We cannot imagine how that might be considered an improvement.

We must object in the strongest possible way to the proposed new development as it currently stands, or any development with similar characteristics placed in the same location with the same footprint. Contrary to the applicant's statement claiming "Consistency with the comprehensive plan", this proposed development will not "complement" The Woodlands. Instead, in both scale and placement it looks quite incompatible with The Woodlands. Additionally these changes will have a significant impact not only on our quality of life, but will also have a significant negative financial impact on our home values.

We request that you please deny this application and proposal as they currently exist.

Thank you
Kip and Debbie James

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: FW: Public Hearing R-21-02 Knowledge Farms zoning request - resident comment
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 8:29:59 AM

From: Roselaw8 <roselaw8@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2022 1:32 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Cc: Rossetti Law <rossetti.law@capitalone.com>; ICE Gary Law <lawgary@aol.com>
Subject: Re: Public Hearing R-21-02 Knowledge Farms zoning request - resident comment

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

My apologies that I left out my address.

My property address is 3075 Herb Garden Drive, Frederick, MD 21704.

Rossetti

On Mar 12, 2022, at 1:22 PM, Roselaw8 <roselaw8@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

We live in the Woodlands of Urbana “Woodlands”, a new and lovely, quiet community bordered by Rt. 355 and Rt. 80. We came to this Urbana community because of the green environment, open space, quiet neighborhood, and less traffic.

We moved into the Woodlands in April 2021 and are dismayed to learn about potential development by Knowledge Farms (KF) along Rt. 355. My property is adjacent to the KF property. I paid a premium price for my property because of the open view of beautiful Frederick valley, but now it will be obstructed by the proposed high-rise buildings with ~220 units and a self-storage facility.

I understand a self-storage unit and a senior housing community are potential occupants of the KF property, with the ONLY exit being the one that is there now – a short driveway onto Thornapple Drive, a road that goes directly into our community off Rt. 355 with the Urbana High School and YMCA sharing the same intersection at Rt 355. The amount of traffic and noise will drastically change the landscape of our community and be bad for the overall natural landscape environment, and residents in the adjacent properties’ perspectives.

Businesses with access to our community will have the adverse effect of having others discover and use amenities that we pay a considerable amount of money to maintain.

These include picnic/recreation areas, fire pits and pickleball courts etc.

We are also STRONGLY against the proposal/requirement of building a walking path between KF and Woodlands as it creates unwanted trespassing to our community. It is absolutely NOT what the Woodlands residents want to have.

In addition, the overall traffic impact will be a huge issue.

- It is already difficult to drive onto Rt. 355 without traffic backing up due to the speed of cars and the blind spots – and we are not yet at full capacity within our community.
- Having cars lined up on Thornapple Drive to leave our community or having tenants wait to get onto Thornapple Drive from the proposed buildings at KF will cause undue traffic backups as well as delays for all of us to get in and out of our community. Without another exit from the South, traffic will be challenging.
- Please also note that the Urbana High School and YMCA are sharing this same Rt.355 intersection.
- Safety issues for fire, police and EMTs trying to get into and out of anything built on KF at Thornapple Drive
- Potentially a large number of vehicles will be diverted to drive through our neighborhood to find another exit at Ivy Meadows Drive/Urbana Parkway due to traffic jams at Thornapple Drive/Rt.355 intersection.
- Large trucks and vehicles coming into the storage facility which would increase noises around the clock 24-hours, additional traffic back up at Thornapple Drive and bring people living outside the area to our neighborhoods.
- Having just one way in and out on KF only adds to the traffic and safety of our community. That will be disastrous for all of us.

While I understand the need to develop this KF property, I believe that building something that maintains the Urbana community value and quality of life of those of us already living here, are important!

Potential solutions would be:

- 1) Keeping the current zoning.
- 2) Another exit for KF to be built south of Thornapple Drive. We need our views to be maintained and the traffic to be reasonable to get in and out via Rt. 355 or in and out of the businesses at Knowledge Farms.
- 3) Restrict and limit the high-rise building heights and 50% reduction of the senior housing units at Knowledge Farms.

We love Urbana being such a beautiful community! We love our neighborhood! High-Rise Buildings and Storage Facility within a residential neighborhood are absolutely against our value and not desirable in a long run for Urbana.

Please consider these issues as you review the development applications for Knowledge Farms. You may reach me via email at roselaw8@gmail.com

Rossetti

To: Frederick County Planning Commission

Subject: Knowledge Farm Mixed Use Development Rezoning Application

From: Walter Labitzky, Resident of Woodlands 55+ Community

Date: March 12, 2022

Dear Chairman Tressler and Commission Members,

As you consider the Knowledge Farm Rezoning Application for the MXD development of the 34 acres located at 3280 Urbana Pike, I am submitting the following points to be considered in your review of the Project Plan and its effect on Fredrick County and in particular on the development of the immediate areas of this part of Urbana.

I moved to Urbana from Gaithersburg where I witnessed firsthand where the negative overzealous development has not always achieved the positive results for the community, where well intentioned developers created impersonal neighborhoods. It's important to evaluate how the overall growth strategy can support the community aspiration and intension. Urbana has shown good planning over the years and has the chance to assure that future submitted plans by developers are beneficial vs. detrimental to the livable existing communities and achieves the most efficient land use. The following are concerns and suggestions I ask you to consider.

REZONING USE: Comparing the new Rezoning Application of the Knowledge Farms to the original plan of having three structures of two/three story buildings compared to the new proposed 24 hour self-storage facility, two 6 story apartment buildings (225 Units) as well as the already existing Medical Office Building is an overdevelopment of the available space. How can this meet the LFMP criteria of size, building scale and style in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan?

As the process develops, will the Rezoning Applicant please provide more specificity as to what the applicant's use under General Commercial Zone (GC) would bring to the developed property. Proposing a three-story 24 Hour Self Storage Facility of approximately 20,000 square feet is not an efficient land use and does not bring with it the potential of creating job opportunities that other uses would bring to the area. Most Storage Facilities only have about two employees. They do however have the potential of creating many problems with their renters. They are also an environmental concern because of the space conditioning equipment, generators, and the bright lights necessary for security and 24-hour access. Having a self-storage area between the existing medical building and the proposed Senior Living Units limits the livable, environmental and walkable areas for the senior residents. Also, there are already 5 storage facilities within an 8-mile radius of the property.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS: The submitted Traffic Analysis for the Knowledge Farm page 8 Figure 2-2 shows the major roads and intersections in the surrounding area but does not provide a good solution for the roadway capacity that will need to accommodate the entry/exit traffic form the proposed new development, (present medical building, proposed self-storage facility and residents of the apartment units) on to the short section of Thornapple Dr. before it meets the MD 355 intersection where a traffic light is proposed by the applicant.

The Rezoning Application shows no plans addressing as to how the back up traffic que of cars coming and going to the new facilities and the Woodlands 55+ Community Residents will be handled at the narrow roadway to the property. It will add to the bottleneck occurring at the MD 355/Thornapple Dr/Campus Drive Intersection. Impatient drivers will soon discover that it will be quicker to drive through the Woodlands 55+ Community in order to reach Fingerboard Road or drive to the expanding retail area at Bennet Creek Blvd. and the future planned expansion of the Urbana Corporate Center.

The Intersection MD 355/Thornapple Dr./Campus Drive is already extremely congested, especially during the peak school arrival & dismissal time periods.

Since there is no second exit planned to intersect with MD 355 at the East end of the property, the traffic congestion will always be present on the roadway leaving the Knowledge Farm (KF) Property. What is the time frame from the start of plan approval or construction date that this traffic light will be functioning? Please also reconsider a second entrance to quickly accommodate Police, Fire, and Emergency Service vehicles.

BUILDING INTEGRATION: Looking at the Concept Use Plan submitted by the Applicant, I am concerned that building height and style compatibility will not seamlessly integrate with the architecture of the adjacent Woodlands development. Originally there were only two and three story buildings planned for the Knowledge Farm. The Rezoning Concept Use Plan shows four and six story buildings as examples of what is envisioned. This would be a large building concentration in a small cul-de-sac area.

As a resident of the Woodlands I hope that our community is kept up to date on what types of facilities are planned, final selections made and that Woodlands is represented at the Site Plan Phase. A transparent discourse will make this process amicable and easier for everyone.

LACK OF EMERGENCY SERVICES: Information provided by the developer states; "...fire/safety and law enforcement facilities already serve the Property and the surrounding area, allowing for the natural, efficient extension of same to the Project." This statement is misleading by indicating that these sufficient resources already exist. Presently they are not capable of supporting the increased demands required for some of the facilities that are being proposed by the developer. The December 2018 Frederick County Fire-Rescue Plan already places the Urbana area in a "moderate risk" category for fire-rescue services. Which "requires an enhanced level of fire and emergency medical service delivery capability to meet the current and future demand". The 2018 report also addresses the need for an additional Fire and Rescue Services Station in the southern area of Urbana, which would be within the area of this proposed re-zoning and additional development. The report further elaborates on deficiencies for Advance Life Support (ALS) care throughout the county. Frederick County should not approve any additional development of facilities which may additionally tax the already deficient emergency services in this area. Furthermore, the county should not rely on mutual aid from other surrounding counties to serve as a stopgap until additional emergency service resources become available in the county. The county should ensure that all NFPA (National Fire Protection Association)-1720 response time standards are met prior to the consideration for further development in Urbana.

Thank you for your consideration.

Walter Labitzky

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [Howard Sherer](#)
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: Concerns regarding development of Knowledge Farms site
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 8:31:08 AM

Good morning:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: Howard Sherer <hmsherer@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2022 3:44 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Concerns regarding development of Knowledge Farms site

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

March 12, 2022

To: Frederick County Rezoning Planning Group

From: Susan and Howard Sherer, 3009 Herb Garden Drive

Subject: Concerns regarding development of Knowledge Farms site

We have questions and concerns regarding the rezoning plans presented by Knowledge Farms for the land behind Thornapple and Herb Garden Drives. The proposed high-density senior residences and storage facility have the potential to change the landscape of the community, introducing traffic problems, safety, and noise issues, while detracting from the natural landscape.

We believe that there will be significant traffic congestion for the Woodlands residential community, both during construction and afterwards. Even now, traffic at the intersection of 355 and Thornapple is very high, particularly before and after school and during commuting times. Thornapple is a small residential street, not suitable for the traffic load that would result from the storage facility and proposed high density apartments. Such traffic should directly egress to Route 355. But even that can cause congestion, as we recently witnessed

driving up Route 355 during rush hour, with substantial backups at all the traffic lights on that road.

In addition, there is no information in the plans as to how the storage facility lighting and traffic will impact the neighbors who do back onto that street. Will there be 24-hour access and therefore noise, lighting, and safety issues? This seems inconsistent with the nature of the existing Woodlands community.

Also, a 5-story apartment building, compared to the original plans for 2-3-story office buildings, will negatively affect the overall appearance of the Woodlands community. Will there be natural barriers installed behind the Woodlands?

Finally, the introduction of a pathway directly into the Woodlands would allow access to amenities for which we in the Woodlands community are responsible. How will the township contribute to controlling any problems that might occur?

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [Roselaw8](#)
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: Public Hearing R-21-02 Knowledge Farms zoning request - resident comment
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 8:29:36 AM

Good morning:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: Roselaw8 <roselaw8@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2022 1:23 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Cc: Rossetti Law <rossetti.law@capitalone.com>; R Law <roselaw8@gmail.com>; ICE Gary Law <lawgary@aol.com>
Subject: Public Hearing R-21-02 Knowledge Farms zoning request - resident comment

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

We live in the Woodlands of Urbana “Woodlands”, a new and lovely, quiet community bordered by Rt. 355 and Rt. 80. We came to this Urbana community because of the green environment, open space, quiet neighborhood, and less traffic.

We moved into the Woodlands in April 2021 and are dismayed to learn about potential development by Knowledge Farms (KF) along Rt. 355. My property is adjacent to the KF property. I paid a premium price for my property because of the open view of beautiful Frederick valley, but now it will be obstructed by the proposed high-rise buildings with ~220 units and a self-storage facility.

I understand a self-storage unit and a senior housing community are potential occupants of the KF property, with the ONLY exit being the one that is there now – a short driveway onto Thornapple Drive, a road that goes directly into our community off Rt. 355 with the Urbana High School and YMCA sharing the same intersection at Rt 355. The amount of traffic and noise will drastically

change the landscape of our community and be bad for the overall natural landscape environment, and residents in the adjacent properties' perspectives.

Businesses with access to our community will have the adverse effect of having others discover and use amenities that we pay a considerable amount of money to maintain. These include picnic/recreation areas, fire pits and pickleball courts etc.

We are also STRONGLY against the proposal/requirement of building a walking path between KF and Woodlands as it creates unwanted trespassing to our community. It is absolutely NOT what the Woodlands residents want to have.

In addition, the overall traffic impact will be a huge issue.

- It is already difficult to drive onto Rt. 355 without traffic backing up due to the speed of cars and the blind spots – and we are not yet at full capacity within our community.
- Having cars lined up on Thornapple Drive to leave our community or having tenants wait to get onto Thornapple Drive from the proposed buildings at KF will cause undue traffic backups as well as delays for all of us to get in and out of our community. Without another exit from the South, traffic will be challenging.
- Please also note that the Urbana High School and YMCA are sharing this same Rt.355 intersection.
- Safety issues for fire, police and EMTs trying to get into and out of anything built on KF at Thornapple Drive
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- Large trucks and vehicles coming into the storage facility which would increase noises around the clock 24-hours, additional traffic back up at Thornapple Drive and bring people living outside the area to our neighborhoods.
- Having just one way in and out on KF only adds to the traffic and safety of our community. That will be disastrous for all of us.

While I understand the need to develop this KF property, I believe that building something that maintains the Urbana community value and quality of life of those of us already living here, are important!

Potential solutions would be:

- 1) Keeping the current zoning.
- 2) Another exit for KF to be built south of Thornapple Drive. We need our views to be maintained and the traffic to be reasonable to get in and out via Rt. 355 or in and out of the businesses at Knowledge Farms.

3) Restrict and limit the high-rise building heights and 50% reduction of the senior housing units at Knowledge Farms.

We love Urbana being such a beautiful community! We love our neighborhood! High-Rise Buildings and Storage Facility within a residential neighborhood are absolutely against our value and not desirable in a long run for Urbana.

Please consider these issues as you review the development applications for Knowledge Farms. You may reach me via email at roselaw8@gmail.com

Rosetti

March 13, 2022

3081 Herb Garden Drive
Frederick, MD 21704

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

We are Grateful for this chance to express our opinion over the development of the Knowledge Farms property adjoining our residence. The very reason we signed for the purchase of our home (in July, 2020) in this new neighborhood was that it advertised to be a quiet area surrounded by a natural setting. Before we purchased, I checked the Frederick County Master Plan on-line and it showed no further uses for the land next to the Woodlands of Urbana. Now we are told that not only is the land to our side being developed, but that it will bring a 50% increase in population to the entrance of our neighborhood. This will destroy the very aesthetics which drew most of our residents to the Woodlands. According to your own Livable Frederick Master Plan (LFMP) **“It proposes no new growth areas, no expansion of existing growth areas, and no zoning changes.”**

An impact study for changes in traffic flow is required, so consider these facts:

1. An increase of traffic flow by 50% cannot be adequately controlled by adding a traffic light to the intersection of 355 and Thornapple RD. The additional traffic will be inside that intersection (i.e. at Knowledge Farm and Thornapple). This will create a permanent bottle neck at rush hours.

2. There is a rise on 355 approaching Thornapple from the south which creates a blind spot (“line of sight”). Presently, this problem is a minor one, but with a 50% increase in traffic, it will become a major problem. Add to this, the fact that the road also intersects with an access to Urbana High School, and the probability for unwarranted danger increases.

3. The current master plan for Frederick County shows a “Future light rail” to run along 355. This will cross the very same intersection of 355 and Thornapple. Future construction engineers will wonder “What were they thinking?”

It seems clear that the proposed development for Knowledge Farms will exceed the County Planning Commission’s own stated goal of ensuring the county’s shared values of preserving the future character of a Livable Frederick County. A scaled down plan with a separate entrance might preserve the current life quality of our community.

Sincerely,

Rodger and Martha Cesaro

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: ohiogirl56@aol.com
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: Knowledge Farms rezoning proposal concerns from Woodlands residents
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 8:33:45 AM

Good morning:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: ohiogirl56@aol.com <ohiogirl56@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 9:15 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms rezoning proposal concerns from Woodlands residents

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

We are writing today to express our reservations concerning the proposed rezoning of Knowledge Farms. As our residence backs up to the property, we definitely have cause for concern with the plans presented.

Traffic: the size and scope of the Knowledge Farms plans will definitely create more cars entering and exiting from the current driveway. The Woodlands is not even fully occupied, and the backup on 355 can be dangerous. Heading north on 355, Erica was waiting to turn left on Thornapple and was almost hit head on by a speeding car that was using the left turn lane (that is designated to turn into Campus Drive) to bypass the slow line of traffic heading south on 355. We have seen that repeated constantly, with drivers driving in the wrong lanes to escape traffic. What will happen when even more cars are added to the mix? We already see cars using the Woodlands as a cut through, to and from the high school, as well as to avoid a backlog of traffic on 355. The proposal to add an additional lane on Thornapple to exit will not alleviate the problem. If the rezoning is to be passed, the Knowledge Farm builder must be required to add another entrance further down 355 heading south to accommodate the cars that will be using the new buildings.

Proposed additions: How close to the Woodlands property will the Knowledge Farms buildings be? Right now we are looking out on a quiet meadow. Will our view change to a parking lot? Will the view now include buildings? Will there be the lights that are on 24 hours , the type that are always attached to a self storage building ? What type of planting and

screening will be provided to muffle the noise coming from the new buildings? It is discouraging for us to have specifically chosen this spot because of the view, only to learn 12 months after we moved in that we could soon be gazing at parking lots, storage units, and brightly lit buildings.

We ask that the Committee consider the negative aspects of the current Knowledge Farms proposal, and request that the developers adjust the plans to insure the safety and neighborhood feel of our current community. The Woodlands is bringing in significant property tax revenue to Urbana, and our concerns must be addressed.

Thank you for your time.

Steve and Erica Mitchell
3091 Herb Garden Drive

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [John Hopkins](#)
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: Public comments regarding the Knowledge Farms Mixed Use Development
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 8:33:13 AM

Good morning:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: John Hopkins <john.w.hopkins@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 8:37 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Public comments regarding the Knowledge Farms Mixed Use Development

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

3205 Ivy Meadow Drive
Frederick, MD
21704

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,
We are residents of The Woodlands at Urbana, having moved here during the summer of 2021. As you are aware, this is a quiet and well cared for 55+ community. Part of the appeal for us in selecting The Woodlands was the very limited access to the community, with the only entry points to the main section of The Woodlands being Thornapple Drive off of 355 and Ivy Meadow Drive off of Urbana Parkway. This has the effect of allowing residents a feeling of privacy, with traffic flow limited primarily to resident vehicles (once construction of homes in The Woodlands is completed).

As you also are aware, the proposed Knowledge Farms Mixed Use Development will have a tremendous impact on multiple Frederick County constituent groups. As residents of The Woodlands, our biggest concern by far is the use of Thornapple Drive as the primary access, and sole access from 355, to the proposed development. The intersection of Thornapple Drive (from the west, and Campus Drive from the east) with 355 is already a very dangerous intersection. We frequently cross 355 at Thornapple Drive to visit the YMCA. I am nervous every time we do that, as oncoming traffic from the south is hidden by a rise in the terrain.

Drastically increased traffic at that intersection appears to be a recipe for disaster. This would

endanger residents of The Woodlands (all seniors I'd like to remind you) as well as new residents of the proposed development and any employees working at any of the new development businesses. In addition, this will also create a far more dangerous situation for both parents and young, inexperienced student drivers utilizing Campus Drive while going to and coming from Urbana High School. This will occur on a daily basis while school is in session as well as on numerous other occasions for athletic events and other extra-curricular activities at the school throughout the year.

With the entrance to the Knowledge Farms property off Thornapple Drive being so close to 355, it is quite likely that it will create gridlock situations as vehicles exiting The Woodlands and any Knowledge Farms development during busy times, with traffic backing up from each vehicle source. This will happen with constant construction traffic before even the first resident arrives at the Knowledge Farms property. The increased traffic and potential for gridlock situations will undoubtedly create frustration with drivers, leading to a higher willingness to take risks to enter or cross 355. This can easily be prevented as will now be described.

Given these concerns, it seems obvious that if the Knowledge Farms Mixed Use Development is to become a reality, it would be imperative to create a separate ingress/egress intersection for 355 traffic further south of Thornapple Drive. Clearly the developer would prefer not to do that because of the added expense. But, needlessly endangering the lives of Frederick County residents is **not** an acceptable tradeoff in order to save a private developer money. We believe that would and should be the Commission's view as well.

We also believe that a public storage facility is not in keeping with the nature of this area. Such a facility would funnel non-residents to this area. These businesses unfortunately are known to attract customers who hide goods rather than store possessions. Such a business would be far too physically close to residents' homes and are typically open 24 hours each day.

As mentioned in our opening paragraph, The Woodlands has attempted to make it feel as though we live in a "private" community. Homes here are expensive, partly because of the open areas, shared amenities and the quiet nature of the area. Additionally, we pay high HOA fees for the development, operation and maintenance of numerous facilities, including a lodge, swimming pool, firepits, bocce courts, pickleball courts and walking paths. The amenities are paid for by all the senior residents of The Woodlands. Consideration of introducing direct access to The Woodlands via walking paths, etc. for new residents of any Knowledge Farms development would create an open invitation to try to use the amenities for which the residents of The Woodlands pay dearly. Any such connections would provide no benefit to residents of The Woodlands, only headaches and unpleasant policing of the amenities that would be forced upon its residents. We urge you to deny any such access to The Woodlands property.

We understand Frederick County's desire to encourage development. However, the concerns we have noted here should be properly addressed through required modifications to the development plan. The safety of all the residents in this part of Frederick County is placed at risk in the current plan.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

John & Rose Hopkins

John: (630) 363-8765

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: krbrown0601@gmail.com
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: FW: Woodlands of Urbana 55+: Knowledge Farms Concerns
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 11:21:16 AM
Attachments: [IMG_0072.JPG](#)

Good morning:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: Kenneth Brown <krbrown0601@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 11:01 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Woodlands of Urbana 55+: Knowledge Farms Concerns

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

We are residents of The Woodlands at Urbana, having moved here in October 2020. As you are aware, this is a quiet and peaceful 55+ community that many of us chose as our retirement location for those very qualities. My husband and I intentionally selected a premium lot backing to the treed hills adjacent to the current Knowledge Farms building. We have enjoyed the peace and quiet of sitting on our back porch watching the rabbits, groundhogs, foxes, hawks and deer wander freely across the hills and the open space to the south.

We are extremely saddened and disappointed with the idea that this will all be lost if the current plans for the Knowledge Farms expansion are approved as our view will change to that of looking at a parking lot and a multi-story storage unit along with the associated traffic, noise, security lights at night and other by-products of this type of business.

We beg you to consider not approving this zoning request.

Respectfully,

Ken & Andres Herrera-Brown
3223 Thornapple Drive
Frederick, MD 20701

Natelli Communities

March 14, 2022

Members of the Frederick County Planning Commission
Winchester Hall
12 E Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701

Re: Knowledge Farms – Rezoning Case R-21-02

Dear Planning Commission Members:

In our capacity as developers of the adjoining Woodlands community, we are writing to offer our general support for the rezoning of the subject property from ORI to MXD. We agree that the market for conventional office space has changed markedly over the past 10 years, further accelerated recently by permanent changes in work habits associated with the response to the Covid pandemic. Broadening the ability to offer uses that are in-demand for Frederick residents and businesses as we look to the future makes sense, and this rezoning offers the ability to do this.

We have a couple of items that we'd ask you to keep in mind for the record as this property moves forward:

The property adjoining this site to the west is being developed into an Active Adult Community known as The Woodlands. The units along most of the property boundary line are being constructed as fee simple, two story, townhome style units. There are a few single family detached homes bordering the southern end of the common property line. Article 1-19-10.500.3. (C) of the Frederick County Code (Approval Criteria for Planned Development Districts) requires a Finding that:

(C) The proposed development is compatible with existing or anticipated surrounding land uses with regard to size, building scale, intensity, setbacks, and landscaping, or the proposal provides for mitigation of differences in appearance or scale through such means as setbacks, screening, landscaping; or other design features in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan, and any applicable community or corridor plans; The proposed commercial use can be made compatible with surrounding uses through careful design and siting of new structures.

As noted in the staff report – *“Nothing proposed in this Application – and illustrated on the Concept Plan – is out-of-character when compared to recent development approved or constructed in Urbana. The subsequent site plan review for the Site would address detailed design issues such as parking, landscaping, screening, building height, building massing/location, etc.”*

At this level of approval we recognize the Planning Commission is not yet considering or addressing the detailed aspects of site design, including the scale, massing and setbacks of

buildings, or exterior lighting impacts on adjoining properties. However, we ask that the Planning Commission keep in mind the need to address compatibility pursuant to the referenced criteria, including setbacks, screening, landscaping and other techniques such as berming and buffering if appropriate, to ensure compatibility with adjoining uses, as more detailed design plans are developed for this property.

We also ask that the site be developed in accordance with the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, and any access and travel lane improvements necessary to accommodate development of this site in accordance with the proposed Concept Plan be required with future preliminary and site plan submissions.

Sincerely,



Tom Natelli, CEO
Natelli Communities

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: [Marcia Gelman](#)
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: Knowledge farms rezoning
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 2:04:33 PM

Good afternoon:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

-----Original Message-----

From: Marcia Gelman <marciaggelman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 11:46 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge farms rezoning

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

While I am convinced that the commissioners know the issues involving the Woodlands of Urbanna community I feel it is of importance to re-state our position.

The most salient issue is the lack of ingress/egress off of 355 to allow for this bedroom community to exist as planned. Coming in from Thornapple will create a dangerous and congested traffic situation which is not rocket science to observe. This is a one lane entrance to a small 55 community that was not intended to have traffic of a highdensity residential community ,24 hour traffic of a storage unit, as well as existing businesses. While the commissioners may not see the traffic as an issue I am a victim if you will, of trying to make a left turn onto 355. The traffic is fast and often above the speed limit as well as students leaving. This community has strict standards on their aesthetics for each individual home which have been largely adhere to by the residents . It is counter intuitive to put up high-rise and obstructed views while trying to keep an esthetic of natural areas. Additionally a 24 hour self storage unit is inappropriate next to a 55 residential community. The ingress/egress of a 24 hour business is unconscionable next to residential housing.

So count this email as yet another resident of the Woodlands asking for you to reconsider the way this plot of land is zoned.

you may reach me at the above email if you have any questions regarding my statements.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Planning Commission](#)
To: dlewinski@aol.com
Cc: [Brandt, Kimberly G.](#); [Superczynski, Denis](#)
Subject: RE: R-21-02 Knowledge Farms MDX
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 7:33:46 AM

Good morning:

Thank you for your comments on the proposed Knowledge Farms rezoning.

Your comments will be shared with the Planning Commission for their consideration.

Karen L. James
Administrative Specialist
Division of Planning & Permitting
Frederick County Government
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1138

From: dlewinski@aol.com <dlewinski@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 5:47 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: R-21-02 Knowledge Farms MDX

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

March 14, 2020

3231 Ivy Meadow Drive
Urbana MD 21704

Frederick County Planning Commission,

My name is Denise Lewinski and I am a resident of the Woodlands at Urbana and a resident member of the HOA Board. I would like to express my concerns about the rezoning application for the Knowledge Farms (KF) site. I moved to Frederick County a year ago to retreat from some of the traffic congestion, over-development, and increased crime in Montgomery County. The rezoning of the Knowledge Farm site that is adjacent to The Woodlands would increase the traffic congestion and crime on our streets and property. The only proposed entry/exit into the KF site is off of one of our neighborhood streets (Thornapple Dr). Congestion at that intersection and to Route 355 is high, especially during peak hours of commuting. Knowledge Farms residents and visitors would have an easy access into the Woodlands neighborhood to avoid congestion on Route 355.

The residents of The Woodlands at Urbana pay a significant association fee to support amenities such as parks, a Lodge, scenic walkways, fire pits, etc. We currently experience trespassers from another neighboring community. Creating an easily accessible pathway by car or foot would increase trespassing in The Woodlands causing wear and tear on our property and unlawful use of our facilities. The proposed addition of a public storage unit causes me extreme concern as it would bring people from outside the neighborhood, and county to use the facility. Our noise and crime could greatly increase. The addition of a Memory Facility will bring not only residents to the area, but workers such as nurses,

caregivers, janitors, food service personnel., etc.

I do not think that the county should approve the rezoning until sufficient infrastructure in terms of roadways are added. We need improvement to 355 through this southern part of Urbana in order to provide another entrance/exit to the property. Please consider carefully when reviewing this proposal.

Denise Lewinski