

From: Susan <spmccannon@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2023 4:20 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>; Superczynski, Denis <DSuperczynski@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT R-21-02

September 26, 2023

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

Please accept this letter as public comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02, submitted to the county in February 2022 and amended in July 2023. I stand against the rezoning for three broad reasons explained in detail below, namely, incorrect and misleading information by the applicant, inherent weaknesses in their interpretation of the Approval Criteria, and insufficient acreage, site location, and a weak concept plan, all of which fail to qualify as a successful MXD development.

INCORRECT/INCOMPLETE JUSTIFICATION (Aug 2023)

A. In support of S 1-19-10.500.2 (B), Knowledge Farms Partners (KF) state on page 2 of the justification statement, their location is in *“a corridor for growth and development along Interstate 270 leading from central Frederick City, through Ballenger Creek Community Growth Area and continuing along I-270 through the Urbana Community Growth Area and terminating at the northern edge of Hyattstown. This corridor emphasizes transit-oriented, mixed-use development to be served by a practical and affordable transit line.”*

RESPONSE: This is incorrect. The majority of the 2 ½ mile radius encompassing the Urbana Community District, including the entire KF parcel, is NOT part of the I-270 primary growth corridor. As shown in figure 4 (LFMP pg 45), the I-270 corridor is to the west of KF and includes land within view of I-270 and access to an I-270 exit. As a secondary growth sector, the Urbana Community District has neither an MXD focus nor the potential transportation funding allotted to primary growth sectors.

Contrary to the KF statement in section 1-19-1.500.3 (B), the LFMP prioritizes I-270 corridor transit options, making the 32' transit reserve on KF property, a second choice and not supportive of current transit initiatives.

B. In support of Approval Criteria S 1-19-10.500.3 (D), KF states on page 5 of the justification statement, *“The project is a natural evolution and completion of the area’s development patterns (i.e., the Projects primary access is a shared access for the Woodlands – provided to the Woodlands by the Applicant via a “right of way.”*

RESPONSE: This is incorrect. The seventy-foot right of way that became part of Thornapple Drive was never “provided” to the Woodlands. The roadway access was dedicated to Frederick County in 2004 on plat P.B. 77, page 20 to give “access for the Kirkgaard, Fairview and Raystock properties.” Mr. Leslie Kirkgaard, partner, signed the document on behalf of KF, in essence, granting R/W access to his own property. Monocacy Land Corporation did not establish the Woodlands project until the submission of R-16-01 (C) in 2017, thirteen years after this right of way was established.

C. In support of S 1-19-500.3 (E), Knowledge Farm describes on page 5 of the justification statement the design’s safety and efficiency due to a proposed egress on MD 355. The second egress is described at 720 feet south of the intersection at Thornapple Drive (a residential street) and Campus Drive (the access from MD 355 to Urbana High School, Middle School, YMCA, and a recently approved, 80,000 square foot medical office building). While mitigation is part of an official APFO review in phase two, Approval Criteria S 1-19-500.3 (J) brings into debate APFO potential in the rezoning process.

RESPONSE: The second egress possibility is misleading and approval is unlikely. In fact, the entire MD 355 frontage, both north and south of the existing Thornapple Drive, was denied by the state in 2004 on the above referenced county plat, P.B. 77 page 20.

KF currently has only a single egress onto a residential street, Thornapple Drive. The second egress comes at a cost of “millions of dollars” and is necessary to support the project density per Mr. Chad Tyler, a representative of Knowledge Farms, making it a cornerstone to their most recent proposal. KF, the county council, and local residents have stated that the lack of a second egress was a significant barrier to the development due to traffic storage concerns, fire, rescue, and emergency safety, pedestrian safety, and existing congestion on the heavily traveled MD 355.

Multiple barriers to the proposed egress make future approval unlikely. Despite assurances on December 6th, 2022 that they were “confident” the egress would be approved, KF’s most recent justification clarified that the egress is only conceptual in nature and subject to future state review and county ordinances.

The 2018 KF traffic study admitted that no consideration was given to the second egress “due to elevation and topography.” At the June 2022 County Council hearing, both the developer and the Council stated that a second egress would be “difficult, if not impossible”, due to existing slope, limited site line, heavy congestion, and natural features along the curvy, narrow road with a soon to be added traffic signal just 720 feet away.

D. KF Concept Development Plan #9 references a section of SR 355 near the southern property border as part of a future “widening by Monocacy Land Company & Knowledge Farms Partners, LLC”, implying there is a significant pending roadway project in that location that includes KF funding.

RESPONSE: This is incorrect. In a series of emails dated September 19 and 20, 2023, Frederick County traffic engineer Mark Mishler stated the reference relates to escrow account #5039 which stems from a circa 2017 APFO mitigation Letter of Understanding (LOU) between Frederick County and Monocacy Land Corporation. It established the need for a second southbound lane on MD 355 “through the intersection of Campus and Thornapple Drive” to be completed at the time of intersection signalization. The email does not reference the southern KF property and there are currently no funds accrued in the road construction account, although there is an available balance in the signalization escrow.

Mr Mishler further provided that Knowledge Farm funds per the APFO LOU dated November 13, 2004 in the amount of \$105,000 were deposited to escrow account #3232 to complete the dualization of MD 355 south of MD 80 and escrow account #3248 to complete the second northbound lane on MD 355. Both of these projects have are finished and the available funds disbursed. The Monocacy Land Corporation will be reimbursed for the balance not their responsibility when future projects pay into the escrow account.

E. Contrary to the KF justification statement under S 1-19-10.500.3 (G), at the June 2022 council meeting, both the developer and the Council agreed that the existing Urbana ambulance and fire rescue services were inadequate to meet the needs of this development, requiring additional equipment and personnel. While senior communities do have less impact on schools and playgrounds, they typically have a greater impact on rescue and ambulance services. A 55+ community is NOT, however, a retirement facility. Vibrant, active, and employed adults, including those under the age of 55, live in these neighborhoods.

WEAKNESSES IN ORDINANCES/APPROVAL CRITERIA

A. In sections, S 1-19-10.500.3 (A), S 1-19-500.3 (B) S 1-19-500.3 (C) S 1-19-3.11.110.4, Knowledge farms uses the phrases “compatible”, “seamless integration” , “integrated” design, “complement,” and “efficient arrangement” of space, encouraging the belief that the proposal holds similarities with the surrounding community.

RESPONSE: KF has overstated their compatibility with the Woodlands of Urbana, a two hundred acre, private amenity community with no public resources, the Villages of Urbana, and the rural areas to the south.

- The employment and commercial elements of the neighboring six hundred acre Southern Employment MXD district, of which the two hundred acre Woodlands of Urbana is the component residential land use mix, are approximately one to two miles away from the KF property. To meet the diversity and size of the project, Frederick County required the R-16-01 proposal to be considered as three different site plans.
 - The KF acreage is surrounded on three sides by the fully residential Woodlands of Urbana. Heating, air conditioning, security lights, emergency vehicles from the KF commercial and institutional buildings will contribute to light and noise pollution for the residential community, far from “complementing” the neighboring property.
- The closest point of contact between the proposed development and the Woodlands is 26 feet, the minimum requirement per county regulations.
 - Steep differences in slope with a natural gully between the projects will make cost effective mitigation unlikely, if not impossible. Since the entire buildable acreage is encompassed in the proposal, challenges need to be debated ahead of site plan application as allowed in the Approval Criteria.
- The proposed KF condos are an estimated one-third bigger than the Woodlands condos. The Woodlands condos are not visible from the KF property and subsequently do not appear on any KF concept map.
- The KF proposal has an unacceptable density compared to the rest of Urbana. The KF proposal has approximately three-quarters more square feet per acre than the Woodlands of Urbana. Separating residential land use only, the KF proposal has approximately twice as many dwellings per acre than both the Villages of Urbana and the Woodlands.
- To meet Frederick County ordinances, the proposal will need approximately 368 parking spaces for their residential community, 180 spaces for the medical/office building, and 50 spaces for the Continuing Care Facility for a total of 598 spots. If the final site plan includes a warehouse, the parking requirements would be an additional 100 parking spots, but if the commercial buildings become retail space as MXD zoning allows, that number can go as high as 400 additional spaces.
 - There appear to be approximately 350 predominantly perpendicular parking spots on the concept map, leaving little to no on-street parking. By contrast, the Woodlands has in excess of 1000 parking spaces and significant street parking. KF overflow parking will spill onto Thornapple Drive, negatively affecting the neighborhood community.
- To the south of the KF parcel are predominately LFMP protected rural and agricultural areas, not expanding MXD developments. This area is generally not served by public water and sewage, making future MXD development or even incorporation into the Urbana Community growth bubble, unlikely. The LFMP further identifies (page 42) the future of Urbana in a series of proposed “hubs and spoke” connections to Frederick City to the north, not continuing to the south, further protecting these rural communities.

B. In sections S 1-19-10.500.3 (D) S 1-19-10.500.3 (E) S 1-19-10.500.3 (F), Knowledge Farm describes their contributions to the “seamless integration” with surrounding roadways and communities, a “natural evolution and completion” of transportation networks, and enhancing “connectivity and mobility” with the neighboring Woodlands.

RESPONSE: Knowledge Farms continues to overestimate the development's benefit and connectivity to the surrounding community, especially with the Woodlands of Urbana.

- Woodlands homeowners have clearly and unequivocally refuted all suggestions by Mr. Tyler that Woodlands amenities be "shared" or connected, or that the new development would somehow become "Woodlands II."
- Other than an APFO LOU that required a water and sewage right of way from the Monocacy Land Corporation to KF, the Woodland's side of the property line is owned by individual, private homeowners. There is no pedestrian or road access between the two developments. With the exception of the water/sewage right of way and a signage easement on an unbuildable piece of KF land, both negotiated with the developer of the Woodlands prior to site plan approval, there are no known agreements, relationships, understandings, or history between the Woodlands and KF.
- The only possible physical connection between the developments is the proposed ten foot (approximate) section of sidewalk from the KF driveway on Thornapple Drive to the end of their property line. (KF 2021 Traffic study appendix).
- The KF proposal includes a ten foot wide bike path and road widening improvement along the east side of MD 355, the opposite side of the road from both their property and the existing Urbana bike trail.
 - KF does not own that property and there is no known easement or right-of-way. On the east side of MD 355 is a large line of trees mitigating the county highway facility.
 - Slope, FRO easements, a stream bed, and other natural barriers prevent the existing Urbana bike path from continuing on the west side of MD 355. In essence, the proposal starts a bike path at Campus Drive and ends approximately 1500 feet later before the road approaches the Bennet Creek bed.

C. In support of S 1-19-10.500.3 (H) S 1-19-10.500.3 (K), Knowledge Farms acknowledges that the site is limited due to storm flows, natural stream valleys, and steep slopes along the eastern side of the property, forcing the development to the western, residential property line. Several FRO easements add to site complexity, making the 34.99 acreage about a 20 acre buildable lot per their concept map #9, further isolating the property from the greater Urbana community and limiting its potential as a high density, interconnected MXD development.

MXD INTENT AND PURPOSE/KF WEAKNESSES

A successful MXD plan relies on the concept of live, work and play in a single location. Done correctly, MXD zoning can provide affordable housing, a profitable and inexpensive location for growing small businesses, and a significant fight against climate change while adjusting to a fluctuating market economy. MXD zoning is a cornerstone for urban growth, Per the LFMP (pg 200), Mixed Use development is *"intended to facilitate redevelopment and transit oriented development (TOD) opportunities in existing developed areas adjoining underutilized commercial industrial and employment areas and vacant or underutilized commercial/ employment corridors."*

A failed MXD development leads to higher vacancy rates, failure to meet target goals, and increased complexity in managing county growth. Redevelopment opportunities are also key to a successful MXD as market conditions change rapidly. The LFMP and Frederick county ordinances address and limits MXD proposals, but the LFMP also recognizes (pg 95) the need to *"Identify opportunity sites and determine impediments to mixed use development through consultation with the county's economic and environmental agencies and representatives of the development industry."*

RESPONSE: This 35 acre plot of land fails to meet the criteria of a successful MXD development, fails to satisfy the goals of the LFMP for MXD zoning, and fails to provide redevelopment opportunities in a

changing market. To study the characteristics of a successful MXD and avoid failure, the following articles are quoted.

1. Zoning for Mixed Use-Developments by Daniel R. Mandelker, American Bar Association Spring 2023. https://www.americanbar.org/groups/real_property_trust_estate/publications/real-property-trust-and-estate-law-journal/rpte-law-journal-58-1-2023-spring-issue/zoning-mixeduse-development/

2. Analyzing the Future of Mixed Use Development in Montgomery County, August 2021. Montgomery County is not only our neighbor, they are nationally recognized as a leader in successful MXD developments. <https://montgomeryplanning.org/blog-design/2021/08/analyzing-the-future-of-mixed-use-development-in-montgomery-county/>

- **MXD LOCATION IS CRUCIAL TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING.** MXD success is dependent on public transit accessibility in a high traffic, vibrant, urban neighborhood. This ideal, livable, walkable, workable, and recreation rich community promotes diverse, affordable housing.
 - The American Bar Association states the optimal acreage for an MXD development is 50-100 useable acres. The isolated KF property lacks acreage, location, and transit, pushing car traffic from over congested roads to residential streets.
 - Successful retail, office, and residential planning creates affordable housing, yet the KF property can't support the traffic or parking required of high volume retail shopping or busy office complexes.
 - The KF high density senior living residences provides few housing options and the project comes with millions of dollars in mitigation recapture costs, leading to a housing "premium" and defeating a significant MXD goal of affordability. Without public transportation, KF residents will not recoup the potential 10-20% transportation savings that an effective MXD plan can provide.
 - Private amenities within the KF proposal, including bike and walking trails, would be paid for and insured by the Knowledge Farm community. They would not be open to the public and are not designed to support the greater community.
- **WALKABILITY IS KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL MXD PLAN.** Reducing car ownership and increasing multi modal transportation leaves a smaller carbon footprint and reduces greenhouse emissions in the fight against climate change.
 - Per the American Bar Association (ABA), internal trip capture is considered a measure of MXD success. Communities with diverse, adequate, and affordable retail, office, and housing options can have an internal trip capture as high as 50%.
 - Walkability is defined by the ABA as a .5 mile radius and a 10 minute walk. By this definition, there are no retail options in walkable range.
 - The necessary foot traffic relies on a strong internal trip capture plus the interconnectivity of roads, paths and sidewalks to neighboring communities and access to public transit. The KF site lacks all of these.
 - For most customers, a medical office building, a self-storage warehouse, and a continuing care facility will require a car. Neighboring retail developments predominantly exceed the half a mile definition of walkability, also requiring a car.
- **ADEQUATE RETAIL AND OFFICE SPACE REQUIRED.** Traditional retail outlets and office parks are declining in favor of MXD flexibility with sustainable, diverse, affordable space, and a vibrant tenant pool.
 - Retail and office oriented MXD developments support emerging small business owners while providing jobs and services to the community. Microbreweries, niche retail

stores, and micro-restaurants are becoming increasingly popular in MXD developments. Institutional facilities and warehouses do not meet MXD objectives.

- There is no opportunity in the KF proposal for small business owners. Mr. Tyler stated that they will sell the land for the continuing care facility to a corporation, but made no such statement for the rest of the development, leaving any financial benefit to the developer/owner, not the community who ceded the zoning constraint.
- Poorly designed MXD developments are expensive, leading to vacancies and hurting community property values. The proposal will not make the current, partially vacant, office space more marketable as it falls under additional pressure from the recently approved, 80,000 square foot Frederick Health building less than half a mile away.
- In a fast changing market, MXD success relies on redevelopment options. Business failure on this small, isolated property located on a residential street with few retail and commercial alternatives would leave the community with a vacant warehouse or large institutional building. Adjoining MXD and PUD properties have gone through multiple site plans before building, but this partnership has yet to address changing market needs since their 2004 build
- The KF proposal does not demonstrate the reality of the nationwide residential care crisis. They continue to use the phrases nursing, assisted living and continuing care community interchangeably, despite their different site plan needs and costs.

- According to the American Health Care Association interview of more than 4,000 assisted living communities,, (June 2022), 87% of survey respondent's state they are having trouble hiring new staff. Sixty three percent state they are facing staffing shortages and 25% of those responders say they have a "high level" of staffing shortages. Nearly half (48%) state that they are concerned they may have to close their facility if workforce challenges continue and a fully one-third declare they are operating a loss they cannot maintain for more than a year. A site with no public transportation for low income employees is unlikely to attract new corporate tenant or succeed at this location.
- Per Mr. Tyler and a Washington Post article, top rated assisted living facilities have already chosen not to build on the KF property. Similar corporations declined to build on the adjoining Monocacy Land site with water and sewage, but still no public transportation.

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NECESSARY AT THE DESIGN STAGE.** Per the Montgomery County study dated 2021, MXD success depends on the engagement of the local community. KF has failed good faith efforts to hold meaningful conversations and seek community input.

- There have been no meeting options for the greater Urbana community since the spring of 2022. The public informational meeting in advance of the October 2023 planning commission hearing was not held despite the significant change to the site plan, including a controversial second egress 700 feet away from the Urbana High School entrance.
- At the June 2022 County Council meeting, the developer acknowledged past disagreements and failure to work with the Woodlands. KF comments were often misleading and occasionally false with condescending references to resident's "unfortunate" lack of knowledge. Other comments were perceived as threats if they failed to get their zoning change. Mr. Tyler exaggerated his "synergetic" relationship with the Woodlands along with his expectations that the two communities share amenities and interconnected paths. KF did not respond to the Woodland attorney's request for a neighborhood meeting. Since June 2022, they failed to deliver on their promise of monthly communications.

- At the December 2022 Woodlands meeting, no questions were asked of the community and feedback was dismissed. Misinformation continued, including exaggerated concession claims while simultaneously raising the height of the condo buildings from a previous concept map. To justify their proposal, KF continued to overstate their relationship and contributions to the development and infrastructure of the Woodlands and refused to consider compromise on the grounds the requests were not “in the spirit of cooperation.”
- The March 2023 informational session addressed a series of pre-submitted questions under a one-sided, zoom format with the audience microphones turned off. No “meeting” actually took place. Follow up emails went unanswered and no opportunity existed to question misleading or inaccurate information. Despite over a year of feedback, the Woodland’s relationship was still exaggerated.

CLOSING: Nobody denies the developer’s right to profit, and on paper, the KF proposal appears to check several key boxes. Frederick County is an aging community. The need for compact MXD environments are essential to the rapid growth facing Frederick County. MXD developments are ideal for revitalizing and redeveloping underutilized spaces like former warehouses and vacant malls and can reduce our carbon footprint.

This proposal, however, falls short of expectations. MXD zoning is best served in existing, high traffic, urban areas with adequate public transit or as a tool to revitalize an underutilized corridor. Urbana does not meet either of those descriptions. The applicant is requesting a retail focused zoning label on land surrounded by private, residential homes. A few private amenities and developer owned businesses in an isolated development does nothing to help the greater community. A lack of retail and commercial possibilities with limited redevelopment options, restricted walkability, poor parking, and dangerous traffic patterns on overcrowded roads negatively affect the surrounding communities. Small business owners receive no benefit from expensive, poorly planned developments and housing is not affordable.

The county holds discretionary approval at phase one, making developer promises to mitigate millions of dollars in shortfalls at phase two irrelevant. This developer has had twenty years to adjust to the changing market. They have other options, starting with redeveloping the current office to meet changing demands. They could have rezoned and coordinated with the neighboring MXD development in 2016. They could focus on a rezoning category that blends with the neighboring residential community. They could create a single, high quality project. They could ask the county council to consider a special land use mix to meet their specific needs. Instead, they created the biggest, most densely populated plan they could fit on paper while continuing to provide misleading and incorrect information to stakeholders.

Any rezoning is a significant step that changes the county master plan due to the vision of a single developer. Zoning is the strongest tool given to the county to control land use, but the MXD option is a dangerous choice that removes this oversight, granting benefits to the developer at the expense of the community. All attempts to rezone should be carefully considered, but the MXD zoning option needs more limitations, research, and analysis before its overuse creates permanent chaos.

Susan Peck McCannon
3011 Herb Garden Drive

From: Scott Reilly <swreilly49@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 9, 2023 6:06 PM
To: Planning and Zoning <PlanningandZoning@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Case #R-21-02

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Members of the Frederick County Planning Commission:

The Frederick County Planning Commission is considering Case #R-21-02, a request to rezone the Knowledge Farm development in Urbana from Office/Research/Industrial (ORI) to Mixed Use Development (MXD). The Amended Rezoning Application proposed by the applicant includes active adult residential units and continuing care residences, possible commercial uses, such as self-storage, and 25 percent of the site as open space/green areas.

We support the proposed rezoning request as amended. The property was approved in 2003 for a site plan that included 140,000 square feet of uses consistent with the Office, Research and Industrial zoning designation. The proposed rezoning to Mixed Use Development will allow for the creation of needed senior housing, possibly including rental housing opportunities, and a substantial component of continuing care housing that is missing from abutting residential communities, including our own community, the Woodlands of Urbana active adult development.

The Amended Rezoning Application is responsive to concerns previously raised by the public and by County officials. The townhouse units located on the portion of the site closest to the Woodlands community are similar in layout, height, and density to the Woodlands' villas located on Herb Garden Drive. The active adult multifamily buildings are in keeping with the condominium buildings already constructed and under construction at the Woodlands, and the applicant proposes to limit the height of the continuing care facility to three stories.

The Knowledge Farms proposal will serve a growing need in Urbana by providing independent living, continuing care housing, and services to our increasing senior population, including the residents of the Woodlands of Urbana. We urge the Planning Commission to recommend approval of this amended zoning request to the Frederick County Council.

Scott Reilly and Stephanie Killian
9302 Chicory Court
Urbana, MD 21704

From: Susan Sherer <sasherer@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 9:21 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Concerns regarding Knowledge Farms Application for MXD

To: Frederick County Planning Commission

From: Susan and Howard Sherer, 3009 Herb Garden Drive

Subject: Concerns regarding Knowledge Farms application

Knowledge Farms has put forth a new proposal for development that is inappropriate for the size and features of the proposed development area. They have tried to throw a lot of potential revenue producing components into a small area that has only a single egress onto a residential street and whose planned components are incompatible with the surrounding community. Even if this proposal is modified before implemented, a MXD categorization will put too much traffic and congestion into an area with very limited access, surrounded by a quiet residential community.

The new traffic study claims that MXD development will reduce traffic, compared to their prior study. However, the prior study had some assumptions that are no longer valid. Moreover, we are concerned that this proposal still adds too much traffic into the neighboring Woodlands community. The new traffic study shows minimal left turns out onto Thornapple. We question whether this assumption is reasonable. When traffic backs up coming out onto Thornapple to Rt. 355, what will drivers do? Probably make a left through the Woodlands to bypass the traffic.

I would suggest that MXD development not even be considered until a second egress is approved. KF has stated that approval of a second egress is subject to future state and county reviews. If this is not approved, the traffic will be a nightmare. We question whether a second egress is even feasible. If you have not already done so, please drive down Rt. 355 and look at the slope, limited site line and the natural features on this curvy, narrow part of Rt. 355. It looks like this would be exceptionally dangerous and add to further traffic backup on Rt. 355. If KF's application is approved and a second egress is later denied, then we will have an even greater traffic nightmare and unwanted cars through the Woodlands development. One single ingress/egress is dangerous particularly for public safety, for example, ambulances (which will be more than average since this is senior housing) and fire safety equipment.

The Knowledge Farms proposal suggests that their proposed condos are compatible with the surrounding Woodlands. First, the Woodlands condos are not visible from most of the single family and villa housing whereas the KF condos will tower over the Woodlands homes. Second, the KF condos are estimated to be one-third bigger than the Woodlands condos. The high density is not consistent with the surrounding areas. Their density is five times greater than the Woodlands.

A storage unit is not compatible with the residential area either. It will create excessive traffic, noise, and light pollution.

The problem is that the Knowledge Farms developers are trying to get as much revenue from this parcel of land. We accept that they want to a profit on their investment and applaud them for trying to add senior housing to Frederick County. However, this parcel of land, whose topology seems to restrict it to

one point of ingress/egress onto a quiet residential street, is not best suited for high density housing, particularly for citizens with higher than average requirements for emergency access. I would suggest that they consider alternate uses of this land. Providing them the MXD categorization would enable them to change the face of this community to the detriment of their neighbors.

Thank you for providing a forum for us to express our concerns.

Susan and Howard Sherer

From: John Galotto M.D. <ottolaghi@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 2:57 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Zoning

Dear Commission Members:

We are residents of The Woodlands, and live on Thornapple Drive, close to the intersection with Rte 355. Because of the zoning changes requested by Knowledge Farms, we want to bring to the Commissions attention that this is a very peculiar and already dangerous intersection, for the reasons enumerated below:

1) A large road-like driveway comes down the hill from the parking lot of the Knowledge Farms office building, emptying into Thornapple Drive very close to its meeting with Rte 355.. There is a continuous in-and-out flow of traffic from people visiting the many medical offices located there. Pulling onto, 355 going south can be hazardous because there is a dip in the 355 roadway 200 yards north of the intersection, in which south driving cars in the thru lane disappear from view for just a second or two, but enough that they cannot be seen when pulling out into the road. Turning left is even worse, since speeding cars also come up from the valley to the south and are not seen until one has already committed to pulling out to turn north. This is compounded, especially at rush hours, by traffic from Urbana High School coming out of Campus Drive at its intersection with 355, which is directly across the road from the Thornapple exit!

2) Putting a traffic light there is certainly needed for safety, but would also cause a backup of cars into the Woodlands and the Knowledge Farms Driveway, which at this present time might not be a big problem. However, please imagine cars from multiple new condos, houses and businesses all trying to get through this bottleneck all day long. How would emergency fire, police and medical vehicles fare in that scenario? How could the people in our community, all in the over 55 category, adapt to the totally chaotic situation that this Knowledge Farms project would create. We are both in our 80's and hoped to live independently and peacefully in The Woodlands, as did the many other residents who moved here in the past 2 years. This KF project would be so ruinous for us, and for our Woodlands neighbors!

Respectfully submitted,

John A. Galotto, M.D. FACP Mary Kay Shartle Galotto Ph.D

3253 Thornapple Drive, The Woodlands, Frederick MD 21704 301-346-4338

From: Malcolm Kinsinger <mdkinsinger@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 10:38 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Reasons not to approve rezoning for the Knowledge Farms (KF) Development

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission Board Members:

I live at 3057 Herb Garden Drive in the Woodlands of Urbana.

The KF Development will devalue my home

The KF Development will devalue my property by at least \$15,000. Two years ago my neighbors paid an additional \$15,000 to buy their lot in which the villa backyard faced the open field behind my villa as opposed to the lot across Herb Garden Drive. Property values have increased since then so the backyard view of my villa is worth at least \$15,000 which will be destroyed if the KF development is approved.





The above picture is my current view and the below picture is the future view if the KF development is approved. Note the symmetrical flowering pear tree in the right of the above picture which will likely be removed if the KF development is approved.

The KF Development would excessively load the local streets in the Woodlands

The public comment R-21-02 states that it is unlikely that the state will authorize second access to Highway 355 because of the extreme elevation difference between 355 and the KF development. A single access to 355 will cause excessive traffic on Thornapple Drive. The KF proposal said 90% of the traffic from the KF development will choose 355 over Thornapple Dr. 90% is overstated. There are times that I choose not to take Thornapple Drive to get to 355 but choose Ivy Meadow and Urbana Pike in order to avoid the traffic on 355. This choice would be true even if a signal were created at 355 and Thornapple Drive. The signal would have long wait times since 355 is much busier than Thornapple Drive. Thus the KF Development would excessively load Thornapple, Herb Garden, Ivy Meadow, and Urbana Pike roads.

The KF Development will create a hazardous intersection at 355 and Thornapple Drive

Currently, the distance from Knowledge Fars Drive and 355 is 100 feet with no crosswalk. A crosswalk would reduce the distance where cars wait to enter 355 by 30 feet. This leaves 70 feet for cars to wait for a light at 355 on Thornapple Drive. Assuming 20 feet for each car, leaves room for only 3 cars to wait

for the light before blocking the exit of Knowledge Farms Drive. Five cars waiting to enter 355 would block a car turning left into Knowledge Farms Drive from Thornapple. The car turning left would have to wait until the light turns green for him to turn left into Knowledge Farms Drive. If more than three cars wanted to turn left from 355 to Thornapple at this time, Thornapple would be blocked creating a dangerous situation. This dangerous situation is likely to occur due to 1) the green light for 355 would be much longer than the green light for Thornapple Drive, and 2) the additional traffic added by the residents and users of the KF Development.

For the above reasons I strongly advise you to not approve the KF Development.

Thank you,
Malcolm Kinsinger
3057 Herb Garden Drive
Frederick, Maryland 21704

From: Marian Callahan <mcallahan3311@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 9:01 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farms Application for rezoning, R-21-02

October 12, 2023

Dear Commission:

I am a resident of the Woodlands, a 55+ community in Urbana. I moved here from Silver Spring to enjoy a community that had been carefully planned by the developer, Natelli. Accordingly, I am not against development and understand that Urbana is a result of that development.

However, the haphazard proposals put forth by the adjacent landowner, Chad Tyler of Knowledge Farms, puts the present carefully planned Urbana community in danger.

We have several schools along the 355 border, including Urbana High School and elementary schools, and a YMCA. The traffic has been increasing at a rapid rate, and there is NO public transportation in the area. None for senior residents; none for employees; and none for students. The intensity of traffic, and crowding onto Rte 270, would only be catastrophic should unfettered development of this small KF parcel be permitted.

The KF parcel is both small in area, and much of it is unusable for development. Crowding a number of townhomes; a storage unit; and a commercial elder care facility would be a health and safety hazard to current residents.

Please do not make a zoning change — there are no reasonable plans in place that would merit such a change, and as you are well aware, there are little restrictions on sloppy, poorly conceived development should the County ignore these concerns.

Thank you for your serious attention to this matter.

Marian Callahan
3311 Ivy Meadow Drive
301 213 8325

From: David Bialzak <dbialzak@yahoo.com>

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 8:25 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farms Development Proposal

We are writing to express our concerns with the Knowledge Farms development proposal. We do not believe that the Knowledge Farms proposal merits rezoning to Mixed Use Development. Here are some of the reasons for our concerns:

- The entry and exit to the property at the driveway create dangerous traffic hazards
- These traffic hazards would negatively impact the safety of nearby residents as they travel from their homes
- These traffic hazards would also likely negatively impact Fire and EMS services for nearby residents
- The Woodlands development would likely become a thoroughfare for traffic from Knowledge Farms creating further traffic hazards
- The density of the Knowledge Farms buildable site is unacceptable since it is far greater than the site density of nearby developments
- Due to the high planned density of the Knowledge Farms proposal, some of the buildings may be placed at an unacceptable distance as close as 26 feet to properties in adjacent communities
- The current site plan for Knowledge Farms includes a storage facility with invasive lighting which would negatively impact residents nearby

These are just a few of our concerns. We encourage the Planning Commission to reject the Knowledge Farms rezoning proposal.

Thank you for your attention to this matter

Bernard and Maureen Bialzak

From: Jonathan Armacost <jonathanarmacost@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 2:05 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Resident Letter for Planning Commission ISO Knowledge Farms

Good Afternoon.

Please find attached my letter for the Planning Commission in support of the Knowledge Farms Active Adult Community. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

--

Very respectfully,

Jonathan M. Armacost
9056 Clendenin Way
Urbana, MD 21704
(910)545-0249 (c)

Jon Armacost
9056 Clendenin Way
Urbana, MD 21704

October 13, 2023

Frederick County Planning Commission
Frederick, MD

Subject: Support for the Knowledge Farms Active Adult Community

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the development of the Knowledge Farms Active Adult Community in Urbana, Maryland. I believe that this new community will be a valuable addition to our town, and I would like to highlight a few key reasons for its approval.

First and foremost, I would like to emphasize the importance of balancing the needs of our existing community, such as the Woodlands, with the growing demand for active adult housing. The Woodlands has been a wonderful residential area, and I am confident that Knowledge Farms will uphold the same standards of excellence and neighborhood that we cherish. It is great to see housing for active adults that is in a location that is beneficial for them, to be close to family or their current employers and not some out of state destination which for many years has been the only choice for aging adults that want to live in a community with their peers.

One concern often associated with new developments is the potential strain on our local schools. I am pleased to note that Knowledge Farms will not overcrowd our schools, ensuring that our educational institutions can continue to provide quality education to the children in our area.

Moreover, the residents of Knowledge Farms are likely to add significant value to our community. Active adults often bring a wealth of experience and expertise, which can enrich our town through volunteer work, mentorship, and various other contributions. Their presence will foster a sense of vitality and community engagement. They will patron the local businesses that now more than ever need our support.

It's also reassuring to know that Knowledge Farms will maintain the architectural and design aesthetic that Urbana residents value. This continuity in design will help preserve the character of our town while allowing for necessary growth and development.

Lastly, I have a large concern about unsightly industrial developments in our area. Approving Knowledge Farms will prevent the construction of warehouses, storage facilities, or more office spaces that often sit vacant, large parking lots with bright lights or less desirable projects that could compromise the visual appeal of our community. I know having a community of active adults is not going to create the chaos traffic that can come along with a distribution center that has tractor trailers coming and going all hours of the day and night.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that you will approve the Knowledge Farms Active Adult Community project. It aligns with the needs and desires of our community, respecting our existing residents and the

character of Urbana. By supporting this initiative, we can ensure that Urbana remains a wonderful place to live for active adults while preserving our town's unique charm and existing residents' property values.

Thank you for your attention and dedication to our community's future. I trust that you will make the right decision to benefit Urbana's residents and the town as a whole.

Sincerely,

Jon Armacost
Urbana Resident

From: Greg Pirozzi <gpirozzi63@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 2:50 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Cc: Tracy Pirozzi <tracypirozzi@gmail.com>; Greg Pirozzi <gpirozzi63@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Notification of Public Hearing For Rezoning Case #R-21-02 Knowledge Farms

RE: Notification of Public Hearing For Rezoning Case #R-21-02 Knowledge Farms

Dear Planning Commission,

We are residents of the Woodlands community and directly border the Knowledge Farms site currently being considered for zoning change from ORI to MXD usage.

We are writing to urge you to reject the current application request due to the numerous significant issues outlined below.

1. Traffic & Safety:

- The projected traffic and planned MXD land use is not supported by the existing ingress/egress driveway and intersection at Thornapple Rd./Rt355/Campus Dr. A projected traffic light would not mitigate thru traffic via the Woodlands community, nor would it ease the significant morning and afternoon school traffic onto Campus Dr. - (see attached photo, with traffic backed up from the said intersection to Rt80/Fingerboard Rd.)
- In addition, a second proposed entry point further south on Rt355 and road widening, that would be essential for this site, would likely never be approved by state MDOT authorities or too costly to build due to the site topography. Furthermore, the applicant should seek and receive approval PRIOR to any requested zoning change to ensure that this issue is mitigated.
- Overall, this presents a serious safety issue for access by the limited volunteer fire & emergency capacity of our local Urbana community and would be further exacerbated by a proposed assisted living facility on the site plan.

2. Density & Building Site location:

- The buildable site consists of only ~11 acres. The density (sq.ft. or dwellings/acre) is unacceptable and is many multiples greater (5x) than the Woodlands at ~200 acres.
- The current site plan shows homes as close as 26ft from existing property with inadequate resident, visitor and employee parking as well as five 5-story Condo buildings ~70ft tall.
- There is no adequate plan for a significant property line buffer distance nor a possible landscaping mitigation.

- No consideration is shown for water retention pond(s): either the number, size nor location or for runoff onto the adjacent forest conservation land or creek bed.
- Simply put – the existing limited site is just NOT compatible with the complexity and usage mix allowed under the MXD designation.

3. Neighborhood compatibility:

- The MXD request allows for ~85 land development uses not allowed under the current ORI designation. Once zoning is changed, our community has little to no input regarding what can eventually be built on the site - e.g. 24hr storage facility or 24hr retail (Seven-Eleven, WaWa), 24hr Continuing care facility etc. This is a MAJOR concern for us all.
- Any of these uses would NOT be compatible nor in character with the residential ONLY use of the Woodlands Community.

We thank you for your expertise and thoughtful consideration of our concerns.

Respectfully,

Dr. Greg and Tracy Pirozzi

3027 Herb Garden Dr.

Frederick, MD 21704

Letter attachment included.



From: R Law <roselaw8@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 12:43 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Cc: R Law <roselaw8@gmail.com>

Subject: Knowledge Farm MXD R-21-02

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

Please accept this email as public comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02, submitted to the county in February 2022 and amended in July 2023. I stand against the rezoning request and would urge Frederick County to deny the request to change the zoning of the Knowledge Farms parcel.

I am a resident at 3075 Herb Garden Drive, Frederick, MD and abut to the Knowledge Farms parcel. Changing from ORI to MDX will severely impact our house, our community and surrounding environment due to multiple reasons.

Traffic Hazards and Safety:

- The projected traffic and land use is not supported by the existing ingress/egress driveway and intersection at Rt355/Campus Drive. This presents multiple traffic hazards to our local residents and public schools in the area.
- Limited sight distance at Thornapple Drive and Rt355 will impact the safety of getting out of our homes and being able to see other cars.
- Potentially impact our safety if Fire, EMT and ambulances cannot get to our community in a timely manner due to traffic jams and delay.
- Increase traffic/speed on our private roads and the community. Due to the nature of the MDX properties, a significant number of commercial and emergency vehicles will be coming through our neighboring streets and RT355 intersection.

Density and Incompatibility:

- The proposed plan at this buildable site only consists of 11 acres. However, the density (sq. ft. or dwelling) is not compatible and is 5 times more than the Woodlands at ~200 acres.
- Knowledge Farms is next to the restricted forestry area so this high-density housing project is not comparable to the nearby environment and does not offer enough green space and leisure amenities.
- The increased noise from dense housing, cars, commercial and emergency vehicles. 24/7 invasive lighting from the MDX buildings such as proposed storage facility and other possible 85 uses with MDX.

Woodlands owners recognize that changing the zoning of the Knowledge Farms parcel from ORI to MDX would certainly add value to that parcel. However, Woodlands owners also feel that the zoning change would take value out of our community since we would have to confront increased traffic and congestion on our roads and sidewalks. The high density, 24/7 usage associated with MDX structure is substantially more than the low density, mostly daytime activity associated with development in an ORI zone. It would be more than our community was designed to handle and more importantly that we were led to expect when we purchased property near a parcel zoned ORI. Some of our owners actually abut the Knowledge Farms parcel and would undoubtedly be negatively impacted by MDX zoned development. That is why Woodlands owners urge the Frederick County to deny the request to change the zoning of the Knowledge Farms parcel.

Sincerely yours,

Rossetti Law

3075 Herb Garden Drive, Frederick, MD

10/16/2023

From: Ivy Barnett <fambar1@yahoo.com>

Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 10:39 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farms Te/Zoning Request

Dear Sirs -

I am a property owner in the Woodlands community adjacent to the Knowledge Farms property. I am opposed to the rezoning request of the property owner! Rezoning will create more traffic through the Woodlands Community, will disturb our neighborhoods appearance and ultimately devalue existing Woodlands properties. None of this, including the rezoning request, are necessary or beneficial to Urbana! Please leave the current property zoning in place w/ out any modifications.

Regards,

David K Barnett

Sent from my iPhone

From: Ivy Barnett <fambar1@yahoo.com>

Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 10:39 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farms Te/Zoning Request

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Sirs -

I am a property owner in the Woodlands community adjacent to the Knowledge Farms property. I am opposed to the rezoning request of the property owner! Rezoning will create more traffic through the Woodlands Community, will disturb our neighborhoods appearance and ultimately devalue existing Woodlands properties. None of this, including the rezoning request, are necessary or beneficial to Urbana! Please leave the current property zoning in place w/ out any modifications.

Regards,

David K Barnett

Sent from my iPhone

From: Kathy Benderev <kbenderev@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 5:59 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Case #R-21-02- KNOWLEDGE FARMS REZONING APPLICATION-PUBLIC COMMENT

I am writing to object to the rezoning application of the Knowledge Farms Development site from an existing Office/Research/Industrial use to Mixed use designation. I am a resident of the Woodlands of Urbana and this change will adversely impact the entire Woodlands of Urbana community. Some reasons for the negative impact include:

Traffic hazards and safety

The projected traffic patterns and land use are not supported by the existing driveway for entering and exiting at the intersection of Route 355 and Campus Drive. Multiple traffic hazards will be created including increased traffic and speed in our community as well as possible delays for emergency vehicles needing access to our homes. I observe non-residents using Urbana Parkway as a shortcut (both directions) to get from Route 355 to Route 80. The increased density from the Knowledge Farms development would make Thornapple, Herb Garden Drive and Ivy Meadow Drive serve as additional "short cuts" through a significant portion of the Woodlands community by non-residents.

Density and Incompatibility

The buildable site is only 11 acres and shows homes as close as 26 feet from existing property. The plan indicates tall condo buildings being added to the Knowledge Farms site. The significant increase in density from the Knowledge Farms proposed site as well as the needed lighting for a storage facility and other buildings will contribute to increased noise and light disruptions for our homeowners. Since our community is not gated, an increased risk of non-resident use of our amenities is an additional and almost certain liability for the Woodlands.

For the above reasons I strongly recommend request denial of the Knowledge Farms rezoning application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Katherine Benderev, Pharm.D., M.B.A

2907 Ivy Meadow Drive

Frederick, MD 21704

From: Loriann <lhoberlin@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 5:43 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Rezoning Issue in Urbana

Planning Commission Members:

I am a resident of the Woodlands, adjacent to the property you will be discussing and voting upon, on Tuesday, October 17th.

I am concerned that the area around Rt 355, Thornapple Drive leading into our community and Knowledge Farms/Physician Offices as well as nearby Urbana High School is already saturated with a lot of traffic, without a traffic light. It's an accident—or several—waiting to happen as cars rush up over the hill from Montgomery County and down from the CVS and shopping plazas.

My understanding is that various plans have been bantered about with no one truly able to say what will or will not be built. So, what we do NOT need --

No need for a large assisted living because it means more traffic, ambulances, ambulance noise at all hours

No need for unsightly storage facility that adds no appeal, aesthetics to a tract of land visible to a community, in which property values would decrease

No need for high rise housing visible to an existing community where people have paid quite a bit for the serenity and mountain views

No need for tight density in a small space. I understand that what's been proposed is an insane level of density compared to what we have in the Woodlands with way less land to build it upon. The proposal is 21 dwellings per acre there, compared to three (3) dwellings per acre here in the Woodlands next door. The safety concerns leap off the page....or should to ever member on the Commission!

Further housing, on a smaller, more individual scale (such as villas or single family homes) would be welcomed, providing that amenities go along with it. We already have a community concern that our resources get used by outsiders who do not pay the HOA fee to maintain them.

More housing and less retail would be wise. That retail could include a small grocery market, with offices or housing above similar to Main Street in the Kentlands, Gaithersburg. Three stories maximum.

A day spa, bakery, coffee shop, or restaurants such as Thai Tanium, Coal Fire pizza, Cava, or Wine Escape, as are in the Kentlands, would be nice additions to Urbana. Such entities bring value to people's daily lives.

Residents of the Woodlands could patronize, and if a traffic light for safety is added, high school students would likely patronize pizza or coffee establishments as well because all could walk there, lessening vehicular traffic.

Safety and traffic concerns as well as limiting the proposed use to more housing and less, but carefully defined retail should be what gets approved or rezoned.

Please do not leave it so open-ended that we have monstrosities down the road in the years to come.

Thank you for giving these thoughts consideration.

Loriann Oberlin
2904 Herb Garden Drive
Urbana, MD

From: **Christy Mager** <cemager@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Oct 15, 2023 at 4:31 PM
Subject: Knowledge Farms planning meeting
To: <frederickplanningcomission@frederickcountymd.gov>

Dear member of the commission,

I live in the Woodlands of Urbana. I am writing you to ask that you do not allow the Knowledge Farms developer to rezone the 35 acres adjacent to the 355 and the Woodlands to a MXD zone property.

I have lived in the Woodlands since 6/20. It is a great place to live. I have noticed that traffic thru our streets has increased significantly. If that is changed to MXD, and Knowledge Farms builds as they said, the traffic will increase even more. I see a couple of issues regarding traffic. There needs to be another egress on to 355. Maybe even come in on Thornapple and leave on a second exit.

Our amenities are not locked, making it very easy to trespass!(we have asked that they be locked, without success) we pay monthly HOA fees to maintain what these 500+homes have. Please don't allow more people access to our property.

Thank you for your consideration, please say NO to knowledge Farms
Christy Mager
3226 Starlight St
Frederick(urbana), MD

From: marjerking@aol.com <marjerking@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 4:06 PM
To: 'Susan McCannon' <spmccannon@gmail.com>
Cc: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: RE: Opposition to Knowledge Farms Application R-21-02, submitted to Frederick County in February 2022 and amended in July 2023.

We may as well use their data while we can! Hot off the press!

From: Susan McCannon <spmccannon@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 3:32 PM
To: marjerking@aol.com
Cc: PlanningCommission@frederickcountymd.gov
Subject: Re: Opposition to Knowledge Farms Application R-21-02, submitted to Frederick County in February 2022 and amended in July 2023.

That's amazing Marcia! I listened to the planning commission talk about the Cromwell plan and they were 100% onboard, but it was because it stood for everything that the KF plan is not.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 15, 2023, at 2:44 PM, marjerking@aol.com wrote:

RE: Opposition to Knowledge Farms Application R-21-02, submitted to Frederick County in February 2022 and amended in July 2023.

To Members of the Frederick County Planning Commission:

I am a resident of the Woodlands of Urbana and I am opposed to the proposed change in zoning to MXD from ORI by Knowledge Farms ("KF") Partners, LLC ("Applicant") as laid out in their Amended Justification Statement noted above in support of its request for rezoning the +/- 34.64 acres located at 3280 Urbana Pike, across from Campus Drive, in Urbana, Maryland. I am opposed to the proposed change in zoning for the following reasons:

1. A viable second egress road is a necessary PRECONDITION to any development and any change in zoning in the KF property. As of now, all visitors to KF must enter and leave by Thornapple Drive. More development simply means more traffic which will flood the road across from the high school entrance and cause a back-up throughout the day, but especially before and after school is in session when the roads are already dramatically backed up. No traffic light will ameliorate this problem. Traffic will also back up into the streets of the Woodlands and this is not, therefore, a compatible proposal.
2. While the Applicant says they have contacted Frederick County and State of Maryland officials to discuss a second road, at no time has any official come forward to say that the

idea is practical or possible. The KF property that abuts Route 355 where the second egress is proposed, is wetlands, and opens up to a flood plain on 355. Furthermore, the twists and turns on 355 in that area would leave the cars entering and leaving the proposed road with unacceptable risk. When I sat through previous hearings on this development proposal, the State of Maryland did not say that this egress would be likely. They only said that consideration of such a road would require further study and would be complicated in this site. Therefore, it's my opinion, that such egress is being proposed simply to appease the residents of the Woodlands of Urbana and isn't credible at this time. If the Commission approves the change in zoning, and the second road isn't possible, there is nothing to stop KF from building anyway.

3. The Applicant proposes a storage facility and claims the storage facility will be attractive. Simply put, no storage facility, no matter what it looks like, belongs embedded with, or is compatible with residential properties – either the new residences proposed by KF, or next to the Woodlands of Urbana.
4. The Applicant has noted that a storage facility doesn't require much parking. This works for KF because the buildable footprint is not actually 34.64 acres, but only 26.84, which is the buildable acreage after wetlands and other unbuildable land is taken into account. Low demand for parking, however, doesn't make a storage facility compatible with the residences proposed and neighboring the property. Can you imagine residents of the proposed residential buildings telling visitors...go past the office buildings, storage facility, and assisted living facility, and then you'll see my place? This situation will lead to difficulty for KF in marketing and selling or renting properties. I don't think the KF Mixed Use plan makes sense.
5. The proposed height of the multifamily buildings is said by KF to be in proportion to those in the Woodlands. However, it is not clear if the 5 story buildings proposed are in addition to a parking level. The 5 story buildings in the Woodlands do include parking garages for individual units. In contrast, please note that the prototype multistory buildings just approved by the Planning Commission for the Cromwell Active Adult Community are only 3 stories high.
6. The density of the proposed residential units proposed by KF is not compatible with that of the Woodlands next door, nor with other 55+ developments in Frederick County. KF proposes to build 150 residential units total on 6.71 acres. This is 1 household per .0456 acres – a density way out of line with the Woodlands, and even with Cromwell Active Adult Community, which proposed 488 units on 161 acres, or 1 household per .33 acres.
7. Similarly, the density of the multifamily buildings within the KF development is not compatible with the Woodlands. The multifamily buildings in the Woodlands house 16 units on 4 floors plus one floor of individual garages. The 5 story multifamily buildings proposed by KF, in contrast, will house an average of 26 units per building, plus they will need additional parking.
8. Finally, it is not clear from the KF proposal whether or not the residential units will be sold or rented. Frankly, it isn't clear from the KF proposal how many residential units they propose – on page 6 they note they are proposing 22 townhouses and 125 multifamily units (total 147 units), while on page 15, they say they are proposing 150

units. It is this type of inconsistency in their proposals and their presentations that lead me to be concerned about the credibility of their rezoning proposal.

For all these reasons, I am opposed to the rezoning of KF from ORI to MXD. Thank you for considering my input.

Sincerely,

Marcia King

From: Marilyn Bath <mbath@comcast.net>

Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 3:35 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: rezoning application in Urbana by Knowledge Farms

We have been informed that Knowledge Farms has applied for a change in zoning for a site in Urbana, directly behind The Woodlands of Urbana. They are asking for a change from ORI to MDX zoning. As residents of the Woodlands we are opposed to this for several reasons.

1. We are being told that ingress and egress would take place from the existing driveway and intersection at Rt. 355 and Campus Drive. 355 is already very busy at the times that students are coming and going from school and is moderately busy at other times. It is hilly and sight is limited at that intersection. I am sure there have already been many near misses. If you add even more traffic to this area, the problem would obviously get much worse. It is a definite safety issue.
2. It would increase traffic and speed on our roads as people use our roads as a shortcut. There are already quite a few cars that use our roads in this way, but having even more traffic through here will make the problem even worse. Our community is for those 55 years old and up. Speed, traffic and older people is a recipe for disaster. Our roads are not wide enough to accommodate heavier traffic.
3. The homes that back up on this property will be subject to bright lights in their yards/houses from parking lots and businesses.
4. If people are attracted to new businesses in the area, they are much more likely to see and believe that they can use, our amenities as they wish and trespass on our properties.
5. There would be an increase in noise, both during construction and from any business activity.

We hope you will agree that a change in zoning to allow for so many possible uses, would severely impact our neighborhood, our property values and our quality of life.

Thank you for consideration.

Timothy & Marilyn Bath

From: Diane Rifkin <d.rifkin05@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 3:43 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farms Concerns for Meeting of 10/19/2023

Dear Planning Commission, 10/15/2023

We are residents of the Woodlands at Urbana and have great concerns about the potential rezoning of Knowledge Farms to MXD zoning. We are particularly concerned regarding the anticipated increase in traffic in our neighborhood and the resulting safety concerns in our 55+ community.

While there is some discussion regarding a second ingress/egress from the Knowledge Farms development, few details have been provided about this. We also have serious concerns about the back up of traffic on Thornapple Drive, even if a traffic light is installed at the intersection of Thornapple Drive and Rt 355. There is also the potential traffic back up out of Knowledge Farms Drive onto Thornapple Drive. Without careful planning, drivers to and from the Knowledge Farms property will utilize the roads through our community as they drive between I-270 and Knowledge Farms Drive to avoid the traffic and traffic lights on Fingerboard Rd and Rt. 355. We are aware that there is little that we can do to mitigate the traffic going through our neighborhood from I-270 to Knowledge Farms. However, we do believe that the impact on our community can be greatly mitigated regarding traffic traveling from Knowledge Farms Drive to I-270. We highly suspect that drivers will attempt to avoid the left turn onto Rt. 355 (with or without a traffic light at this intersection) and the traffic and traffic lights of Fingerboard Rd and Rt. 355 by driving through our community as they navigate to I-270 (thus, from Knowledge Farms Drive, left on Thornapple Drive, right on Herb Garden Drive, right onto Ivy Meadow Drive, left onto Urbana Parkway, and finally, left (via the traffic circle) onto Fingerboard Road to I-270). The increased traffic and speeding of cars and trucks through our 55+ residential community will pose significant harm to the safety and wellbeing of the residents, grandchildren, and pets of our community.

We are not aware if any of the traffic studies have commented regarding our concern of what we anticipate the true flow of much of the traffic will be as drivers leave the Knowledge Farms property. Due to this serious concern to the safety and livability of our community, we strongly request that any discussion of further development of the Knowledge Farms property, be it for rezoning or future site plan approval, mandate a physical barrier which enforces a right turn only option for traffic leaving the Knowledge Farms property. The construction of a forced right turn only lane (with a constructed barrier) would force all traffic to turn right as it exits the Knowledge Farms property and would also not allow a vehicle to legally or illegally turn left onto Thornapple Drive. I have attached a diagram for your reference. Please note that we sincerely believe that having only a "no left turn" sign without a physical barrier will have negligible effect on driver behavior.

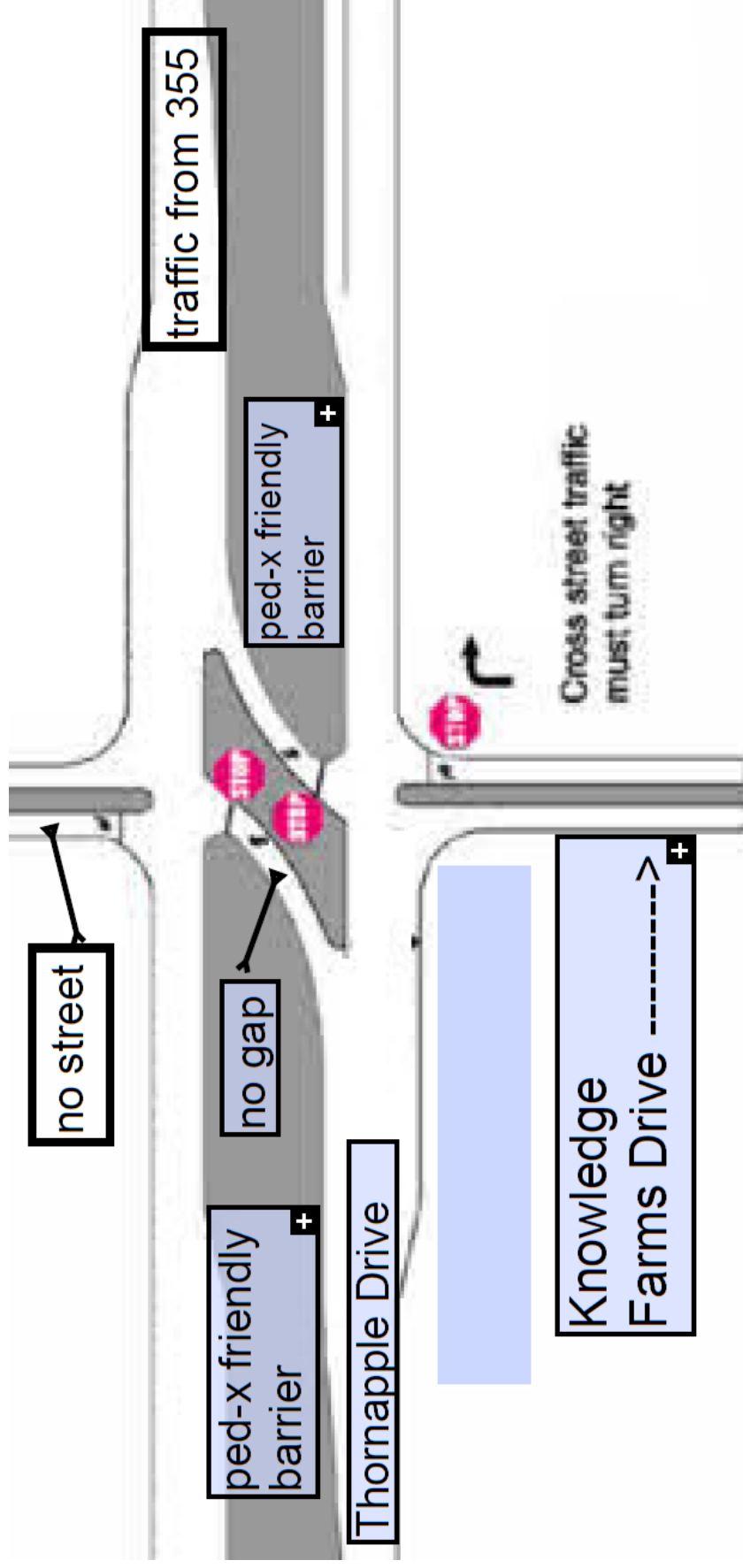
We also want to confirm that any study or discussion of the anticipated traffic at the Route 355 and Thornapple Drive intersection consider the traffic at rush hour which would include the contribution of the traffic utilizing this intersection as traffic enters and leaves the Urbana High School campus along with the residents of the 581 units of the Woodlands at Urbana.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns,

Diane and Michael Rifkin

3313 Ivy Meadow Dr.

Frederick, MD 21704



From: Dan Rosen <dan.rosen153@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 10:57 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on Knowledge Farms. R-21-02

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

I am writing to you as a public comment to the Knowledge Farms application R-21-02 that was submitted originally to the county in February 2022 and later amended in July 2023. My wife and I live in The Woodlands community on Herb Garden Drive, immediately adjacent to the Knowledge Farms property. We are opposed to the rezoning request as we do not believe the current plan put forward by Knowledge Farm is compatible with existing and planned development and infrastructure in that area and would ask the Commission to reject the application given the public interest concerns.

The plan put forward by Knowledge Farm results in an incredibly high density compared to the rest of Urbana and to most if not all parts of the entire county exclusive of downtown Frederick. As proposed their development plan has approximately three-quarters more square feet of development per acre than the neighboring Woodlands of Urbana community. More specific to the residential land use only, the Knowledge Farms proposal has roughly twice as many dwellings per acre than either the Woodlands or the Villages of Urbana. Why does it make sense to approve a significantly more dense community in this case than has been approved previously in existing neighborhoods that immediately surround Knowledge Farm? We do not believe that level of density is compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

This aspect of density is particularly important given the existing single egress limitations of the property which I comment on further below. It seems that the applicant to make this project as economically attractive as possible for themselves are proposing a project of significant density despite the relatively small buildable acreage of land that is further limited by access, environmental and topographical constraints. What comes to mind when you look at the actual property and the proposed plan is "trying to put a square peg into a round hole". To be compatible such a mixed use project needs to be descaled to better reflect the usable acreage on the property, the location relative to existing neighborhoods, and the existing and potential access points to the property and it does beg the question of whether a mixed use zoning is appropriate in this case at all.

A major concern with the application for rezoning is the available access into and out of the Knowledge Farm property. At this time there is only the single access point off of Thornapple Drive. That single point of access is not sufficient to support a project of this density. Without a second egress point directly onto Route 355 which allows for traffic flow both north and south on 355, this project will create traffic issues at the existing intersection with Route 355 (which is directly across from Campus Drive that leads to and from Urbana High School which further raises safety concerns) and will also undoubtedly result in traffic flowing through the Woodlands community at levels that were not contemplated when the Woodlands community was designed and approved. That will create safety and quality of life concerns for residents living in The Woodlands. At a minimum the Planning Commission should not consider approval for rezoning without approval by the State of Maryland for a full second egress point onto Route 355 and a commitment from Knowledge Farms to build that second egress point. Otherwise it is hard to see how public interest is being served. This issue was raised by many concerned parties when Knowledge Farms first made their application in 2022 and they still have not addressed it beyond vague terms in the latest amended application.

We would also like to highlight that even with approval from the State to build a second egress, the specifics around that second egress point onto 355 (what will be the location of the second egress, will there be a traffic light there, and will there be turning limitations coming out of the Knowledge Farm property if there isn't a traffic light there) will be meaningful to whether it fully solves the problem at hand and the Commission may want to consider this as it contemplates approval of the application. Knowledge Farms has described a second egress point as being located 720 feet south of the intersection at Thornapple Drive and Campus Drive. Given the limited sight line up 355 that will exist at that access point, if no traffic light is also hung there (which is what was described in Knowledge Farms' justification statement), it is possible for safety reasons that the second access point will need to be right turn only heading south on Route 355. The problem with that is most of the traffic out of Knowledge Farms property will want to head north on 355 where all the amenities in Urbana reside and where access to Interstates 270 and 70 are. If that is the case, an overwhelming amount of the traffic flowing out of Knowledge Farms will default to using the existing intersection at Thornapple Dr and the second egress point will not have served much purpose in addressing the traffic concerns out of Knowledge Farms.

I hope that the Planning Commission carefully considers all of the issues being raised by its various constituents and denies the Knowledge Farm MXD application given the broad public interest concerns. I appreciate your time and consideration in reading this comment letter.

Yours truly,
Daniel Rosen
3017 Herb Garden Dr.

Sent from my iPad

From: Marilyn Levin <blevin112@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 9:16 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Zoning

To the Frederick County Planning Commission,

I am a resident of The Woodlands since April 2022 and I thoroughly enjoy living here after being a longtime resident of Montgomery County where I lived in the Waters Landing Community for 38 years. Through the years, the area around Waters Landing was developed adding more apartments, townhouses, senior living choices, retail including Milestone, Town Center, storage facilities, the list goes on. The planning of this growth never encroached on the comfort of the neighborhood. It seems that the zoning of the facilities were placed strategically. The rezoning here makes me think that anything and everything will be squished into the land available causing traffic hazards and safety issues as many other people have mentioned.

Frederick County is beautiful. There is so much land available to spread out and strategically place facilities and retail. There are existing shopping centers that could use add more retail and overall renovation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPad

From: Barbara Meehan <bdmeehan11@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 14, 2023 1:32 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms proposed zoning change request

I am writing to express my extreme dismay at the proposal to change the zoning for this building site abutting my home at the Woodlands. A zoning change would permit development which is inconsistent with my community and would cause great harm to the community and its residents., The impact of the additional traffic, both in safety and traffic hazards would be enormous. Also, the proposed allowed density is incompatible with the current community. This change would impact the use of the amenities which our residents pay for and potential liability concerns with non residents using these amenities.

I implore you to listen to the citizens of this community and not allow this zoning change.

Thank you,

Barbara Meehan

From: John Robie <Jrobie1188@outlook.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 14, 2023 8:47 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Cc: John Robie <jrobie1188@outlook.com>
Subject: Planning Commission Meeting 10/19/2023 Zoning Map Amendment Knowledge Farms

As a resident of Frederick County, I would like to voice my strong opposition to the proposed change in zoning for the Project/property known as Knowledge Farms. It is my understanding that will come before the Planning Committee on October 19, 2023. There are close to 600 residents in the Woodlands that have spent untold millions of dollars on their new properties over the past two years. They made life changing decisions based on the facts at hand concerning Knowledge Farms zoning. Any deviation in zoning at this time is unacceptable to a majority in the community. Supporting one land developers journey to enhance that value of his property to the potential detriment of 600 residents is unreasonable and intolerable. The developer has/had the knowledge, expertise and understanding of zoning laws for many years before the first shovel was turned in the Woodlands. The developer should have and could have acted before Woodland's residents made decisions. His lack of foresight years ago should not be corrected today on the backs of Woodland residence.

Please deny the zoning change request pending before you.

John Robie
3002 Herb Garden Mews South
Frederick, Maryland 21704
1-419-787-1188
Jrobie1188@outlook.com

From: Gary Meyer <gmeyer1357@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, October 14, 2023 1:21 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Public comment for October 19th meeting

Please accept this public comment regarding the zoning change application for the Knowledge Farms property adjacent to The Woodlands in Urbana.

Woodlands owners recognize that changing the zoning of the Knowledge Farms parcel from ORI to MDX would certainly add value to that parcel. Woodlands owners also feel that the zoning change would take value from our Woodlands owners since we would have to confront increased traffic and congestion on our roads and sidewalks. The high density, 24/7 usage associated with MDX zoning is substantially more than the low density, mostly daytime activity associated with development in an ORI zone. It would be more than our community was designed to handle and more than we were led to expect when we purchased property near a parcel zoned ORI. Indeed some of our owners actually abut the Knowledge Farm parcel and would undoubtedly be negatively impacted by MDX zoned development. That is why Woodlands owners urge the Frederick County Council to deny the request to change the zoning of the Knowledge Farms parcel.

Respectfully submitted

Gary & Ina Meyer

2829 Camomile Dr East

Frederick, MD 21704

From: dlewinski@aol.com <dlewinski@aol.com>

Sent: Saturday, October 14, 2023 11:59 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>; Superczynski, Denis <DSuperczynski@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farms Rezoning Request R-21-02

Members of the Frederick County Planning Commission,

This is the second time I have written to your Commission regarding the Knowledge Farms Rezoning Request. I was one of three Woodlands residents who testified by zoom in in March of 2022. My comments and those of my fellow residents were dismissed by the Knowledge Farms Partners Group as uniformed and "unneighborly". On a live microphone at the end of the hearing I could hear a commissioner congratulate Knowledge Farms partners on their success in obtaining a recommendation to move forward to the County Council.

The Knowledge Farms Partner Group did not have success at the County Council meeting in September of 2022. Their unpreparedness and their assertion that they were having monthly meetings with Woodlands residents was exposed, and they withdrew their application to redesign. The Partners visited the Woodlands in December of 2022 with promises of materials with a new design concept for residents' review. They did not bring the promised materials but did speak in general terms about their concept. The audience was not impressed and continued to find many inconsistencies. Their comment(s) about how their primary purpose was to "make money" off of their design was understandable but did not inspire confidence in thoughts of cooperation and doing what was best for the community.

Therefore, it is my hope that you carefully consider their latest plan and consider what is best for our community. As in the past, I ask that you review the latest concept plan for density, safety, traffic, and access to the Woodlands amenities paid for by HOA dues. The request to change zoning does not appear to be in the best interest of the community.

Sincerely,

Denise Lewinski

3232 Ivy Meadow Drive

From: kbcbab@aol.com <kbcbab@aol.com>

Sent: Saturday, October 14, 2023 8:21 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge farms

Dear Commissioners,

As a long time Frederick County resident I have concerns regarding the continued unbridled development and the unclear plans for the development at this site. In particular the site is not suitable for the additional traffic it would generate as the high school is very close and Campus Drive is adjacent.

Please carefully consider the lack of appropriate public facilities and the potential negative effect such an open ended plan could have on the nearby communities and southern Frederick County as a whole.

Zoning decisions that would allow uncontrollable adverse changes to this part of the county should not be allowed.

Karen Baker
2919 Ivy Meadow Dr.
Frederick, MD 21704

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: hupfamily <hupfamily@yahoo.com>

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 9:18 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>; Superczynski, Denis <DSuperczynski@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Cc: Hupfamily <hupfamily@comcast.net>

Subject: Comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02

Please accept this letter as public comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02, submitted to the county in February 2022 and amended in July 2023.

We wish to express our serious concerns to the Frederick County Planning Commission regarding the proposed request for rezoning of the Knowledge Farms property and the planned development of this parcel of land.

We live in the Woodlands community on Purple Sage Mews, which is very close to the entrance of the current Knowledge Farms building from Thornapple Drive, as well as to the intersection of Thornapple with Route 355 (Urbana Pike). Our primary concerns with the proposed development are the great increase in traffic through our community that it would bring, having only one entry/exit into a huge new development, the lack of compatibility with our existing Woodlands community, and the lack of detail provided by the developer as to exactly what they propose to build.

From our daily experience, currently there is already a large amount of traffic using Thornapple Drive, even now before building of the remainder of the Woodlands 55+ community is completed. The proposal to add a large development in Knowledge Farms and to have all of that additional traffic exiting onto Thornapple Drive would create a significant problem in our residential area. Traffic congestion will occur along Thornapple Drive as an excessive number of vehicles for that amount of space on the road wait to turn onto Route 355. This will cause delays to residents, safety concerns to motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, and increased pollution from the exhaust emissions from multiple idling motor vehicles. We realize that the county plans to install a traffic light at the intersection of Route 355 and Thornapple. While this should improve safety, it will not change the total amount of additional traffic that will still be trying to use Thornapple to get to Route 355.

Therefore, we urge you to require that a second, separate entrance/exit onto Route 355 for Knowledge Farms be constructed regardless of the final size of the development. In the event that this is not possible, at a minimum the road exiting Knowledge Farms onto Thornapple Drive should be "right-turn only", to prevent excessive traffic going left and routing through our completely residential community. Right-turn only would also enable the flow of traffic out of the new Knowledge Farms development to move much more smoothly, rather than creating backups for them trying to turn left onto Thornapple to exit their development.

Further, we are extremely concerned over the proposed multistory apartment and self-storage building heights. We request that the Planning Commission seriously consider

height limits to all buildings in the proposed development, since they will all border very closely onto the Woodlands single family and Villa buildings and are not at all compatible with the existing housing. At a minimum, we urge the Council to move all proposed residential and commercial buildings away from the existing Woodlands development and to require a very significant open space and landscape buffer to minimize sight, lighting and noise concerns.

Additionally, we are concerned about the proposed construction of a multistory public self-storage unit building as part of the Knowledge Farms development. We feel that this is not at all compatible with a residential area, neither for us who are already in the Woodlands community nor for residents of new housing units planned to be part of Knowledge Farms. A storage unit would add excessive traffic from customers from outside of the residential community, as well as noise and security concerns, and we request it not be approved as part of the proposed development.

Therefore, we urge the Planning Commission to deny the rezoning application, at least until the developer provides clear specific details as to how they would fix the very real traffic, safety and compatibility issues. If the Planning Commission does choose to recommend allowing the project to go forward, this should be done with strict conditions requiring the correction of those problems. Please do not give them a "blank check" to build a development that would create traffic hazards and is totally incompatible with the existing Woodlands residential development.

Thank you for your consideration of our input.

Christopher and Dorothy Hupfeld
3310 Purple Sage Mews, Frederick, MD 21704
hupfamily@yahoo.com

From: Christina Anderson <ckand27@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 4:53 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Letter regarding Knowledge Farms Proposal for 10.19.23 meeting

Please see attached.

Thank you,

Christina Anderson

October 13, 2023

Dear Planning Commission,

Please accept this letter as public comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02 submitted to the county in February 2022 and amended in July 2023. I stand against the rezoning to MXD for a number of reasons, including incompatibility with the area and neighboring community, safety issues regarding increased traffic hazards as well as livability issues for those that are already living here.

It does not seem in the public interest that Knowledge Farms can come into an established community plan an overstuffed development, compromise the lives of the people living there already and give this a green light. This is clearly at the expense of those already living there. I am hopeful that the planning commission can take a close look at the details of this development and see that it is too dense and incompatible and decide not to approve MXD. By approving the MXD we will now have to manage a pandora's box of ills including increased traffic dangers, trespassers, noise and light pollution as well as literally shutting out the sunlight of those that live near the edge of the plan due to the towering 5 story buildings that have been planned.

Our community has over 500 homes and many of these will back to this ill conceived development. Those of us that bought in this community did so in hopes that we could escape the over populated areas of Northern VA and Montgomery County where mixed developments have eaten up open areas and turned them into traffic snarls and strip malls. Not all MXD's are successful and this one will be a disaster for our community if allowed to go forward. Though mixed developments have been the bread and butter of growing communities, not all are successful and this one has detrimental elements that could prove costly to a large number of Frederick residents.

In February of 2022, we learned that the local real estate company TDRP were planning to stuff all of these buildings in a 11 acre piece of land with no regard for our community. When we tried to reach out, we were rebuffed. In addition, Mr. Chad Tyler and his group have been very evasive as to what the plan actually is when we try to clarify. They came to our community and could not answer our questions. They have been dismissive and said that it was unfortunate we did not know their history. We looked into their history and many of the statements they have made are incorrect. Their attitude is cavalier and when asked to provide details or explanations, we have been put off. Even their meetings have been one sided and in fact one did not even allow us to comment as our microphones were turned off.

Wouldn't it make sense that there should be some considerations for those that already live in a community. At one point, they were promised a quality of life that they greatly invested in. At what price do we put a rubber stamp on a bad concept just because we need to accommodate more people that are moving to an area. Mr. Chad Tyler of Knowledge Farms has made it clear to us that the primary reason he is doing this development is to make a lot of money and really has no intention of working with us to see that it is even tolerable for those living here. Their goal, as stated a number of times is to use as much of the land as possible to make it highly profitable. So, they have created the largest, most densely populated plan they could construct and continue to mislead us with incorrect information.

Many of us that moved to The Woodlands knew that there would be a total of 3 office buildings that would be built under the ORI zoning. We could live with that and made decisions with this given information. Most of the people here are seniors and this was their last move. After homes were purchased and moved into, we were told that the office buildings were a no go and there was a new plan that turned out to be 5 times the density of the Woodlands and included assisted

living and a storage facility. Not only that but Knowledge Farms spoke of the “Synergy” that we would have with each other in regards to sharing our amenities and a pathway between the properties. The Woodlands did not agree to those conditions and have maintained that we do not want this.

Please deny the zoning change to MXD as that will open up 85 more uses that could be detrimental to the existing community and area. But if you deny the facts and arguments documented in this letter, and decide to zone this to MXD, please put some conditions on this that would greatly reduce the density and the elements that make this plan unlivable for a large portion of our residents. Who wants to live their lives in the shadow of a condo building when they have counted on living their last days in the sun? Please consider denying this zoning request for all of these reasons and require them to build something that retains the quality of life of those in our established community.

Sincerely,

Christina K. Anderson
3015 Herb Garden Drive
Frederick, MD 21704

October 13, 2023

Dear Planning Commission,

Please accept this letter as public comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02 submitted to the county in February 2022 and amended in July 2023. I stand against the rezoning to MXD for a number of reasons, including incompatibility with the area and neighboring community, safety issues regarding increased traffic hazards as well as livability issues for those that are already living here.

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purchased and moved into, we were told that the office buildings were a no go and there was a new plan that turned out to be 5 times the density of the Woodlands and included assisted living and a storage facility. Not only that but Knowledge Farms spoke of the "Synergy" that we would have with each other in regards to sharing our amenities and a pathway between the properties. The Woodlands did not agree to those conditions and have maintained that we do not want this.

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Sincerely,

Christina K. Anderson

3015 Herb Garden Drive

Frederick, MD 21704

9296 Blue Sage Court
Frederick, Maryland 21704

Division of Planning and Permitting
30 North Market Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701

October 12, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

We have been living in the Woodlands since 2021 and we hope that this can stay a wonderful community.

We encourage you to keep the zoning of the Knowledge Farms as is, so that there is no negative effect on the community and surrounding area. Changing the zoning could impact property values, increase traffic and enable outsiders to use our amenities.

Sincerely,
 
Stewart and Gail Bergman

Eileen M. Brennan
3421 Angelica Way, Unit 302
Frederick, MD 21704

October 13, 2023

Division of Planning and Permitting
30 North Market Street
Frederick, MD 21701

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission:

Re: Knowledge Farms Application R-21-02

I live on the third floor of a condominium at the Woodlands in Urbana. In addition to enjoying the wonderful Woodlands community and all that charming Frederick city and the county offer, I am lucky enough to have a view of Sugarloaf Mountain from every window in my humble abode. I tell you this as when I initially I learned of the Woodlands community's concern of the possible MXD designated use of the Knowledge Farm acreage adjacent to our development, I thought it was just another case of "Not in my backyard."

I started having concerns, however, when I learned what MXD zoned property allows to be built. I am now convinced that if the MXD zoning is approved for Knowledge Farms, it could have a detrimental effect on the safety of Woodlands residents. My main concern is the traffic that will increase from Thornapple to Ivy Meadow and then through to Urbana Parkway, all three main streets through the Woodlands.

Presently, non-residents drive through Urbana Parkway, and many are speeders. I anticipate a significant increase in traffic along Thornapple and Ivy Meadow to cut through to Urbana Parkway if the MXD zoning for Knowledge Farms is approved. This worries me. There are lots of pedestrians, senior citizens who elect to walk these streets to the pool, the community center, the pavilions, and just for their daily exercise. I have no doubt that a tragedy is inevitable if Thornapple and Ivy Meadow become local thoroughfares, which will happen if Knowledge Farms receives MXD zoning approval.

Please vote NO on rezoning Knowledge Farms for MXD development.

Thank you for reading and thank you for your service to Frederick County citizens.

Sincerely,



Eileen M. Brennan
eileenmbrennan@comcast.net
(301) 518-9872

From: Susan Jay <susanjay3288@msn.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 11:56 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Comments Regarding Knowledge Farms Zoning Request

To members of the Planning Commission:

As residents of The Woodlands, we have several concerns regarding the zoning change request of Knowledge Farms which is adjacent to our Community. These concerns are:

1. There will be a huge impact on traffic coming in and out of the Community primarily on Thornapple exiting onto and entering from MD 355. In the morning, traffic heading southeast on MD 355 is already very heavy. The same is true in the evening heading northwest on MD 355. Although the construction traffic will eventually decrease coming into and out of The Woodlands community via Thornapple, it will not happen quickly. If the only entrance into Knowledge Farms is off Thornapple, there will be even more construction vehicles to deal with as well as a significant increase in individual vehicles entering the current and various new structures being proposed in the zoning request. Even after all construction is completed, the traffic load will be heavy. In our opinion, Thornapple will not be able to handle this vehicle load. In addition, there are several times throughout the day that there is significant traffic entering and exiting Urbana High School onto MD 355 in both directions. The issue of getting emergency vehicles in and out of the community is also a big concern. Adding another entrance does not seem possible due to the current road route and use.
2. Knowledge Farms keeps changing what it wants to do with the property. A storage facility brings with it concerns of increased noise, bothersome lights during the nighttime hours and safety concerns that such facilities have a reputation for bringing with them. Our pleasant community should not have to deal with this type of structure. Retail development also is a concern especially in today's climate of increased crime in such facilities. There are ample facilities (CVS, eateries, gas stations) within a very quick drive as well as walking distance already from our community. Knowledge Farms has empty space in their current buildings that they have not been able to rent so additional buildings do not seem to be needed.
3. We are very opposed to any walking path that connects our community to any structures on Knowledge Farms. Our community pays for the upkeep of our common areas, and these are not meant to be shared with individuals from outside of the community that could present safety issues to our residents, damage from individuals who have no ties to the community and unwanted trespassing on our properties.
4. The wildlife living in the reforestation area that will be next to whatever gets built will also be negatively affected. Potential destruction of their habitats is likely. There are eagles, deer, fox and turkeys to name a few of the creatures living in this area.

We hope that the members of the Planning Commission will look carefully at the scope of Knowledge Farms project. Some expansion is certainly expected but the scope of this project

seems to not consider the affect it will have on the residents of The Woodlands Community, the traffic it will cause and the impact on the natural beauty and wildlife found in the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Susan and Michael Jay
3013 Herb Garden Dr.
Frederick, MD 21704
919-428-0255

From: Mary elliott <ellimary213@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 10:06 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Do not change Knowledge farm zoning

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hello, I am a resident in the woodlands, and have a number of concerns about changing the zoning to mixed use and proposed plans for that mixed use.

Woodlands has hone ratio to land to allow spacious, quiet , neighborhood. There are traffic concerns, noise concerns, and safety concerns, (24 hr storage).

There are also light pollution concerns. Not to mention the blocking of the view our residents paid 10s of thousands of dollars to have.

It is preferable to keep zoning for another medical building or equivalent.

There is much data to support total concerns of the woodland residents.

Sincerely,
Mary Elliott
3247 Thornapple Dr
Frederick MD 21704

From: Madeline Catalano <dmaddyd56@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 11:23 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Knowledge Farms Application for rezoning from ORI to MXD (application R-21-02)

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

KF's proposed use for their land is not suitable for MXD zoning and we STRONGLY oppose any change in zoning from the existing ORI. We recognize that the land will eventually be developed but the size (usability and proposed density) and scale of the proposed land usage does not support MXD Zoning. We want the ORI zoning to stand as originally approved for land use.

Safety

With the proposed structures, we must have an egress/ingress off of Rte355 required and approved (with funding) BEFORE a change in zoning is considered. This is especially important as KF was denied this access in the past. It is not safe for our community or those that currently use the medical offices on Thornapple. What if there were an emergency such as a fire in one of the buildings? How will people get in or out? How will the required services (Fire, EMT and Police) get in when at the same time others will be trying to escape the premises? Thornapple already gets stacking during peak times of the day with appointments, lunch breaks, etc. Though there is "talk" of a light at 355 & Thornapple, it will not diminish the traffic. We already see people going down Thornapple to Herb Garden to Ivy Meadow and onto Urbana Pkwy at high speeds to avoid waiting to get onto 355. Our community is made of active seniors but some are in wheelchairs, walkers or just walk slower. This alone is a huge safety risk/concern for our residents.

Transportation & Walkability:

There is no "walkability" as we do not have buses that service our area to allow for workers, specifically those needed to support the proposed structures. While professionals such as doctors, therapists and paraprofessionals may be able to use personal vehicles to get to work (though parking to support those vehicles are questionable at best), most support personnel for what is being proposed would have a difficult time getting to work. That includes housekeeping, food services, etc.; many of which rely on public transportation to get to their place of employment. The assisted living structure proposed is 24x7. Potential workers would have even less options available during the overnight shift. Without support workers, this option is doomed to fail (as has been the case nationwide) leaving the Woodlands with an eye sore and a potentially unsafe area that will clearly reduce our property values.

Size and Scale:

KF's proposed structures are not synergistic to other Frederick county communities and more specifically, the Woodlands. Our property is built on over 200 acres vs 35 acres of which only 11 acres is suitable for building. Yet, KF is jamming as many structures as conceivably possible

without thought. Their homes are not well planned with one area within 26feet of one of our homes and their condos looming over 70 feet tall. That is not consistent with the Woodlands. While there are many other areas of huge concern that does not support MXD zoning, involving our quality of life due to noise & light pollution that both assisted living facilities and a storage facility generate by operating 24x7, we chose to focus primarily on safety as this impacts our entire Urbana community, not only those of us living at the Woodlands.

Respectfully Submitted
Madeline & John Catalano
3085 Herb Garden Drive
Frederick, MD 21704
dmaddyd56@gmail.com
610-662-0557

From: Geri Morrison <gmorrisonrn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 10:15 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: ZONING KNOWLEDGE FARMS

As residents of The Woodlands 55+ Community we fear that a zoning change opens the door to many awful options that will increase traffic greatly, decrease property values and could possibly increase crime in the area. The zoning change plunges The Woodlands into a great unknown concerning development of the 35 acre neighboring property. The zoning was decided years ago and acceptable to our residents. Don't allow a change at this time.

Thank you for taking our viewpoints into consideration,

James and Geraldine Morrison

9288 Blue Sage Court

Urbana, MD 21704

From: Kip James <1kipster@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 10:37 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>; Council Members <CouncilMembers@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farms re-zoning application

Members of the Planning Commission and County Council,

I am writing as a member of the senior community living at The Woodlands of Urbana, adjacent to the Knowledge Farms property. As the Oct 19 date approaches for your next Planning Commission meeting, my wife and I feel compelled to restate our serious concerns regarding the Knowledge Farms (KF) rezoning application.

While we understand that KF already has the ORI zoning to develop its property, we see little willingness on their part to listen to any questions or concerns from The Woodlands residents, their only nextdoor neighbor. The few meetings we've had with each other have always been at the urging of the Woodlands citizens, and always resulted with the clear impression that, in the eyes of KF representatives, we are just a troublesome group to be mollified or disregarded. The overall impression left by KF when the two groups have met can best be characterized as condescending and, at times, even combative and threatening. The KF representatives appeared annoyed that we might have concerns and ask for accommodations. It hasn't helped that when those same reps have been questioned regarding details of their plans, they often seemed completely surprised and vague, displaying an alarming lack of preparation (and experience?) that one would hope for with such an ambitious development.

Having got an idea of Knowledge Farms' "ideas", combined with their attitude towards us, Woodlands residents understandably have valid concerns and questions. Architectural compatibility with our community is one question. Traffic planning looks very problematic at best, with the prospect of congested egress and overflow to and from KF, through our crowded residential streets. Additionally, any emergency vehicles would create, or have to contend with, tremendous congestion - a huge safety issue in our senior community. Without addressing this lack of a confirmed, sensible traffic plan, the high-density KF development will surely create a traffic nightmare within our quiet community and severely impact our quality of life and property values.

Other than their stated goal of generating a profit, KF's plans have continued to change, creating the impression that they're still unsure what they will ultimately decide to do with the property. That lack of a supported clear plan leaves us Woodlands residents with no faith that KF's claim of willingness to really listen to our concerns is anything more than an attempt to get their MXD application approved and move forward with whatever plan they finally decide on later, during the Site Plan phase. As you are aware, by then it becomes too late for any other concerned parties to exert any real leverage to generate compromise or accommodation in the spirit of "good neighbors".

Our purpose is not to quash the KF rezoning application as much as to inform the Planning Commission and County Council of our deep concerns regarding KF's unclear intentions and their apparent disregard for our questions and concerns. Whether the KF rezoning application is

approved or not, Woodlands residents are only asking for reasonable accommodation that gives serious, thoughtful consideration to our desire for compatibility with our neighbor. KF's "planning", as presented publicly to The Woodlands, has been all over the map. By default, this puts the burden on our own County Planning Commission to be extraordinarily diligent in examining, questioning, and evaluating the KF rezoning application. We residents of The Woodlands are necessarily depending on you to ensure an equitable arrangement that demands thoughtful long term planning, commitment and action from Knowledge Farms in the form of accommodation and compatibility with their next door neighbor.

Thank you in advance.

R.C. and Deborah James
3019 Herb Garden Drive

From: Sonia Desai <soniadesai43@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 12:24 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms

I was driving towards 355 when a car came racing out of Knowledge Farms. It didn't stop at the stop sign and nearly hit my car. I live in the Woodlands and my concern is as the population grows at Knowledge Farms, car accidents will become more prominent.

Sincerely,

Sonali Desai

From: Julie Heatherly <juls.heatherly@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 11:14 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Rezoning of Knowledge Farms
To the Frederick County Planning Commission,

The following are my key reasons to object to the rezoning application of the Knowledge Farm site from existing ORI (Office/Research/Industrial) to MDX (Mixed Use).

Traffic Hazards and Safety

- The projected traffic and land use is not supported by the existing ingress/egress driveway and intersection at Rt355/Campus Dr. Presents multiple traffic hazards.
 - Limited sight distance may impact the safety of getting out of the Woodlands Community.
 - Potentially impact the safety if Fire, EMT and ambulances cannot get to the Woodlands Community in a timely manner.
 - Increase traffic/speed around the Woodlands Community

Density, Incompatibility and Liability

- The buildable site consists of only 11 acres. The density (sq.ft. or dwellings/acre) is unacceptable and is (5x) than the Woodlands at ~200 acres.
- The current site plan shows homes as close as 26ft from existing property with inadequate resident and visitor parking as well as five 5-story Condo buildings 70 feet tall.
- Increase noise pollution from construction, cars, housing and emergency vehicles with the new proposed living.
- Plans call for a storage facility and a possible 85 uses with MXD.
- Increase invasive lighting for all homes nearby with storage and parking lots.
- Increase in drivers cutting through our streets to avoid the traffic back up.
- Risk of trespassers and non-residents having access to all of our open amenities.
- Liability issues from those outside the community using our amenities.

Sincerely,
Julie Heatherly
3200 Cedar Groves Mews
Frederick, MD 21704

Julie Heatherly
(she/her)

From: Carol Cron <carol.cron@hotmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 6:45 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Cc: 'ckand27@gmail.com' <ckand27@gmail.com>; Susan McCannon <spmccannon@gmail.com>

Subject: Comments regarding the Knowledge Farms proposed development and hearing on Oct. 18

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission Members,

We moved to Urbana, Maryland to escape congestion and noisy traffic in Prince George's County. We have been concerned to learn of the potential development of the Knowledge Farms property on Rt. 355, which backs up to the Woodlands of Urbana, where we live.

There are many valid reasons to deny this development request by Knowledge Farms (KF) in its present form. A lot of my neighbors in the Woodlands have written to you and will speak at the hearing this week. I am writing this email to you to convey the concerns of my husband (Michael Cron) and myself. In this email I would like to focus on the safety aspect of this proposed development.

There is only ONE entrance and exit into and out of KF off Rt. 355. It is onto Thornapple Drive. Cars that go right will back up at the stop sign to go right or left on Rt. 355. If cars turn left out of Knowledge Farms they will end up smack in the middle of our neighborhood, at our bocce ball and pickleball courts, tot lot, and neighborhood sidewalks. The only way to get out of the Woodlands at that point is to turn right on Herb Garden Drive and turn right again on Ivy Meadow Drive to get to Urbana Parkway. Urbana Parkway will take them to Rt. 355 if they turn right or to the area along Rt. 80 in Urbana if they turn left. While I understand a traffic light may be added in the future, the single entrance onto Rt. 355 with the current stop sign will be extremely unsafe. Cars travel at high rates of speed from both directions. It sometimes takes up to a full minute, or more, to turn left SAFELY onto Rt. 355. Directly across from Thornapple Drive is Campus Drive, which goes to Urbana High School. This road will have new and inexperienced drivers going into and out of school and after school activities.

With the planned development of KF, especially an assisted living facility, there will be ambulances and fire trucks at all times of the day and night. It is not easy for a fire truck, especially, to turn into KF from Rt. 355 with the short access on Thornapple Drive. A storage facility along with assisted living will have cars, vans and even tractor-trailers going in and out, all day and all night.

We believe a second entrance into the KF development should be mandated. I understand this was turned down some twenty years ago by the County, but times have changed. Traffic has increased exponentially. The second entrance can be used for traffic to go either north or south on Rt. 355. We are not yet at full capacity within the Woodlands, and it is already difficult to drive onto Rt. 355 without traffic backing up due to the speed of cars and the blind spots. Having cars lined up on Thornapple Drive to leave our community or having tenants wait to get onto Thornapple Drive from the proposed businesses at KF will cause undue traffic backups as well as delays for all of us to get in and out of our community, especially at rush hour times. Without another exit from the South, traffic will be challenging. Having just one way in and out only adds to the traffic and safety of our community. You may reach me via email at carol.cron@hotmail.com. I am happy to speak further with you if you wish to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carol and Michael Cron
Woodlands of Urbana residents

Carol E. Cron

E-mail: carol.cron@hotmail.com

Cell: 301-704-8777

From: Jodi Phelan <jphelan2909@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 6:22 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>; Kevin Phelan <kevinphelan42@gmail.com>

Subject: Knowledge Farms Application R-21-02

This letter serves to document our opposition to the rezoning of the Knowledge Farms parcel in Urbana from ORI to MDX.

We live in the Woodlands of Urbana and fear that a Mixed Use zoning permit would result in significant traffic problems, especially at Thornapple and Rte 355, a decrease in property value, an increase in noise problems, the potential for unauthorized use of our community amenities, and pedestrian safety issues. Part of Knowledge Farms justification for rezoning is based on a traffic study in 2021. This data does not accurately reflect the current traffic pattern of fall 2023 because in 2021, our community was less than 50% complete, and many people were working from home due to the pandemic.

We recognize Knowledge Farm's right to profitably develop the land; however, we emphatically ask the FC Planning Commission to strongly consider the foreseeable damage to our community and the inherent risks associated with a significant increase in traffic.

We appreciate your consideration.

Regards,
Jodi and Kevin Phelan
2756 Camomile Dr. W.
Frederick, MD 21704



Jodi L. Phelan, BBA, MS Marketing
410-302-0420

From: Lisa Milne <lomilne62@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 5:34 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Development
Good afternoon,

I live in the Woodlands at Urbana and am concerned about the proposed development being considered for the Knowledge Farms property adjacent to ours.

The traffic impact will be huge for our development. Backups, delays and safety issues with only one way in and out. At the very least - a second entrance/exit should be a requirement of going forward with the proposed plan.

Please consider the impact to those of us who already live here and consider this our home. We would love to maintain the peaceful setting we thought we were getting when we purchased three years ago.

Thank you.

Lisa and Henry Milne
9260 Starlight Mews N
Urbana, MD 21704

From: Frances M Whitehead <fmw4440@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 4:16 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms LLC Rezoning Request

To Members of the Frederick County Planning Commission:

As residents of the Woodlands of Urbana 55+ community, we wish to express our opposition to the request submitted by Knowledge Farms, LLC to rezone their property .

The Knowledge Farms property is adjacent to The Woodlands. To allow mixed development on that tract of land would undoubtedly have an extremely negative impact on our entire community and beyond. Major concerns include a greatly increased volume of traffic through our quiet neighborhood streets, much more noise, decreased resident safety, and degradation of our community's infrastructure. Non-resident trespassing and use of Woodlands amenities, which are paid for by Woodlands residents, and decreased Woodlands property values are also of major concern.

Therefore, we join our Woodlands neighbors in voicing our concerns to Frederick County. We are highly opposed to rezoning the Knowledge Farms property from ROI to MXD, and we strongly urge you to deny the request to do so.

Respectfully,

Frances M. Whitehead
Gary S. Martin
Resident Owners, The Woodlands of Urbana

From: ohioirl56@aol.com <ohiogirl56@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 9:56 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms request for Rezoning

Dear Planning Commission Members,

We are Steve and Erica Mitchell; we live at 3091 Herb Garden Dr in The Woodlands. Because our home abuts directly to the Knowledge Farm development, we have a vested interest in this proposal. This is the second time we have grappled with this project, and we are dismayed to find out that the KF developers are trying again to change the current zoning. We strongly object to this proposal on 3 fronts: as immediate neighbors, as members of the Woodlands community that will be adversely affected by this ill conceived application, and as Urbana residents who care deeply about the area we have chosen to live.

KF has proposed villas and condos directly behind our residences. At one end, the distance between an existing Woodlands residence and the KF building is around 26 feet. What possible buffer could be planted in that minimal space? Every Woodlands villa has light coming in to the back of their residences, including the Woodlands villas that are next to the Woodlands condos. The Woodlands community has been thoughtfully designed with buildings carefully placed; KF's main focus seems to be to jam as much as possible in a small amount of buildable land. Why are their 5 story condo buildings placed so close to Woodlands villas, blocking out available light crucial to our homes? Our villas' light source comes from the East. A group of 5 story condos negates that. We have lived in multiple states, and have had occasion to use storage facilities many times. NOT ONCE were the storage facilities abutting a residential area. 24/7 lighting distractions, noise, overflowing dumpsters, traffic with cars and storage vans make that a non-starter....yet the KF developers have suggested that their storage facility is compatible with our neighborhood. How?

Equally as upsetting is the apparent disregard for traffic safety. Right now there is only one ingress/ egress into the KF development; how is that safe? The intersection of 355/ Campus Drive/ Thornapple is already dangerous, yet the KF proposal will add hundreds of cars. We have serious doubts that a second egress will be allowed, given the curvature of the road and limited sight distance. This means cars will simply turn into our neighborhood and use it as a cut through, to get to 270 or to simply avoid the 355 bottleneck. Approving the KF rezoning as proposed will definitely make our 55+ community more dangerous.

We question the reality of the Assisted Living segment of the proposal. Successful elder care facilities are built on much more land than KF has allotted; there is NO public transportation on 355, which is crucial to attracting the staff that is needed. There is not adequate parking for any of the buildings proposed on the KF property. If the Assisted Living proposal falls through, what will go in its place? MXD has a possible 85 uses; this is a far cry from the two buildings that are permitted under the current zoning agreement. How does a haphazard and undefined development benefit the town of Urbana?

We urge the Planning Commission to reject the rezoning request.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our concerns. We appreciate your time.

Steve and Erica Mitchell

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

From: Jan Burns <janburns23@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 9:32 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Please reject the rezoning request of Knowledge Farms

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

My husband and I strongly urge you to reject the rezoning application of the Knowledge Farm property on Route 355 in Urbana from ORI to MDX.

The development of a high density community on such a limited size land parcel and its location to an already established 55+community has many detrimental components.

One of many, is the impact of increased traffic where the Highschool already has a significant traffic problem on Route 355. Many are young inexperienced drivers put at higher risk of accidents with increased traffic.

Another being drivers likely using a shortcut through the Woodlands community to access the entrance to 270 on route 80. This community has many aging adult regular walkers whose safety would be at great risk in this event.

Please consider these factors in your decision making. Frederick has so much to offer as it is.

It is one of Maryland's most peaceful and beautiful counties. Please don't let it be ruined by greedy developers just wanting the Almighty dollar instead of what's best for the tax paying, voting residents.

Thank you.

Janice L Burns
3282 Pine Needle Circle
Frederick, MD 21704

From: Sandra Saltz <saltzey@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 4:45 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Rezoning of Knowledge Farm MXD R-21-02

Dear Council Members,

I am a resident of the Woodlands at Urbana, the 55+ community adjacent to the Knowledge Farm (KF) property. I have lived here for three and a half years and have watched our community grow from the start. I was originally told that KF was going to build two office buildings next to the current structures. As I have watched the community grow, I have witnessed the increase in traffic cutting through to Urbana Parkway. The increase has been noticeable, but the speed of the cars and trucks coming through is not only noisy, but a safety hazard to our 55+ residents. I have spoken with many folks who don't feel it is safe to cross Urbana Parkway. This is a shame because it limits their easy access to many of our amenities.

If KF is approved for MXD the amount of traffic coming from the possible proposed building will more than double or triple. This will impact the Woodlands in many ways. Our roads will bear the brunt of wear and tear, noise levels will increase and as I stated already the danger of speeding cars to our many residents that like to walk and ride bikes through the community.

The current plan that KF has proposed, or something similar does not reflect the same type of community that we have in the Woodlands. The condominiums are taller and would impact our villas and houses on Thornapple and Herb Garden Drives. There would be no synergy as KF owners have boasted about several times. These residents never imagined a 24 hour self-storage facility in their backyard. It would most likely stay lit all night and there would be more noise from people in and out at all hours. Safety of our residents is also a concern.

In conclusion, for the reasons I have listed and many other concerns that you will hear at the meeting on October 19th, I ask that you take very seriously the KFrequest to change from ROI to MXD use and deny their request.

Respectfully,

Sandra L. Saltz

3266 Starlight Street

Frederick, MD 21704

saltzey@gmail.com

From: Dusty Rhodes <DustyRhodes777@outlook.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 9:04 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Cc: Dusty Rhodes <dustyrhodes777@outlook.com>; IreneWRhodes@Gmail.com

Subject: Urgent Comment - Zoning Map Amendment Knowledge Farms for this Thr 10/19/23 meeting

Importance: High

I'll be brief.....

As a homeowner in the 55+ community of Woodlands of Urbana, one of many concerns I have about rezoning Knowledge Farms to MXD, especially with my home backing up to the 34+ acres of land under consideration.....in our senior ages, most of us homeowners are likely in the LAST HOUSE we will own before eventually needing to move into a retirement village – we're in the final stretch of the investment-generating stage of our lives. We MUST maximize our investment in this neighborhood because it is our last chance to benefit financially from homeownership. We bought in here believing this location holds the kind of potential growth we will need one last time. Things out of our control are one thing (earthquakes, national economy, etc) but for local planning commission decisions which are in your control, I see NO COMPELLING POSITIVE GAINES for our property values for any homeowner in Woodlands if you vote to rezone Knowledge Farms to MXD. But I see ONLY MULTIPLE LOSSES FOR US ALL if you do rezone to MXD. We all bought into this area to help ourselves but which also helps Frederick County grow into a financially vibrant community.
PLEASE VOTE NO ON REZONING KNOWLEDGE FARMS TO MXD!

Sincerely,

Ralph and Irene Rhodes
Herb Garden Drive
Frederick, MD 21704

If necessary I can provide our house # and phone #.

From: MARY KLOET <jkloet3916@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 4:22 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Zoning change for Knowledge Farms

To whom it may concern:

As a current resident of a condominium in The Woodlands community I would like to voice my displeasure with a proposed zoning change for the Knowledge Farms project.

This proposal will negatively impact the quality of life in our community and I strenuously oppose its enactment.

Sincerely,
Mary Kloet
9249 Angelica Lane, #201
Frederick, MD 21704

Sent from my iPhone

From: John Nori <norijohn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 9:31 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Rezoning request

We live in the Woodlands; however, our property does not directly abut the Knowledge Farms property; Nevertheless, we have carefully followed the progress of the request for rezoning because we and our neighbors will be impacted by this request. Initially, we strongly supported the limitations recommended by the Planning Commission; however, after listening carefully to the presentation by the Knowledge Farms developer, we believe that **rezoning should not be granted because he was not able or perhaps was not willing to articulate their vision clearly.**

The density that was described and the impact that is proposed will reduce the quality of our lives and indeed will have an adverse impact on the Woodlands and the greater community of Urbana.

We feel certain that the development of the Knowledge Farms property will have a major negative impact on our community. Therefore, if it is approved, we request that you:

1. Minimize traffic impact on our community by requiring a second entrance to the property.
Without this separate entrance any development will bring chaos to the intersection of the entrance to the KF property and Thornapple Drive.
2. Require that the developer provide a clearly articulated plan that buffers our community from towering buildings and busy commercial facilities that may be built.
3. Require a significant landscape buffer between our community and the new development.
4. Require that **NO storage facility** be built on the KF property as it will bring traffic, intrusive lighting, and noise.

Thank you for your time.
John and Brenda Nori
3122 Herb Garden Mews, N.
Urbana, MD 21704

To: Frederick County Planning Commission

Subject: Knowledge Farm MDX Rezoning Application

Date: October 13, 2023

Dear Planning Commission,

As you consider the Knowledge Farm Rezoning Application for MDX 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 possible negative effects on Frederick County and especially along south bound MD 355. This area seems to be on a fast track to overzealous development which does not always achieve positive results for the communities in the long run. Urbana has shown some good planning over the years and the Commission has the chance to assure that future submitted development plans are beneficial vs. detrimental to the livable existing communities and achieve the most efficient land use for the public interest. The following are some of my concerns as I read in the submitted Knowledge Farm Rezoning Application.

Uncorroborated points in the KF Justification Statement:

Availability of Public Transportation- 2nd Egress/entry point

The Applicant's reliance on possible future practical public transit lines being available to help mitigate the increase in vehicle traffic resulting from the potential residents and employees of the new site is not viable for presentation in their Application. Functioning public transportation being available in time for the completion of the proposed project is speculative. Without an easily accessible bus line stop on or close to the development, all of the approximate 450 plus residents will need to rely on automobiles. This increase in vehicle traffic along with the present Medical Facility and the Woodlands will create a bottleneck at Thornapple Drive, the only entry-exit for the property. Here again the Applicant assumes that their conceptual discussion with Frederick County and SHA will result in approval for the 2nd exit-entrance which was already denied once at the State level in 2004. Without this happening at the same time as the start of the construction, the new development may become a future trap to others during emergency response services.

Contrary to the statement made in the KF Justification that senior living communities tend to have a lower impact on public facilities and services, the age restricted community will require more attention to providing a safe and comfortable place to live. A 24-Hour Storage Facility right in the middle of the site does not contribute to that. The previous ORI permitted a 3-story medical building of 17,000 SF, the proposed building states 33,000 SF for storage space. I have read that a similar storage facility has been approved around Hyattstown. The future residents of the KF Project will probably be downsizing from their previous homes preparing for a new lifestyle and not requiring dead storage space. A complementary building providing additional

amenities and wellness commercial space would be a better option than a redundant storage space facility.

The Applicant provides misleading information that fire and emergency support facilities “will be adequate for the Project’s additional units and uses”. The 2018 Frederick County Fire-Rescue Plan already placed the Urbana area in a “moderate risk” category for fire-rescuer services. Since that time the Woodlands, with approximately 1600 residents when completed in 2024, have been added as well as other residential developments completed or are now in planning. The KF Project addition of about 450 plus residents- 150 are in Assisted Living -would also need emergency services. Statistics show that Assisted Living Facilities require frequent medical assistance response more than the average mixed communities. Currently, I am not aware that the Urbana Fire Station has already increased its equipment and staff to handle these increases in population. The County should ensure that all NFAP (National Fire Protection Association)-1720 response time standards are met prior to further development in Urbana. Since new roads will become part of the property, the site will be required to meet the EXIT Distance Requirement to be less than 1800 ft for fire and safety services from all of the facilities. If only one exit is available this critical requirement would not be met.

Without the pre- approval and clarification of the above critical points, a Rezoning Approval should not be given.

Other Concerns Noted:

Sensitive Areas

The Concept Plan Submitted does not show a walkway from the residential facilities to the exit at Thornapple Drive. Seems like the residents would have to walk on the road around the Storage Facility to reach the exit. This would make it a little difficult for Seniors to navigate out of the site. Also there seems to be a 10 ft path shown starting from the corner of Campus Drive going south along MD 355 that leads to nowhere. What is the purpose of this. There is no sidewalk indicated along the KF Property Line but there is already a curb cut on the south corner of Thornapple Drive and MD 355.

The many new roads planned, parking on the property and the buildings will create a large area of hard surface contributing to potential large rain runoff problems. This could become a problem for the watershed to the creek below where a large flood control project was recently completed. Will this negatively impact the new creek bed by the volume of runoff water once the KF Project is completed.

As you review the Knowledge Farm Rezoning Application, please consider setting up guardrails for best land use. Thoughtful and responsible development will benefit everyone in the County and bring new residents who are in search of well-planned neighborhoods. Factors should include preserving existing natural features in relationship to planned construction both on site and the immediate vicinity, efficient site design, environmental considerations and low impact development techniques in accordance with Chapter 1.15.2 of the Frederick County Code.

The Applicant has provided a few minimum changes in their revised concept plan but has not made changes that would reduce density and improve the overall desired livable Senior Community conditions for prospective residents. Approval of the Rezoning to MDX should be held back until approvals for the above-mentioned uncorroborated points are clarified.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted by:

Walter Labitzky -3054 Herb Garden Drive, Urbana 21704

From: Chad Tyler <chad@tylerco.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 2:15 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Historical Staff Report with Implications for the Knowledge Farms Rezoning Hearing on October 19

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I'm sending you the attached July 10th, 2017 Staff report on the Natelli (Urbana Office Research Center) rezoning, which has implications for our Knowledge Farms rezoning hearing this Thursday, October 19th. I apologize that this was not sent sooner, however we'd certainly appreciate you reviewing it in advance of the hearing. I know that a few of the current members of the planning commission we're also on the planning commission back in 2016, when Natelle's subject rezoning started. As you know (as the planning commissions' archives/records reflect) the planning commission voted favorably in support of that rezoning, with many of the same factors now applying to our Knowledge Farms rezoning. We look forward to providing a more comprehensive overview of our rezoning on Thursday, whereby we'll address the merits of the rezoning, and relevant matters of concern brought forth by some within the community. Thanks in advance for your attention and consideration of this information.

Chad S. Tyler, President

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/chad-tyler-77b01a8/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Chadstyler>

Web: <https://td-realty.com/>



Offices:

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Hyattstown, MD 21754

Colorado-Denver

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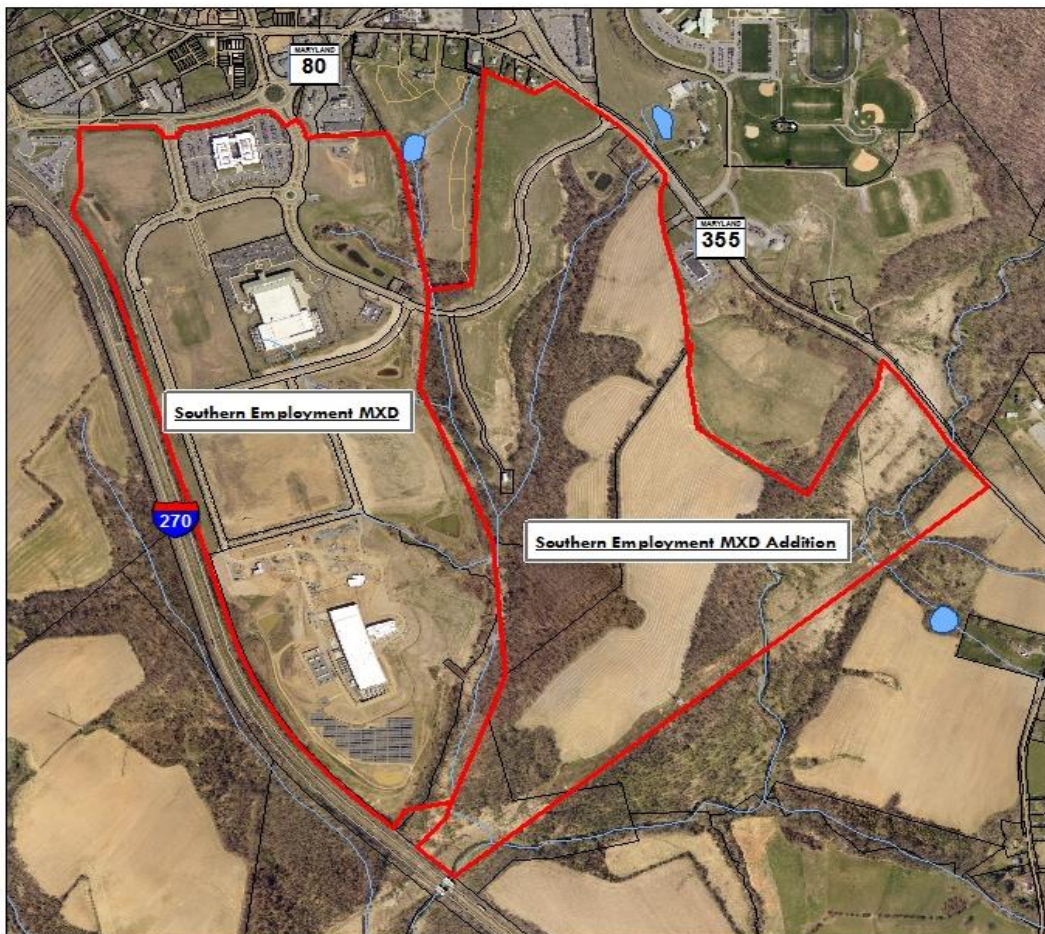


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July 10, 2017

Frederick County Division of Planning & Permitting
Zoning Map Amendment
Staff Report

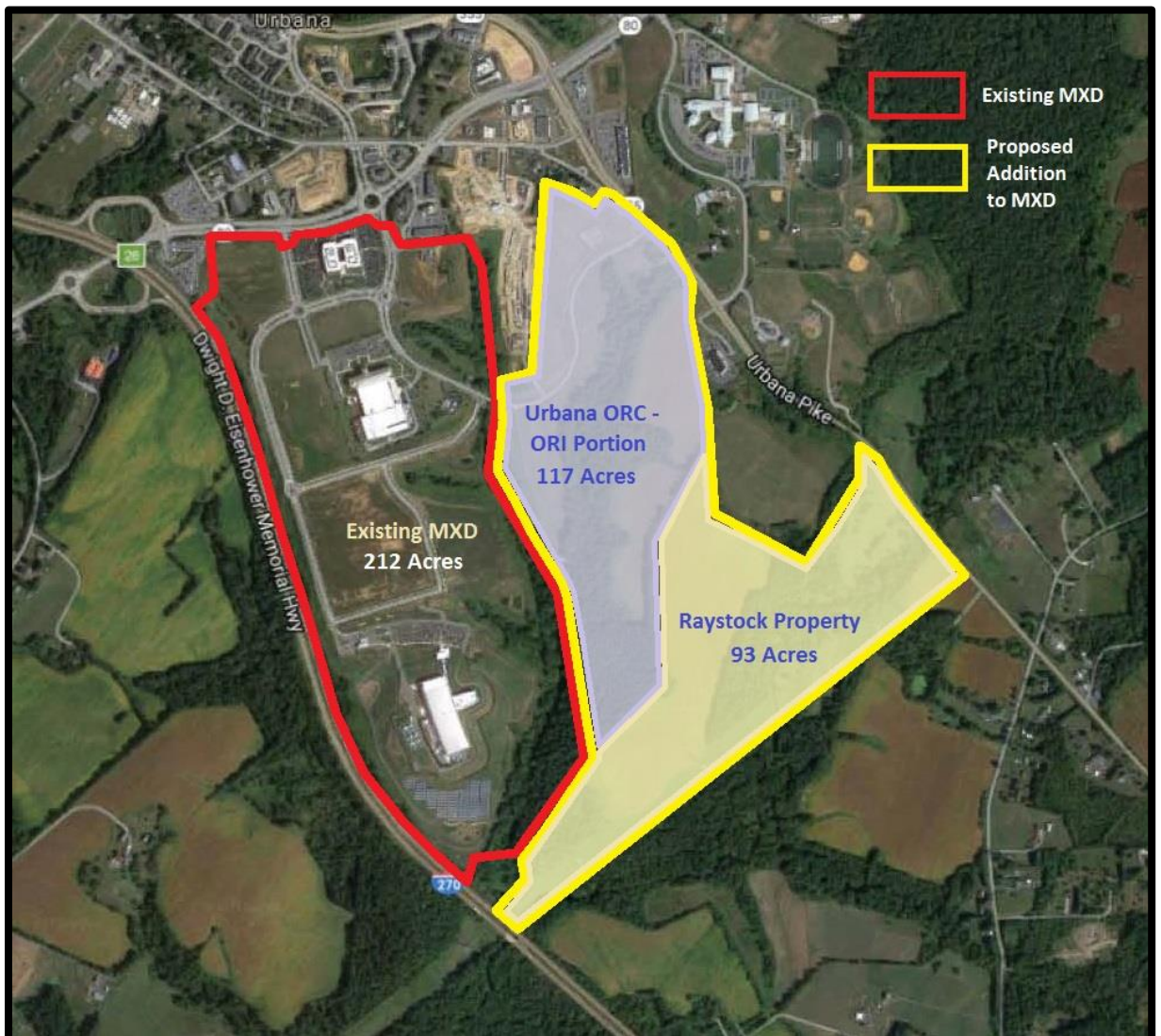
Case #: R-16-01 (C)
Applicant: Urbana Corporate Center, LLC, and Natelli Communities LP,
Request: Rezone 166.9 acres of Office/Research/Industrial (ORI), 42.5 acres of Resource Conservation (RC), and 0.7 acres of Limited Industrial (LI) to Mixed Use Development (MXD) and amend the Phase I Plan of the Southern Employment MXD (a.k.a. Urbana Office Research Center MXD) to include additional acreage as an age-restricted residential development with 700 permitted dwellings and/or an assisted living/nursing care facility.



I. Background

This development, more specifically known as the Urbana Office Research Center or Southern Employment MXD), was rezoned from ORI to MXD in 1998 (R-98-1) proposing only employment and commercial uses (no residential uses). The Phase I Plan was amended in 2009 (R-98-1 A) to adjust the amount of permitted commercial uses to accommodate a planned outlet mall. In 2012, a second amendment to the development was approved (R-98-1 B) that significantly reduced the commercial uses to accommodate the now existing Social Security Administration data center.

There is approximately 67 acres of net acreage available within the current MXD to accommodate additional employment and commercial development. If developed entirely as employment with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.5, this land has the potential for approximately 1.4 million square feet of office space.



II. Applicant's Proposal

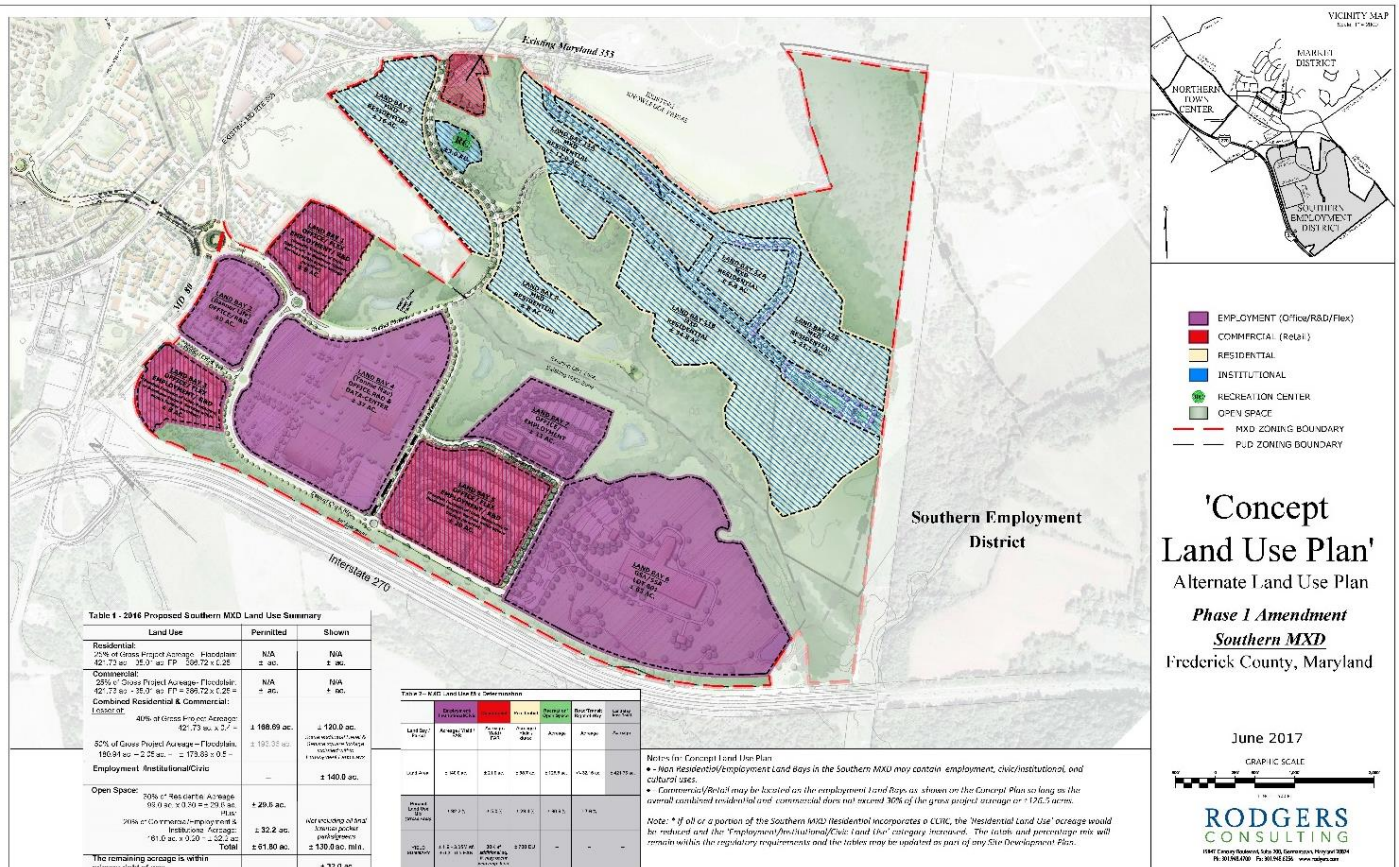
Overview

In the Southern Employment MXD, the Applicant is seeking a significant expansion and revision of the land use mix previously approved. The proposal maintains the original employment areas in the 211+ acre MXD development that is already home to several employers including the Social Security data center, Fannie Mae data center, and Legal and General (insurance company). The proposed 210-acre expansion area south and east of the existing MXD would create an opportunity for the development of a 700-unit age-restricted residential community, absorbing not just the undeveloped Raystock property but the land bays previously zoned for ORI development along Urbana Parkway. This portion of the proposal would add a residential component to an MXD project that currently includes only non-residential uses. This area may also accommodate an institutional use, which would permit an assisted living/nursing care facility on all or a portion of proposed residential area.

In summary the Application proposes:

- Rezone and add 210 acres to the Southern MXD development;
- Add a residential component for 700 age-restricted dwellings with the option to develop all or a portion of this area with an assisted living/nursing care facility.

Proposed Concept Plan



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The proposed land use plan meets the threshold criteria of the Zoning Ordinance laid out in Section 1-19-10.500 as follows:

Existing & Proposed Land Use Mix Summary

Land Use	Existing MXD		Proposed MXD		Maximum Permitted or Minimum Required
	Acres	Percentage (total land area)	Acres	Percentage (total land area)	
Residential	0	24%	99	28%	40% maximum ¹
Commercial	17		21		
Employment/Institutional	140	44%	140	33%	No maximum
Open Space/Recreational/Floodplain	32	17%	130	31%	62 ac minimum
Right-of-Way	23	15%	32	8%	N/A
TOTAL	212ac	100%	422 ac	100%	

1. Of the gross acreage (421.73 acres) including floodplain

Open Space Criteria

The Zoning Ordinance requires the provision of open space at the following rates in an MXD:

Residential uses - 30% of total residential acreage = 29.7 ac

Commercial/Employment/Institutional uses - 20% of combined acreage = 32.2 ac

The required amount of Open Space is 61.9 acres. The Applicant is proposing 130 acres (including 35 acres of floodplain) which exceeds the requirement significantly.

Employment Potential

This application (Southern MXD R-16-01 (C), and the Northern MXD application (R-16-01 (B) submitted under separate application), propose to shift a significant amount of land from employment use to residential or institutional uses. The table below summarizes both applications and the difference in acreages for each development/property as currently exists and with the proposed revisions.

Development/Property	Existing (acres)	Proposed (acres)
Northern MXD	67	35
Southern MXD (undeveloped land only)	67	67
Urbana Office Research Center (ORI)	54	0
Raystock property (ORI)	71	0
Total Acres	259 acres	102 acres
Building Potential (square feet)	5.6 million¹	2.2 million¹

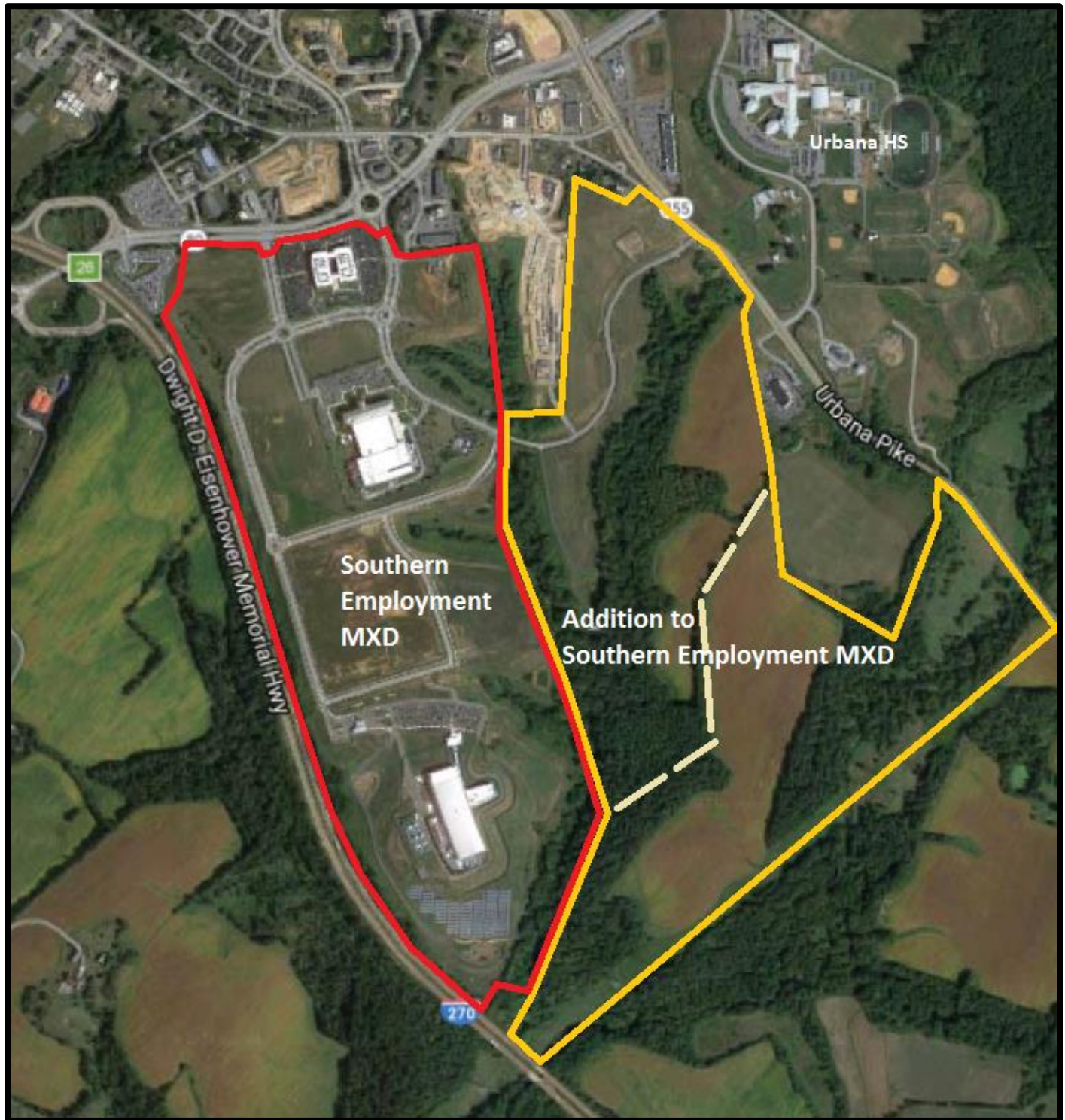
1. Assumes a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.5

Concept Plan

The Concept Plan demonstrates a continuation of design principles previously utilized by the Applicant throughout the development of the associated Urbana projects. Proposed development areas are illustrated as compact neighborhoods utilizing a modified block patterns with a clear hierarchy of streets serving a variety of building types and responding sensitively to the natural features and environmental constraints of the land.

The **Southern Employment MXD** concept plan provides a level of detail that demonstrates a new approach to this expanded geographical area of the Urbana community. In addition to a continued buildout of the office/employment bays previously improved for development (streets, water/sewer, lighting, sidewalks), the plan illustrates the proposed age-restricted project in two distinct sections: a higher-density series of residential structures surrounding a community center, situated along the existing Urbana Parkway; and, what appears to be a slightly lower-density 'peninsula' of varying types of residences laid out along a hairpin-shaped loop road with connections to MD 355 on the east and Urbana Parkway on the west. These two sections are separated by a largely undeveloped, wooded, stream valley. A comprehensive trail system that connects the sub-areas of the community to one another and to the greater Urbana area is illustrated as a key element in providing interconnectivity to other destinations and land uses in neighborhood. The road network is linked together through a robust series of streets designed to provide convenient access from I-270, MD 80, and MD 355. Land areas immediately adjacent to Sugarloaf Parkway provide sites for anticipated, previously-approved retail, restaurant, and hotel uses.

Southern Employment MXD and Proposed Addition



Phasing Plan

The employment area of this MXD is essentially complete in terms of shared infrastructure and site preparation. Additional employment uses may proceed through the development review process (6 – 9 months) and otherwise be unencumbered in terms of construction.

The areas along Urbana Parkway that would transform from office/research uses to the proposed age-restricted residential community are in a development-ready state with roads and utilities available. The southernmost sections of the age-restricted site are in a pre-development state and would require significant effort to be ready and available for development. Site Development Plan application is anticipated for this section during the 2017-2018 timeframe. No other phasing information is available in the application. Initial construction of the residential component could occur in the 2018/2019 timeframe.

III. Evaluation - Relationship to the County Plans

Proposed Land Use Mix and Density

The Land Use Mix proposed in this Application provides for a range of uses anticipated in areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan for Mixed Use Development. In summary:

Employment/Institutional	33%
Residential	23%
Commercial	5%
Open Space	31%
Other (core functions)	8%

The Residential Density of the age-restricted component can be measured in two ways:

Gross Density 700 du/422 acres = 1.66 dwellings/acre

Net Density 700 du/99 acres = 7.1 dwellings/acre

The proposed net residential density of 7.1 DUs/acre falls squarely within the Medium Density Residential range (6-10 dwellings/acre) in the County Comprehensive Plan (*Managing Our Growth*, p. 10-25).

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan

The I-270 corridor in Frederick County has been targeted as a primary employment area as far back as the County's first Comprehensive Plan in 1959. The first industrial zoning in the corridor was applied in 1969. In the late 1990's the I-270 corridor in both Frederick and Montgomery county's was first marketed as the I-270 High Technology Corridor to recognize the type of development occurring in Montgomery County and to promote the entire corridor. While the initial view of the land along I-270 was to be solely employment the County has facilitated the ability to create mixed employment/residential developments to address the market and the shift away from the isolated office campus type development. The County Comprehensive Plan references the desire for mixed developments in the following policies:

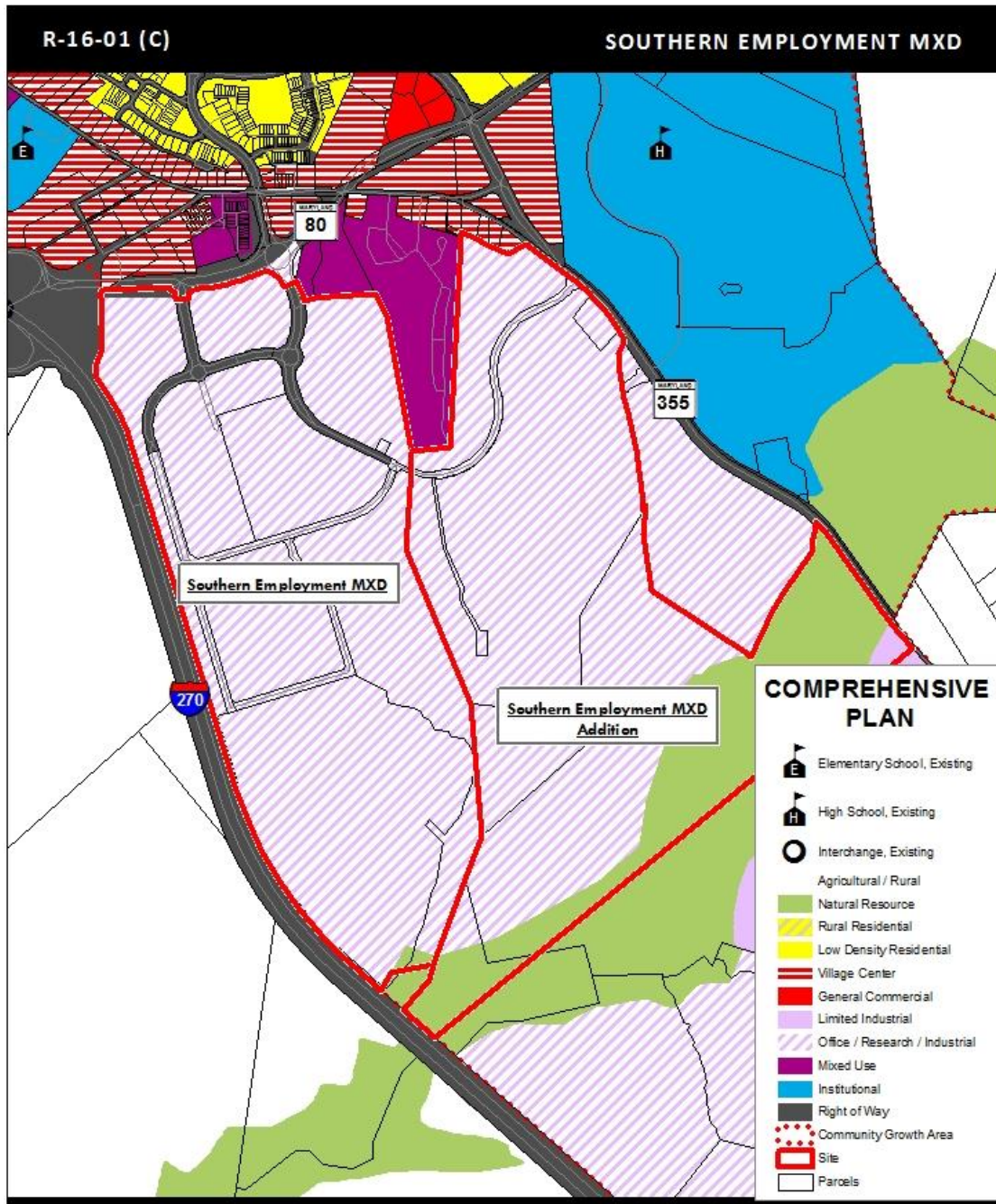
ED-P-02 Locate employment uses in community growth areas where they can take advantage of existing/planned infrastructure and proximity to the workforce & other services.

ED-P-03 Integrate compatible employment, commercial and residential uses when possible to achieve a mixed-use environment.

ED-P-07 Advocate for the efficient use of limited land resources zoned for employment that accommodates the County's targeted industries.

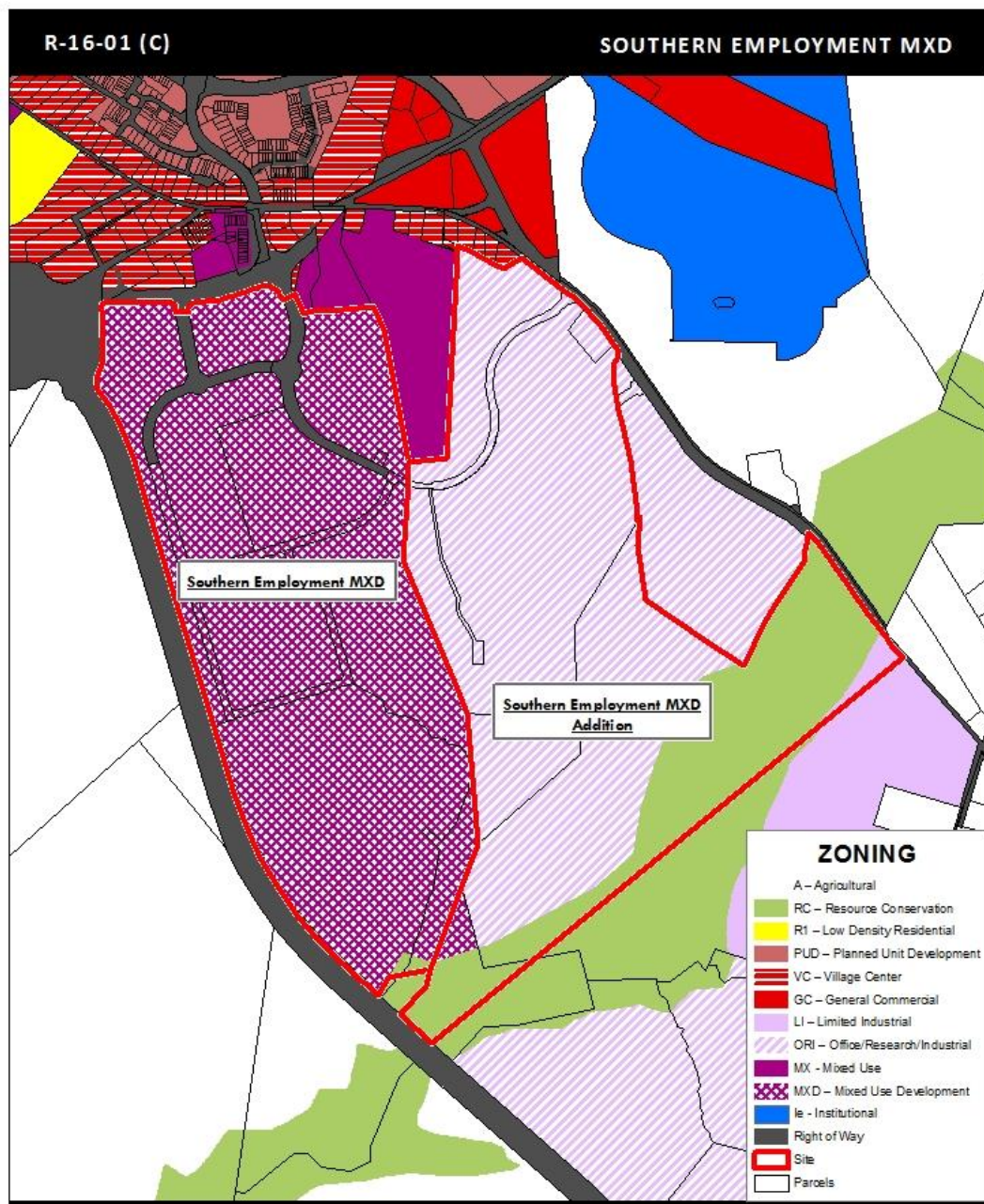
MG-P-19 Substantially limit development along major highway corridors such as I-270 and US 340 to those uses that maximize employment opportunities.

Staff recognizes the current market conditions, trends and absorption rates related to office development in the larger Washington metropolitan region. Irrespective of those trends, staff supports the revised Concept Plan submitted by the Applicant that maintains 67 acres of construction-ready land area within the older portion of the MXD.



Compatibility with Adjoining Zoning and Land Uses

Adjoining zoning districts surrounding the Southern MXD include Village Center (VC), Office/Research/Industrial (ORI), Limited Industrial (LI), and General Commercial (GC). Along the I-270 boundary, the MXD areas adjoin vast areas zoned Agricultural (A). This boundary serves as the physical limit of the Urbana Community Growth Area along its entire western edge. On the south, the proposed Southern Employment MXD boundary abuts a swath of Resource Conservation (RC) acreage, a portion of which would be incorporated into the revised MXD. The mix of intensive uses generally permitted by the zoning of the abutting properties is consistent with the continued development of the growth area.

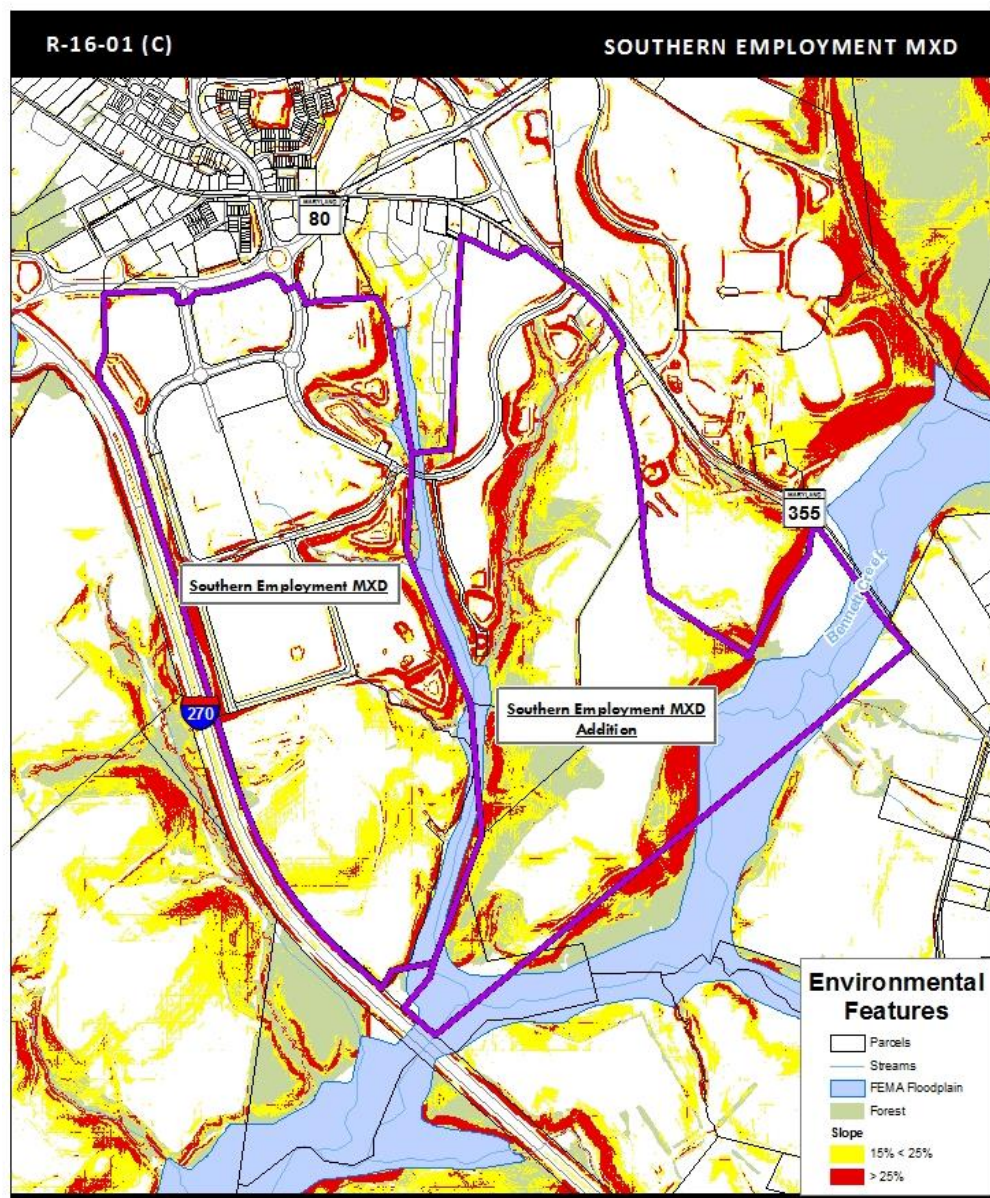


Surrounding land uses include commercial shopping centers, high-density residential apartments, and the Urbana High School campus.

The proposal is compatible with adjoining zoning districts and land uses.

Natural Features

The Southern Employment MXD site is also characterized by rolling topography with cleared open land and woodlands primarily adjacent to the streams. There is a stream corridor that separates the proposed residential component from the existing Southern MXD site. The stream is a tributary to Bennett Creek and has a narrow band of 100-year floodplain. The area proposed to be rezoned to MXD includes a portion of Bennett Creek and its adjacent 100-year floodplain. These areas are proposed to be open space in the Phase I Plan.



IV. Evaluation - Adequacy of Public Facilities and Services

Schools

The proposed amendment to the MXD will not include any all-age residential uses that would generate new students.

Water and Sewer

Within the existing Southern Employment District MXD the developed parcels are classified S-1/W-1 (existing service). Other portions with subdivision approval, within the existing MXD and in the ORI property are classified S-3/W-3. The Raystock property is classified S-4/W-4 (service in a 4-6 year timeframe).

Water Supply - Public water is provided through the New Design water system, which withdraws water from the Potomac River. The New Design Water Treatment Plant has a permitted capacity of 25 million gallons/day (MGD) and has a current average daily use of approximately 16 MGD.

Sewer Service - Sewage treatment service is provided by the Ballenger-McKinney wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), which has capacity of 15 MGD and currently discharges into the Monocacy River. Current average daily treatment flows at the Ballenger-McKinney WWTP is 5.7 MGD.

Based on the proposed 700 dwellings, and assuming 250 gallons/day/dwelling, the residential use would need approximately 175,000 gallons/day of both water supply and sewage treatment capacity. The Applicant is responsible for extensions and connections to the existing public water and sewer lines as well as constructing water storage tanks, pump stations etc.

The proposed 700 dwellings will use less than 50% of the capacity needed for the approximately 2 million sq. ft. of office use that would be replaced with the residential.

Programmed Improvements (FY 2018-2023 CIP)

There are no projects in the Urbana area.

Public Safety

The nearest fire station is the Urbana Volunteer Fire Department (Station #23), located on Urbana Pike next to Urbana Elementary School. The County Division of Fire and Rescue Services plans to add 9 Firefighters to the Urbana Fire Station to fully implement tactical unit staffing. Additional staffing opportunities are available as a result of the 2016 FEMA Grant. The site is approximately 3,500 feet from the Urbana Fire station.

Police protection for the Site is provided by the Frederick County Sheriff's Office.

Programmed Improvements (Adopted FY 2018-2023 CIP)

Green Valley Fire Station – Replacement of the existing station (Station #25), located near the intersection of MD 75/80. The site has been dedicated and conveyed to the County. The station is proposed to be open in 2023 and will have space for the County Sheriff's Office.

Planned Improvements

There are no additional planned public safety related improvements

Libraries

Urbana is served by the Urbana Regional Library located in the Villages of Urbana PUD Town Center. There are no library improvements programmed in the FY2018-2023 CIP.

Parks

There are two existing County parks in the vicinity of Urbana. The County's Urbana District Park (95 acres) is a regional park located on MD 355 across from the Northern Town Center MXD development. The other is the County's Urbana Community Park (20 acres) located on Urbana Pike adjacent to the Northern Town Center MXD. Both parks are fully developed with play fields, playgrounds, and trails.

The proposed active adult residential component in the Southern MXD would have its own HOA controlled pool/club house facilities. The Frederick YMCA is proposing a full YMCA facility including an aquatic center on property between the Urbana High and Middle schools. The County is proposing to contribute funding towards the pool component to allow for some public use of the pool.

Programmed Improvements (FY 2018-2023 CIP)

No programmed improvements for parks in the vicinity

Planned Improvements

Special Park – The County owns a 19-acre site in the Villages of Urbana next to Centerville Elementary School that would be available for future park facilities.

Sugarloaf Elementary School will be constructed as a Park/Rec school, including an oversized gymnasium designed to offer expanded recreational programs.

Transportation

Existing Site Access Characteristics

The Southern Employment District MXD has frontage along MD 80 with two full access points, one controlled by a traffic signal and the other at a roundabout. A third access point is provided via Urbana Pkwy, which runs through the MXD to MD 355. The proposed residential area will have a connection to Urbana Pkwy and a direct access point (currently an existing driveway access to Knowledge Farms) to MD 355 across from Campus Dr.

Existing Traffic Volumes and Capacity on Adjoining Roads

A measure of additional capacity of a roadway can be generally determined through the calculation of the Volume/Capacity (V/C) ratio, which can be obtained by dividing the **capacity** of the road (based on # existing thru lanes) by the current average daily traffic **volume**.

4-lane arterial capacity – 34,000 vehicles/day

2-lane arterial capacity – 18,000 vehicles/day

A V/C ratio below 1.0 indicates that capacity is available.

Count Location	Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	Volume/Capacity (VC) Ratio
MD 355 – north of Worthington Blvd	10,990	18,000, V/C -0.61
MD 355 – north of MD 80	8,050	34,000, V/C – 0.24
MD 355 – south of Campus Dr.	8,750	18,000, V/C – 0.49
MD 80 – west of I-270	7,060	18,000, V/C – 0.39
MD 80 – west of Urbana Pkwy	19,600	34,000, V/C – 0.58
MD 80 – east of MD 355	19,510	34,000, V/C – 0.57

The proposed 700 dwellings would have the following daily weekday trip generation:

Senior detached (700 dwellings) 2,597 daily trips
Based on ITE (8th edition) trip generation rate of 3.71 trips/dwelling unit

Comprehensive Plan Designations for Adjoining Roads

MD 80 – Minor Arterial

MD 355 – Major Arterial

Urbana Pkwy - Collector

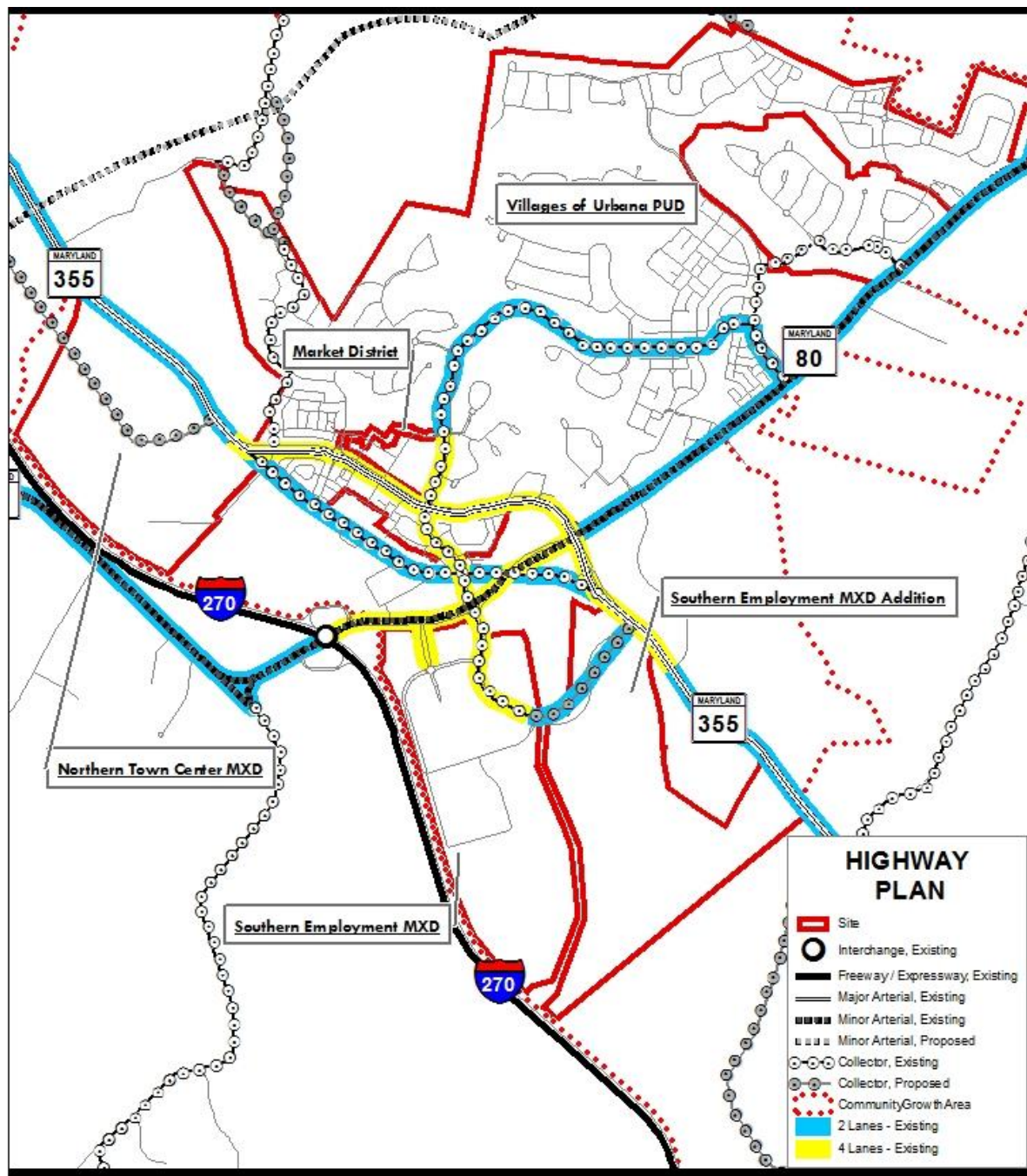
Urbana Pike (old MD 355) - Collector

Programmed Improvements (Adopted FY 2017-2022 CIP)

There are no County road improvements in the current CIP.

Planned Improvements

I-270/MD 80 Interchange – Through prior APFO approvals, the applicant is responsible for constructing a new ramp from northbound I-270 to eastbound MD 80. This ramp will replace an existing ramp that requires traffic to make a left turn onto eastbound MD 80 at a traffic signal.



V. Approval Criteria and Summary of Findings

§ 1-19-3.110.4 (A) – Approval Criteria for Zoning Map Amendments

(1) Consistency with the comprehensive plan;

Staff finds that the proposed amendments to the Southern MXD maintains a sufficient mix of land uses, including employment, that Staff would find consistent with underlying Office/Research/Industrial Comprehensive Plan designation.

(2) Availability of public facilities;

Staff finds that parks, libraries, and public safety facilities are currently adequate to serve the proposed residential development. The construction of a replacement Green Valley fire station (station #25) in 2023 will help to maintain adequate fire/rescue services. For water/sewer service, the proposed 700 dwellings will require less than 50% of the capacity than the employment uses it is proposed to replace. There is approximately 9 MGD of water supply and 9.3 MGD of sewage treatment capacity currently available in the New Design water system and the Ballenger-McKinney WWTP.

The proposed age-restricted residential would not generate any new students.

(3) Adequacy of existing and future transportation systems;

Staff finds the existing road to be adequate to accommodate additional traffic. Both MD 80 and MD 355 throughout the immediate Urbana area have volume/capacity ratios less than 1.0 indicating the ability to accommodate additional traffic. Current Adequate Public Facility Ordinance (APFO) approvals will require additional improvements to MD 80 east of MD 355 and on MD 355 in the vicinity of the Urbana District Park. The potential daily weekday trip generation of 2,597 trips from the proposed age-restricted residential can be adequately accommodated given current traffic volumes and volume/capacity ratios.

(4) Compatibility with existing and proposed development;

Staff finds that proposed changes to the MXD are generally compatible with existing and proposed development. The remaining employment area in the Southern MXD will be separated from the residential uses by a natural buffer (stream valley and open space areas).

(5) Population change; and,

The current population of Urbana proper is approximately 9,800. The proposed 700 additional age-restricted dwellings will result in a population increase of approximately 1,400 people based on an average household size of 2.0 persons/household.

(6) The timing of development and facilities.

For the MXD development the water/sewer and road infrastructure are mostly in place to accommodate the age restricted residential development and/or an assisted living/nursing care facility. These additional dwellings will also be subject to subsequent APFO testing for school adequacy.

§ 1-19-10.500.3. – Approval Criteria for Planned Development Districts

- (A) *The proposed development is compact, employing design principles that result in efficient consumption of land, efficient extension of public infrastructure, and efficient provision of public facilities;***

Staff finds that the proposal for the Southern Employment MXD is relatively compact and efficient in its consumption of land and infrastructure in this section of the MXD. A complex mix of medium-density residential, employment, commercial, and open space/recreational uses are woven together to maximize privacy and separation where necessary and to encourage interconnection between residential neighborhoods and the services and facilities needed to sustain them.

- (B) *The proposed development design and building siting are in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan, and any applicable community and corridor plans;***

Staff finds that the general Phase I design components of the Southern MXD proposal are consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan goals regarding efficient and well planned development patterns supporting a variety of housing types and employment opportunities for current and future County residents. Currently, there are no Community or Corridor Plans for this area.

- (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;***

To the extent discernible in a Phase I Land Use Concept Plan, the proposal for the Southern Employment MXD appears to reflect a development scheme that makes wise use of natural and man-made features to diminish differences in intensity, building scale, and appearance between the existing employment uses and the proposed residential or assisted living/nursing care facility.

- (D) *The proposed development provides a safe and efficient arrangement of land use, buildings, infrastructure, and transportation circulation systems. Factors to be evaluated include: connections between existing and proposed community development patterns, extension of the street network; pedestrian connections to, from, and between buildings, parking areas, recreation, and open space;***

Staff finds that the proposed development of the Southern Employment MXD provides a safe and efficient arrangement of land uses, whether it is developed as age-restricted or with an assisted living/nursing care facility. The road network that is mostly existing provides alternative access points while also providing some degree of separation of traffic generated by the employment uses.

- (E) *The transportation system is or will be made adequate to serve the proposed development in addition to existing uses in the area. Factors to be evaluated include: roadway capacity and level of service, on-street parking impacts, access requirements, neighborhood impacts, projected construction schedule of planned improvements, pedestrian safety, and travel demand modeling;***

Staff finds the transportation system to be adequate to accommodate additional traffic. Both MD 80 and MD 355 throughout the immediate Urbana area have volume/capacity ratios less than 1.0 indicating the ability to accommodate additional traffic. Current Adequate Public Facility Ordinance (APFO) approvals

will require additional improvements to MD 80 east of MD 355 and on MD 355 in the vicinity of the Urbana District Park. The potential daily weekday trip generation of 2,597 trips from the proposed 700 age-restricted residential dwellings can be adequately accommodated given current traffic volumes and volume/capacity ratios.

- (F) *The proposed development provides design and building placement that optimizes walking, biking, and use of public transit. Factors to be evaluated include: extension of the street network; existing and proposed community development patterns; and pedestrian connections to, from, and between buildings, parking areas, recreation, and open space;***

While the network of streets and pedestrian facilities appears to have expanded organically into the land areas previously planned for office employment uses in the Northern Town Center MXD, the proposed expansion of a significant residential component (700 DUs) into the southernmost land areas of the Southern Employment MXD creates a challenge for connecting future residents to the jobs, shopping areas, and institutions critical to a successful community. Staff finds that the Applicant has maximized connectivity in the southernmost sections of the MXD by providing multiple pedestrian paths, apparent vehicular/pedestrian interconnections to previously developed parcels, and placed the highest density residential structures in close proximity (within 500 feet) to existing commercial development and potential transit routes along Urbana Parkway, Urbana Pike, and Fingerboard Road.

- (G) *Existing fire and emergency medical service facilities are or will be made adequate to serve the increased demand from the proposed development in addition to existing uses in the area. Factors to be evaluated include: response time, projected schedule of providing planned improvements, bridges, roads, and nature and type of available response apparatus;***

The Urbana Fire Co. (Station #23) is within 2 miles of the site. This station has professional staff and a full complement of fire and rescue equipment. The Green Valley Station (Station #25) is approximately 5 miles from the respective developments and would serve as the second due station. County Fire and Rescue Services plans to add career staff to support tactical staffing of equipment to better serve the community.

- (H) *Natural features of the site have been adequately considered and utilized in the design of the proposed development. Factors to be evaluated include: the relationship of existing natural features to man-made features both on-site and in the immediate vicinity, natural features connectivity, energy efficient site design, use of environmental site design or low impact development techniques in accordance with Chapter 1-15.2 of the Frederick County Code;***

The proposed concept land use plan maintains the open space areas from currently approved plans. These open space areas protect several stream corridors that include woodlands, and moderate slopes. Sensitive natural areas and open spaces are utilized strategically to provide natural land use buffers and provide opportunities for passive and active recreational amenities to serve both residential and employment uses in the MXD.

- (I) *The proposed mixture of land uses is consistent with the purpose and intent of the underlying County Comprehensive Plan land use designation(s), and any applicable community or corridor plans;***

Staff does find the proposed residential land use in the Southern MXD component to be consistent as it

provides for an integrated mix of land uses in an area that is currently limited to employment and commercial uses.

- (J) Planned developments shall be served adequately by public facilities and services. Additionally, increased demand for public facilities, services, and utilities created by the proposed development (including without limitation water, sewer, transportation, parks and recreation, schools, fire and emergency services, libraries, and law enforcement) shall be evaluated as adequate or to be made adequate within established county standards.***

Staff finds that parks, libraries, and public safety facilities are currently adequate to serve the proposed residential development. The construction of a replacement Green Valley fire station in 2023 will help to maintain adequate fire/rescue services. For water/sewer service the proposed 700 dwellings will require approximately less than 50% of the capacity than the employment uses it is proposed to replace. There is approximately 9 MGD of water supply and 9.3 MGD of sewage treatment capacity currently available in the New Design water system and the Ballenger-McKinney WWTP.

VI. Proposed Condition Revisions

Two recently concluded County studies include recommendations supportive of the revisions proposed in the Urbana Southern MXD application:

The Seniors First Steering Committee Report and Recommendations (November 2016), notes that the number of adults age 60+ will surpass the number of school age children in the County by 2020. The Report also notes that the 85 and over age group will nearly quadruple over the next 25 years. The result is a growing demand for services to this growing segment of our population coupled with a need for a continuum of affordable housing options, assisted living alternatives, and skilled care for seniors.

The Frederick County Affordable Housing Needs Assessment (November 2016) provides further support for more affordable housing options for our growing senior population. Specifically, housing programs to support aging in place alternatives, and utilization of a portion of the County's MPDU funds to serve seniors are strongly recommended by the Steering Committee.

The following conditions reflect the most recent revision to the Southern Employment MXD approved in 2012 (Ordinance # 12-32-627).

Language with a ~~strike through~~ is proposed to be deleted and language in all CAPITALS is new.

1. The proposed street connections between the employment uses and commercial uses shall be maintained in a way that allows for pedestrian access through the development of the project. Furthermore, these pedestrian/street links between employment and commercial uses shall be strengthened through the use of wider and generously landscaped walkways.
2. The MXD project shall be subject to the *Frederick County Community Design Guidelines and Development Principles* (adopted July 16, 2002) throughout the Planning Commission's review process.
3. Convenient bicycle and pedestrian access shall be established and maintained in order to fully interconnect the Villages of Urbana PUD with the Urbana Office/Research Center MXD. Such access shall accommodate reasonable attempts to find convenient connections to the NEWLY INCORPORATED MXD ORI lands east of the EMPLOYMENT AREA OF THE MXD.
4. An integrated trail/walkway shall be constructed for the use of employees of, and visitors to, employment and commercial uses in the MXD.
5. Applicant shall coordinate with Frederick County's TransIT Division in order to optimize future transit service to the MXD.
6. An extension of Bennett Creek Avenue through Fannie Mae site, either as a pedestrian or vehicular thoroughfare, shall be indicated on the land use plan and illustrative document so

as to protect the opportunity for access to the central Land Bay.

7. The applicant shall confirm and demonstrate at or prior to the time of MXD Phase II (preliminary plan) approval through a traffic review to the satisfaction of County staff that the traffic impacts, including distribution of trips, resulting in any proposed change in use are not greater than the traffic impacts resulting from the current approved uses under the APFO LOU amended as part of this application.
8. THE SOUTHERN MXD SHALL BE PERMITTED TO DEVELOP AS DEPICTED ON THE CONCEPT PLAN AND UTILIZE UP TO 30% OF THE COMBINED LAND USE AS RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL AS PERMITTED UNDER SECTION 1-19-10.500.7(A).
9. A MAXIMUM OF 700 DWELLING UNITS MAY BE DEVELOPED IN THE SOUTHERN EMPLOYMENT DISTRICT MXD. ONE HUNDRED PERCENT (100%) OF THESE DWELLINGS UNITS SHALL BE AGE-RESTRICTED.
10. SOME OR ALL, OF THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL LAND USE AREA FOR THE AGE-RESTRIED DWELLINGS MAY BE DEVELOPED AS A NURSING CARE/ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY. IF THE DEVELOPED AS A CCRC, NURSING HOME/ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY, THE NUMBER OF UNITS WILL BE DETERMINED AS PART OF THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, AND NOT BE SUBJECT TO THE UNIT CAP ESTABLISHED AS IT IS AN INSTITUTIONAL USE.
11. COVENANTS SHALL RESTRICT 100% OF THE DWELLING UNITS IN THE SOUTHERN MXD PROJECT TO BE AGE-RESTRICTED PER THE FEDERAL FAIR HOUSING ACT AND THE HOUSING FOR OLDER PERSONS ACT OF 1995. THERE SHALL BE A FURTHER LIMITATION ON THE MINIMUM AGE OF PERMANENT RESIDENTS BEING 19 YEARS OF AGE. THESE COVENANTS SHALL BE RECORDED PRIOR TO THE RECORDING OF THE FIRST SUBDIVISION PLAT. THE COVENANTS SHALL BE RECORDED AND MADE PART OF THE TITLE FOR EACH DWELLING UNIT. EVERY PROPERTY OWNER WITHIN THE AGE-RESTRICTED DEVELOPMENT (AND HOA) SHALL BE BENEFICIARIES OF THE COVENANTS WITH THE ABILITY TO ENFORCE THEM THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE OR JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS. THESE COVENANTS ARE TO BE REVIEWED BY THE COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO ENSURE THAT THE MXD ZONING DISTRICT IS INVALID IF THESE COVENANTS ARE NOT RECORDED AND DO NOT RESTRICT AGE AS PROFFERED IN A BINDING AND ENFORCEABLE MANNER. THE REQUIRED BIENNIAL FEDERAL SURVEYS (24 CFR 100.307) SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COUNTY FOR ITS REVIEW AND RECORDS.

VII. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the request, R-16-01 (C), to rezone approximately 210 acres from ORI, LI, and RC to MXD, and to add this land area to the Southern Employment District MXD for the purpose of developing an age-restricted residential use and/or an assisted living/nursing care facility. Staff forwards this recommendation in consideration of the recommendations contained in the Seniors First Steering Committee Report and Recommendations and the Frederick County Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, and based on the following findings:

Based on the findings, described in Section V of the staff report, relative to:

- The Approval Criteria as set forth in §1-19-3.110.4 of the Zoning Ordinance; and
- The Planned Development District Approval Criteria as set forth in §1-19-10.500.3 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff further recommends APPROVAL of applicant's proposed/revised conditions. Staff would recommend deletion of #4 as this condition has been satisfied. The recommended conditions are listed below:

1. The proposed street connections between the employment uses and commercial uses shall be maintained in a way that allows for pedestrian access through the development of the project. Furthermore, these pedestrian/street links between employment and commercial uses shall be strengthened through the use of wider and generously landscaped walkways.
2. The MXD project shall be subject to the *Frederick County Community Design Guidelines and Development Principles* (adopted July 16, 2002) throughout the Planning Commission's review process.
3. Convenient bicycle and pedestrian access shall be established and maintained in order to fully interconnect the Villages of Urbana PUD with the Urbana Office/Research Center MXD (aka Southern Employment MXD). Such access shall accommodate reasonable attempts to find convenient connections to the newly incorporated MXD ORI lands east of the employment area of the MXD.
4. An integrated trail/walkway shall be constructed for the use of employees of, and visitors to, employment and commercial uses in the MXD.
5. Applicant shall coordinate with Frederick County's TransIT Division in order to optimize future transit service to the MXD.

6. An extension of Bennett Creek Avenue through Fannie Mae site, either as a pedestrian or vehicular thoroughfare, shall be indicated on the land use plan and illustrative document so as to protect the opportunity for access to the central Land Bay.
7. The applicant shall confirm and demonstrate at or prior to the time of MXD Phase II (preliminary plan) approval through a traffic review to the satisfaction of County staff that the traffic impacts, including distribution of trips, resulting in any proposed change in use are not greater than the traffic impacts resulting from the current approved uses under the APFO LOU amended as part of this application.
8. The Southern Employment MXD shall be permitted to develop as depicted on the concept plan and utilize up to 30% of the total acreage for residential and commercial land uses as permitted under section 1-19-10.500.7(a).
9. A maximum of 700 dwelling units may be developed in the Southern Employment MXD. One hundred percent (100%) of these dwellings units shall be age-restricted.
10. Some, or all, of the proposed residential land use area for the age-restricted dwellings may be developed as a CCRC, nursing home, or assisted living facility. For land areas within the proposed MXD that are developed as a CCRC, nursing home, or assisted living facility, the number of units permitted for these institutional uses will be determined during the site development plan review process, and will not be counted against the 700 dwelling unit cap established for the Southern Employment MXD.
11. Covenants shall restrict 100% of the dwelling units in the Southern MXD project to be age-restricted per the Federal Fair Housing Act and the Housing for Older Persons Act of 1995. There shall be a further limitation on the minimum age of permanent residents being 19 years of age. These covenants shall be recorded prior to the recording of the first subdivision plat. The covenants shall be recorded and made part of the title for each dwelling unit. Every property owner within the age-restricted development (and HOA) shall be beneficiaries of the covenants with the ability to enforce them through administrative or judicial proceedings. these covenants are to reviewed by the county attorney's office to ensure that the MXD zoning district is invalid if these covenants are not recorded and do not restrict age as proffered in a binding and enforceable manner. The required biannual federal surveys (24 cfr 100.307) shall be made available to the county for its review and records.

From: Kathy Benderev <kbenderev@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 5:59 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Case #R-21-02- KNOWLEDGE FARMS REZONING APPLICATION-PUBLIC COMMENT

I am writing to object to the rezoning application of the Knowledge Farms Development site from an existing Office/Research/Industrial use to Mixed use designation. I am a resident of the Woodlands of Urbana and this change will adversely impact the entire Woodlands of Urbana community. Some reasons for the negative impact include:

Traffic hazards and safety

The projected traffic patterns and land use are not supported by the existing driveway for entering and exiting at the intersection of Route 355 and Campus Drive. Multiple traffic hazards will be created including increased traffic and speed in our community as well as possible delays for emergency vehicles needing access to our homes. I observe non-residents using Urbana Parkway as a shortcut (both directions) to get from Route 355 to Route 80. The increased density from the Knowledge Farms development would make Thornapple, Herb Garden Drive and Ivy Meadow Drive serve as additional "short cuts" through a significant portion of the Woodlands community by non-residents.

Density and Incompatibility

The buildable site is only 11 acres and shows homes as close as 26 feet from existing property. The plan indicates tall condo buildings being added to the Knowledge Farms site. The significant increase in density from the Knowledge Farms proposed site as well as the needed lighting for a storage facility and other buildings will contribute to increased noise and light disruptions for our homeowners. Since our community is not gated, an increased risk of non-resident use of our amenities is an additional and almost certain liability for the Woodlands.

For the above reasons I strongly recommend request denial of the Knowledge Farms rezoning application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Katherine Benderev, Pharm.D., M.B.A

2907 Ivy Meadow Drive

Frederick, MD 21704

From: hupfamily <hupfamily@yahoo.com>

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 9:18 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>; Superczynski, Denis <DSuperczynski@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Cc: Hupfamily <hupfamily@comcast.net>

Subject: Comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Please accept this letter as public comment in reference to Knowledge Farms application R-21-02, submitted to the county in February 2022 and amended in July 2023.

We wish to express our serious concerns to the Frederick County Planning Commission regarding the proposed request for rezoning of the Knowledge Farms property and the planned development of this parcel of land.

We live in the Woodlands community on Purple Sage Mews, which is very close to the entrance of the current Knowledge Farms building from Thornapple Drive, as well as to the intersection of Thornapple with Route 355 (Urbana Pike). Our primary concerns with the proposed development are the great increase in traffic through our community that it would bring, having only one entry/exit into a huge new development, the lack of compatibility with our existing Woodlands community, and the lack of detail provided by the developer as to exactly what they propose to build.

From our daily experience, currently there is already a large amount of traffic using Thornapple Drive, even now before building of the remainder of the Woodlands 55+ community is completed. The proposal to add a large development in Knowledge Farms and to have all of that additional traffic exiting onto Thornapple Drive would create a significant problem in our residential area. Traffic congestion will occur along Thornapple Drive as an excessive number of vehicles for that amount of space on the road wait to turn onto Route 355. This will cause delays to residents, safety concerns to motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, and increased pollution from the exhaust emissions from multiple idling motor vehicles. We realize that the county plans to install a traffic light at the intersection of Route 355 and Thornapple. While this should improve safety, it will not change the total amount of additional traffic that will still be trying to use Thornapple to get to Route 355.

Therefore, we urge you to require that a second, separate entrance/exit onto Route 355 for Knowledge Farms be constructed regardless of the final size of the development. In the event that this is not possible, at a minimum the road exiting Knowledge Farms onto Thornapple Drive should be "right-turn only", to prevent excessive traffic going left and routing through our completely residential community. Right-turn only would also enable the flow of traffic out of the new Knowledge Farms development to move much more smoothly, rather than creating backups for them trying to turn left onto Thornapple to exit their development.

Further, we are extremely concerned over the proposed multistory apartment and self-storage building heights. We request that the Planning Commission seriously consider

height limits to all buildings in the proposed development, since they will all border very closely onto the Woodlands single family and Villa buildings and are not at all compatible with the existing housing. At a minimum, we urge the Council to move all proposed residential and commercial buildings away from the existing Woodlands development and to require a very significant open space and landscape buffer to minimize sight, lighting and noise concerns.

Additionally, we are concerned about the proposed construction of a multistory public self-storage unit building as part of the Knowledge Farms development. We feel that this is not at all compatible with a residential area, neither for us who are already in the Woodlands community nor for residents of new housing units planned to be part of Knowledge Farms. A storage unit would add excessive traffic from customers from outside of the residential community, as well as noise and security concerns, and we request it not be approved as part of the proposed development.

Therefore, we urge the Planning Commission to deny the rezoning application, at least until the developer provides clear specific details as to how they would fix the very real traffic, safety and compatibility issues. If the Planning Commission does choose to recommend allowing the project to go forward, this should be done with strict conditions requiring the correction of those problems. Please do not give them a "blank check" to build a development that would create traffic hazards and is totally incompatible with the existing Woodlands residential development.

Thank you for your consideration of our input.

Christopher and Dorothy Hupfeld
3310 Purple Sage Mews, Frederick, MD 21704
hupfamily@yahoo.com

From: dshickel@comcast.net <dshickel@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 15, 2023 8:42 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Comments re R-21-02 Knowledge Farms MXD

We are providing the following comments for your consideration at the October 19 Planning Commission meeting which will address the proposed rezoning of the Knowledge Farms (KF) site in Urbana. We recommend that you deny this request for the following reasons.

1. The proposal does not fully meet two of your existing approval criteria for PUDs.
 - a. "Transportation system is or will be made adequate." Your evaluation refers to installation of a traffic signal at MD 355/Thornapple Dr/Campus Dr and a second site access to achieve acceptable levels of service at this intersection. To our knowledge, neither of these upgrades have been approved and MD has previously denied a second access to this site from MD 355. Your evaluation also states "Several unsignalized intersections will not operate with acceptable levels of service under background development or buildout conditions, including intersections at MD 355/Urbana Parkway, MD 355/Sugarloaf Parkway roundabout, and MD 80/MD 355." This already negatively impacts access to Woodlands at Urbana and a change to MXD with its greatly increased development and use options will likely make it worse especially during rush hours.
 - b. "Design and building placement optimizes walking, biking and use of public transit." There is no regularly scheduled public transit serving this project. The developer also proposes building active adult (senior) residential units and an assisted living/continuing care facility. How often will the older occupants of these units use walking and biking paths outside of KF? There will just be more car traffic at the Thornapple/MD 355 intersection and on Urbana Parkway through Woodlands at Urbana.
2. The rezoning request does not fully align with some objectives of the Frederick County 2035 Comprehensive Plan.
 - a. In the Business Development Office/Industrial section, the plan states the following regarding community benefits. "The value of office and industrial business development to Frederick County is immeasurable. As part of the County's economic development effort, office and industrial growth is a key component for ensuring a broad selection of employment opportunities for the citizens of Frederick County. The continuation of a low residential tax rate is a direct result of the expansion of the commercial and industrial tax. Currently commercial and industrial tax revenue accounts for approximately 13% of the County's tax base. The County's goal indicates this should be around 25% to ensure a balanced fiscal environment. Tax revenue derived from the average single family residence is approximately fifty percent of the cost of service provided for that same residence. The County's fiscal survival is dependent upon recruiting office and industrial occupants which offset those residential costs." KF already has some medical and professional offices in place. It would seem prudent to retain the ORI zoning and fully develop the site for office/research industrial use rather than yet another active adult complex. Natelli is already working on a new condo building in Woodlands at Urbana and is constructing another condo unit near the Urbana library.

- b. In the Residential Development section, the plan states “The County should continue to establish policies which result in attractive and welcoming residential neighborhoods which are able to accommodate a growing population and expanding workforce. Such residential development should be comprised of a mixture of housing types and lot sizes to provide options for a range of lifestyles and incomes, such as retiree’s, millennials and younger families.” The KF developer’s plan for high cost age-restricted residences and an assisted living/continuing care facility hardly addresses the lifestyles and incomes of millennials and younger families.

For these reasons we respectfully request that you recommend that the Frederick County Council reject this request for rezoning of the Knowledge Farms property. Thank you for considering our comments.

David and Judith Shickel
2969 Caraway Drive
Frederick, MD 21704
410-570-4559

From: Mary Elliott <ellimary213@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 10:06 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Do not change Knowledge farm zoning

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hello, I am a resident in the woodlands, and have a number of concerns about changing the zoning to mixed use and proposed plans for that mixed use.

Woodlands has hone ratio to land to allow spacious, quiet , neighborhood. There are traffic concerns, noise concerns, and safety concerns, (24 hr storage).

There are also light pollution concerns. Not to mention the blocking of the view our residents paid 10s of thousands of dollars to have.

It is preferable to keep zoning for another medical building or equivalent.

There is much data to support total concerns of the woodland residents.

Sincerely,
Mary Elliott
3247 Thornapple Dr
Frederick MD 21704

From: Susan Jay <susanjay3288@msn.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 11:56 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Comments Regarding Knowledge Farms Zoning Request

To members of the Planning Commission:

As residents of The Woodlands, we have several concerns regarding the zoning change request of Knowledge Farms which is adjacent to our Community. These concerns are:

1. There will be a huge impact on traffic coming in and out of the Community primarily on Thornapple exiting onto and entering from MD 355. In the morning, traffic heading southeast on MD 355 is already very heavy. The same is true in the evening heading northwest on MD 355. Although the construction traffic will eventually decrease coming into and out of The Woodlands community via Thornapple, it will not happen quickly. If the only entrance into Knowledge Farms is off Thornapple, there will be even more construction vehicles to deal with as well as a significant increase in individual vehicles entering the current and various new structures being proposed in the zoning request. Even after all construction is completed, the traffic load will be heavy. In our opinion, Thornapple will not be able to handle this vehicle load. In addition, there are several times throughout the day that there is significant traffic entering and exiting Urbana High School onto MD 355 in both directions. The issue of getting emergency vehicles in and out of the community is also a big concern. Adding another entrance does not seem possible due to the current road route and use.
2. Knowledge Farms keeps changing what it wants to do with the property. A storage facility brings with it concerns of increased noise, bothersome lights during the nighttime hours and safety concerns that such facilities have a reputation for bringing with them. Our pleasant community should not have to deal with this type of structure. Retail development also is a concern especially in today's climate of increased crime in such facilities. There are ample facilities (CVS, eateries, gas stations) within a very quick drive as well as walking distance already from our community. Knowledge Farms has empty space in their current buildings that they have not been able to rent so additional buildings do not seem to be needed.
3. We are very opposed to any walking path that connects our community to any structures on Knowledge Farms. Our community pays for the upkeep of our common areas, and these are not meant to be shared with individuals from outside of the community that could present safety issues to our residents, damage from individuals who have no ties to the community and unwanted trespassing on our properties.
4. The wildlife living in the reforestation area that will be next to whatever gets built will also be negatively affected. Potential destruction of their habitats is likely. There are eagles, deer, fox and turkeys to name a few of the creatures living in this area.

We hope that the members of the Planning Commission will look carefully at the scope of Knowledge Farms project. Some expansion is certainly expected but the scope of this project seems to not consider the affect it will have on the residents of The Woodlands Community, the traffic it will cause and the impact on the natural beauty and wildlife found in the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Susan and Michael Jay
3013 Herb Garden Dr.
Frederick, MD 21704
919-428-0255

From: Kathy Laun <kflaun@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 11:34 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farm Development Proposal

Committee Members,

Our concerns with the rezoning application of the KF site to MDX are as follows:

1. Projected traffic is not supported by the existing ingress/egress driveway and intersection at RT 355/Campus Drive, or Thornapple Drive. The existing limited site distance is both challenging and dangerous, especially during rush hours, and Urbana High School start and end times.
2. This density and increase in vehicular traffic will be dangerous not only for Urbana High School students, parents, faculty, and visitors, but to YMCA members and guests using Campus Drive to travel Rt 355.
3. This density will cause an increase in vehicular traffic through the Woodlands community. People will try to avoid the dangerous left turn onto Rt 355, and they will cut through the Woodlands community to exit from Urbana Parkway. This poses a danger to residents of the Woodlands community.
4. The KF buildable site consists of 11 acres. They are proposing a density that is 5x greater than the Woodlands community at ~200 acres. This in and of itself is extremely concerning.

We know development will occur. This rezoning request is not in the best interests of Urbana in its entirety. As such, we respectfully ask the Committee deny the rezoning request.

Albert & Kathy Laun

From: Carol Cron <carol.cron@hotmail.com>

Sent: Monday, October 16, 2023 6:45 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Cc: 'ckand27@gmail.com' <ckand27@gmail.com>; Susan McCannon <spmccannon@gmail.com>

Subject: Comments regarding the Knowledge Farms proposed development and hearing on Oct. 18

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission Members,

We moved to Urbana, Maryland to escape congestion and noisy traffic in Prince George's County. We have been concerned to learn of the potential development of the Knowledge Farms property on Rt. 355, which backs up to the Woodlands of Urbana, where we live.

There are many valid reasons to deny this development request by Knowledge Farms (KF) in its present form. A lot of my neighbors in the Woodlands have written to you and will speak at the hearing this week. I am writing this email to you to convey the concerns of my husband (Michael Cron) and myself. In this email I would like to focus on the safety aspect of this proposed development.

There is only ONE entrance and exit into and out of KF off Rt. 355. It is onto Thornapple Drive. Cars that go right will back up at the stop sign to go right or left on Rt. 355. If cars turn left out of Knowledge Farms they will end up smack in the middle of our neighborhood, at our bocce ball and pickleball courts, tot lot, and neighborhood sidewalks. The only way to get out of the Woodlands at that point is to turn right on Herb Garden Drive and turn right again on Ivy Meadow Drive to get to Urbana Parkway. Urbana Parkway will take them to Rt. 355 if they turn right or to the area along Rt. 80 in Urbana if they turn left.

While I understand a traffic light may be added in the future, the single entrance onto Rt. 355 with the current stop sign will be extremely unsafe. Cars travel at high rates of speed from both directions. It sometimes takes up to a full minute, or more, to turn left SAFELY onto Rt. 355. Directly across from Thornapple Drive is Campus Drive, which goes to Urbana High School. This road will have new and inexperienced drivers going into and out of school and after school activities.

With the planned development of KF, especially an assisted living facility, there will be ambulances and fire trucks at all times of the day and night. It is not easy for a fire truck, especially, to turn into KF from Rt. 355 with the short access on Thornapple Drive. A storage facility along with assisted living will have cars, vans and even tractor-trailers going in and out, all day and all night.

We believe a second entrance into the KF development should be mandated. I understand this was turned down some twenty years ago by the County, but times have changed. Traffic has increased exponentially. The second entrance can be used for traffic to go either north or south on Rt. 355.

We are not yet at full capacity within the Woodlands, and it is already difficult to drive onto Rt. 355 without traffic backing up due to the speed of cars and the blind spots. Having cars lined up on Thornapple Drive to leave our community or having tenants wait to get onto Thornapple Drive from the proposed businesses at KF will cause undue traffic backups as well as delays for all of us to get in and out of our community, especially at rush hour times. Without another exit from the South, traffic will be challenging. Having just one way in and out only adds to the traffic and safety of our community.

You may reach me via email at carol.cron@hotmail.com. I am happy to speak further with you if you wish to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carol and Michael Cron
Woodlands of Urbana residents

Carol E. Cron

E-mail: carol.cron@hotmail.com

Cell: 301-704-8777

From: Helene Jankowitz <hejankowitz@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 7:12 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Knowledge Farm Development in Urbana

To Whom It May Concern-

As a resident of The Woodlands in Urbana I am quite concerned about the Knowledge Farm development. Not knowing what type of development will take place with the property is definitely sending red flags to me. Also, has anyone considered the traffic issues that will occur with retail and/or residential buildings? As it is, 2 main thoroughfares (Urbana Pkwy and Thornapple Dr.) in The Woodlands are used daily by people outside our community. This will just increase the volume of traffic. The Thornapple Dr. exit from The Woodlands onto 355 is across from the high school. Just imagine what it will be like in the mornings when people are going to work and trying to get into the high school? How will this be addressed??

Please consider The Woodlands residents when making final decisions of Knowledge Farms. We love our community and would like it to continue to be safe and desirable to live in.

Thank you
Helene Jankowitz

From: Susan Sherer <sasherer@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 9:21 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Concerns regarding Knowledge Farms Application for MXD

From: Susan and Howard Sherer, 3009 Herb Garden Drive

Knowledge Farms has put forth a new proposal for development that is inappropriate for the size and features of the proposed development area. They have tried to throw a lot of potential revenue producing components into a small area that has only a single egress onto a residential street and whose planned components are incompatible with the surrounding community. Even if this proposal is modified before implemented, a MXD categorization will put too much traffic and congestion into an area with very limited access, surrounded by a quiet residential community.

The new traffic study claims that MXD development will reduce traffic, compared to their prior study. However, the prior study had some assumptions that are no longer valid. Moreover, we are concerned that this proposal still adds too much traffic into the neighboring Woodlands community. The new traffic study shows minimal left turns out onto Thornapple. We question whether this assumption is reasonable. When traffic backs up coming out onto Thornapple to Rt. 355, what will drivers do? Probably make a left through the Woodlands to bypass the traffic.

I would suggest that MXD development not even be considered until a second egress is approved. KF has stated that approval of a second egress is subject to future state and county reviews. If this is not approved, the traffic will be a nightmare. We question whether a second egress is even feasible. If you have not already done so, please drive down Rt. 355 and look at the slope, limited site line and the natural features on this curvy, narrow part of Rt. 355. It looks like this would be exceptionally dangerous and add to further traffic backup on Rt. 355. If KF's application is approved and a second egress is later denied, then we will have an even greater traffic nightmare and unwanted cars through the Woodlands development. One single ingress/egress is dangerous particularly for public safety, for example, ambulances (which will be more than average since this is senior housing) and fire safety equipment.

The Knowledge Farms proposal suggests that their proposed condos are compatible with the surrounding Woodlands. First, the Woodlands condos are not visible from most of the single family and villa housing whereas the KF condos will tower over the Woodlands homes. Second, the KF condos are estimated to be one-third bigger than the Woodlands condos. The high density is not consistent with the surrounding areas. Their density is five times greater than the Woodlands.

A storage unit is not compatible with the residential area either. It will create excessive traffic, noise, and light pollution.

The problem is that the Knowledge Farms developers are trying to get as much revenue from this parcel of land. We accept that they want to a profit on their investment and applaud them for trying to add senior housing to Frederick County. However, this parcel of land, whose topology seems to restrict it to one point of ingress/egress onto a quiet residential street, is not best suited for high density housing, particularly for citizens with higher than average requirements for emergency access. I would suggest that they consider alternate uses of this land. Providing them the MXD categorization would enable them to change the face of this community to the detriment of their neighbors.

Thank you for providing a forum for us to express our concerns.
Susan and Howard Sherer

From: Mike & Penne Baer <baer1722@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 8:53 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Cc: Mike & Penne Baer <baer1722@gmail.com>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Rezoning Request

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

My name is Mike Baer and my wife's name is Penne. We have enjoyed living in Frederick since 2011 when we moved to Worman's Mill. The summer of 2021 we moved to The Woodlands 55+ community in Urbana. Urbana is a great place to live and the additional retail and restaurants recently added are making it an even better. Compared to the north side of Frederick where we used to live, Urbana is remarkably easy to get around in a car, bike or walking. Selfishly, we wish to keep it this way. We are writing to the Planning Commission to raise our voice in regards to the rezoning request submitted by Knowledge Farms to go from existing ORI (Office/Research/Industrial) to MDX (Mixed Use).

- From everything we have seen, the buildable site consists of only 11 acres. This density (sq.ft. or dwellings/acre) is unacceptable and is 5 times larger than our Woodlands neighborhood. This is despite what KF owners advised us when they said they were mirroring the density we have.
- The current site plan shows homes as close as 26ft from existing property with inadequate resident and visitor parking as well as five 5-story Condo buildings 70 feet tall.
- Traffic - as stated above, we find Urbana quite easy to move around in a vehicle. I think this is largely due to the use of traffic circles and other great planning decisions. Having lived here over 2 years now we know areas to avoid and when. The intersection of 355 and Thornapple Dr. is one of those. This is especially true at the start or end of each school day. Having the proposed Knowledge Farms expansion share the same entrance/exit will create further congestion. We would ask that additional traffic studies be performed during months that schools are in session to ensure the best, most efficient design is adopted regardless of what is approved for KF.
- We already experience a lot of traffic cutting through The Woodlands via Thornapple Drive or Urbana Pkwy to avoid traffic backups as a quicker way to get to I270.
- Increased noise pollution from construction, cars, housing and emergency vehicles with the new proposed living.
- KF "current" plan calls for a storage facility and any of 85 other possible uses allowed with MXD zoning. Again, reiterating this property is just not conducive for MXD.
- There will be an increase in invasive lighting for all homes nearby with storage and parking lots.

Thank you for reading and taking our concerns, and those of other Urbana residents, into consideration when rendering your decision. We strongly urge you to act in the best interest of all of Urbana and deny this rezoning request by Knowledge Farms.

Best regards,

Mike & Penne Baer
3051 Herb Garden Drive

From: Lynn Kirk <lynn@kirk-communications.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 8:48 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Rezoning

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Traffic is dense on Route 355 as teachers and students drive to the high school and as business travelers commute to work. Additional traffic lights are already needed, especially during early morning and late afternoon hours.

Adding more traffic without proper planning could lead to unnecessary accidents and unacceptable congestion.

Please reconsider our infrastructure and whether Route 355 is prepared to handle the exorbitant addition of hundreds more daily vehicles--construction equipment as well as cars. Rezoning is not acceptable at this time.

Thank you,
Lynn and Ron Kirk
[Lynn@kirk-communications.com](mailto:lynn@kirk-communications.com)
804 337 6667

From: Wendy <wendyba493@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 9:45 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms zoning

It is of utmost importance that residents of Woodlands, members of the Urbana high school community and virtually anyone who travels on Rte. 355 is made fully aware of the changes to occur if and when Knowledge Farms' property undergoes construction. This method of prior approval without full understanding of the project and its impact on traffic, environment, and safety will, in the end, harm not enhance the area. Please button down ALL the specifics of the project before approval. Thank you.

From: David Reeves <dave2442ree@hotmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 9:52 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Strongly Oppose Proposed Rezoning and Development of Knowledge Farms KF #R-21-02 in Urbana

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rezoning and development of the Knowledge Farms (KF) property in Urbana (Case #R-21-02) adjacent to The Woodlands 55 and over adult community.

I am not opposed to compatible development adjacent to residential communities, however, zoning is a community agreement and vision about how the character of land development in the community should exist now and how it should proceed in the future. The Frederick County Master Plan lays out that vision and planning. One individual, or one party in the case of development companies, should not be able to contravene the expressed collective desires of the community for their own individual and personal profit. This is what developers do when they buy land, knowing its value under current zoning agreements. They then unilaterally seek to artificially inflate its value by rezoning it and developing it for a huge profit, at the expense of all of the rest of the community. They break that social contract and community agreement that the land was originally zoned for. As was so aptly stated in a recent Frederick News Post letter to the editor which agreed with Councilman Steve McKay (October 16, 2023): "Planners and elected officials... need to take a timeout and quit catering to the big developers." An overwhelming majority of the citizens and voters of Frederick County agree with this sentiment.

The Woodlands of Urbana is a residential community immediately adjacent to the Knowledge Farms parcel proposed for rezoning to Mixed Use (MXD). While the existing zoning of the Knowledge Farms parcel as office/research/industrial (ORI) development is quiet and mostly compatible with The Woodlands residential community, MXD zoning is not.

I therefore ask that you please deny the MXD rezoning request and the proposed development, for the following reasons:

1. Density, Incompatibility and Liability: The proposed rezoning (from ORI to MXD) and development of Knowledge Farms is totally incompatible with, and contrary to the character of, the residential neighborhood of Urbana, and of The Woodlands in particular, being a senior adult community:

- The buildable site consists of only 11 acres. The density (sq.ft. or dwellings/acre) is unacceptable and is (5x) than the Woodlands at ~200acres.
- The current site plan shows homes as close as 26ft from existing property with inadequate resident and visitor parking as well as five 5-story Condo buildings 70 feet tall, too high for such a location adjacent to a residential area.

- Increase noise pollution from construction, cars, housing and emergency vehicles with the new proposed living.
- Plans call for a storage facility and a possible 85 uses with MXD.
- Increase invasive lighting for all homes nearby with storage and parking lots.
- Increase in drivers cutting through our streets to avoid the traffic back up.
- Risk of trespassers and non-residents having access to all of our open amenities.
- Liability issues from those outside the community using our amenities.

2. Traffic Hazards and Safety: The additional traffic of hundreds of cars daily from this proposed rezoning and commercial development is inappropriate and unacceptable, especially because it would be routed through The Woodlands neighborhood on residential streets, such as Thornapple Drive. This heavy additional traffic would be hazardous to the seniors living in the community of The Woodlands. Specifically:

- The projected traffic and land use is not supported by the existing ingress/egress driveway and intersection at Rt355/Campus Dr. This presents multiple traffic hazards.
- Limited sight distance may impact the safety of getting out of our homes and being able to see other cars.
- Potentially impact our safety if Fire, EMT and ambulances cannot get to our community in a timely manner.
- Increase traffic/speed on our private roads and the community.

3. Lack of Public Transit and Walkability: There is no public transit that would serve the proposed MXD rezoning and development. MXD zoning is best served in existing, high traffic, urban areas with adequate public transit or as a tool to revitalize an underutilized corridor. Urbana does not meet either of those descriptions. The parcel is also too far from existing MXD zoning and development and would not allow walkability to retail and commercial businesses.

4. Lack of Greenspace Buffer: There is no greenspace buffer proposed between The Woodlands and the nearest structures proposed for the Knowledge Farms development. Such a greenspace buffer, as well as additional aesthetic landscaping buffers, should have been included.

The applicant is requesting a retail focused zoning label on land surrounded by private, residential homes. A few private amenities and developer owned businesses in an isolated development does nothing to help the greater community. A lack of retail and commercial possibilities with limited redevelopment options, restricted walkability, poor parking, and dangerous traffic patterns on overcrowded roads negatively affect the surrounding communities. Small business owners receive no benefit from expensive, poorly planned developments and housing is not affordable.

The developer has other options, starting with redeveloping the current office to meet changing demands. They could have rezoned and coordinated with the neighboring MXD development in 2016. They could focus on a rezoning category that blends with the neighboring residential community. They could create a single, high quality project. They could ask the county council to consider a special land use mix to meet their specific needs. Instead, they created the biggest, most densely populated plan they could fit on paper while continuing to provide misleading and incorrect information to stakeholders. Any rezoning is a significant step that changes the county master plan due to the vision of a single developer. Zoning is the strongest tool given to the county to control land use, but the MXD option is a dangerous choice that removes this oversight, granting benefits to the developer at the expense of the community. All attempts to rezone should be carefully considered, but the MXD zoning option needs more limitations, research, and analysis before its overuse creates permanent chaos.

Overall, the proposed MXD rezoning and proposed development exhibits a distinct lack of planning in regard to appropriate building heights, noise, traffic, safety, minimizing car use to mitigate climate crisis concerns, utilizing public transit, walkability, and greenspace and landscaping buffers. Therefore it is not smart growth, and it is incompatible with our community at The Woodlands and inappropriate for Urbana.

Thank you for your consideration and for your denial of the proposed MXD rezoning and development at Knowledge Farms.

Sincerely,

David E. Reeves
9265 Starlight Mews N
Frederick, MD 21704

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: Joan Riggs <riggsjoan1@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 11:31 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: Urbana Development Concerns

Hello,

I am a homeowner in The Woodlands at Urbana, concerned about the status of the Knowledge Farms zoning application. Many homeowners in our development are worried about the lack of detail and misleading language in the Knowledge Farms application, and we are concerned that approval of this application would give Knowledge Farms a free pass to develop without county oversight.

Our concerns are not only about construction so close to our boundaries. This development will generate a large amount of traffic that will spill over into our community, creating safety issues. There is insufficient traffic management from Rt 355. Already cars are cutting through our community to avoid the light at Fingerboard Road, because there is no traffic control leading in/out of our community.

Giving Knowledge Farms free rein to build as they choose is a major issue for residents of The Woodlands, and we have watched with alarm as they hedged on our questions and concerns. Oversight and planning for the future are key responsibilities of our government, and we urge you to ask your own probing questions as you consider their application.

Thank you,
Joan Riggs
The Woodlands at Urbana

From: David Vorhis <david.vorhis@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 4:12 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Comment on proposed rezoning of Knowledge Farms property

My wife and I are residents at the Woodlands of Urbana community. We are strongly opposed to the proposed rezoning of the Knowledge Farms property.

Any additional traffic at the intersection of 355 and Thornapple Drive will make an already dangerous intersection much more so.

The noise pollution associated with possible uses under MDX zoning would significantly impact the quality of life for Woodlands residents especially those living on Thornapple Drive. So will the presence of large commercial lighting fixtures.

The Knowledge Farms parcel only has roughly 11 acres of buildable land. If it were rezoned as MDX the density of the possible uses of the property would be incompatible with the residential nature of the neighboring Woodlands community.

If the property were rezoned as MDX, there would be increased traffic through the Woodlands neighborhood from those attempting to avoid congestion on 355. The Woodlands streets are narrow with numerous cars parked on the streets. Any extra traffic will pose dangers to both parked vehicles and pedestrians.

The proposed rezoning should be denied.

David Vorhis
2964 Caraway Drive
Frederick, Maryland

From: Kelly Bauer <k_bauer99@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 2:02 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms Concerns for Planning Meeting on 10/19/2023

Dear Frederick County Planning Commission,

I'm writing to you as a resident of the Woodlands community to share my concerns about the Knowledge Farms (KF) plan adjacent to our community and to oppose the rezoning application to MXD as this will have a large impact on our beautiful community.

According to the current plan, this project would impact the existing properties in the Woodlands and be within very close proximity (in some cases within 26 feet). The proposed project far exceeds the density of the Woodlands at five times the amount of our neighborhood. In addition, this project only includes one entrance and exit which is directly within a neighborhood street and not on 355. Cars coming from the office building already rush out of the parking lot and adding five times the residents/traffic to this one area in addition to the Woodlands community would certainly impact traffic and public safety. In an emergency situation, which may not be unusual for a 55+ community, the addition of a large number of dwellings along with a continuing care facility will just exponentially increase the traffic and noise for such a small parcel of land. The traffic in and out of KF already has limited visibility south on 355 and adding such a large increase in housing for one exit into a neighborhood will also have an impact.

The idea of placing a self-storage facility in or directly near a residential area is unacceptable. The lighting, noise, traffic in and out will impact our community and could be better served in the numerous commercial areas in Frederick County. There are various commercial spaces south along 355 that would be more appropriate. This unsightly building doesn't fit the residential nature of the surrounding area and could cause safety concerns. In addition, MXD allows for various other uses which would not align with this residential portion of Urbana.

I am concerned about the potential for trespassers and non-residents having access to amenities that are paid for by Woodlands residents. We are aware of ongoing issues from non-residents including the apartments behind our community, trespassing in our open areas, courts and firepits (that are clearly marked for Woodlands residents).

While I understand progress and some development is necessary, we do not want to be over-developed like Montgomery County and are concerned that the KF plan adds a concerning number of housing units based on the size of the property.

Please reject the plan for MXD as is or impose conditions such as denying the self-storage building, similar commercial buildings, and requiring an additional egress point outside of the Woodlands further down 355.

I appreciate your time and attention to this very important matter for the safety and preservation of Urbana and Frederick County residents. And thank you for your commitment to public service in our community.

Respectfully,

Kelly Bauer
3206 Ivy Meadow Drive
Frederick, MD 21704

From: Ellen Harris <evbharris@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 4:17 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>
Subject: Knowledge Farms parcel

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this email to ask you to not approve the rezoning for the Knowledge Farms parcel.

When I moved here 2 years ago from Montgomery County I was told the land behind my new home would be medical office space. Upon moving in I hear the KF developer wants to totally change the zoning from medical to mixed use . Quite frankly I would have stayed in Montgomery County if I had know about this rezoning. I like the area because of the open space and Frederick County quiet. I feel if approved my real estate values will plunge and all the work I did make to make moving to Frederick County for naught.

Also, please carefully consider the chaos that the proposed change will have on Urbana .

In closing please deny the KF rezoning plan.

Thank you in advance,

Ellen Harris
3059 Herb Garden Drive

Sent from my iPhone

From: David A. Boyd <david.a.boyd@icloud.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 3:28 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Cc: David A. Boyd <david.a.boyd@icloud.com>; Penny Boyd <penny.boyd@mac.com>

Subject: Public Comment to Knowledge Farms request for rezoning to MXD

I am writing to voice my objection to Knowledge Farms' request for a zoning change from ORI to MXD and to request that the Frederick County Planning Commission **reject** the Knowledge Farms rezoning request with prejudice.

My home is on Herb Garden Drive, and my property backs up to the Knowledge Farms property and is in direct line with the recent notional usage map provided by Knowledge Farms. My home, like others, directly abuts the Knowledge Farms property. Like other homeowners along Herb Garden Drive, we paid a significant fee, \$25,000.00, for this open space view with the expectation that it would remain open. At our first encounter with Knowledge Farms, we learned that discussions between them and the Woodlands' developers and builders had been ongoing for over a year. These discussions focused on Knowledge Farms' intent to request rezoning to MXD and their plan to connect to the Woodlands sewer and stormwater system and access our trails, paths, and amenities. These discussions were well before we decided to purchase in the Woodlands. Myself and other homeowners were shocked by their admission.

Had Knowledge Farms disclosed their intent, we would not have purchased a villa on Herb Garden Drive. Other neighbors have expressed the same sentiment. Faced with a property value that will be diminished by \$25,000 or more, with villas and five-story condominiums directly behind my home, my financial future is at risk if this rezoning is approved.

One of the tenets of MXD is for open and honest communications with surrounding communities during the design stage. Knowledge Farms has demonstrated, on numerous occasions, their propensity to deceive, obscure, and alienate residents of the Woodlands. The Planning Commission should recognize that Knowledge Farms will operate **solely in its best interest** while **ignoring** the concerns of the Woodlands homeowners. I would strongly suggest that the Planning Commission consider the adversarial and threatening interactions between Knowledge Farms and Woodlands residents and not trust any Knowledge Farms contingency agreements regarding rezoning their property to MXD and reject their request.

Numerous safety and compatibility issues impact the Woodlands Community writ large that go beyond the direct impact on my home's market value. Based on the latest concept presented by Knowledge Farms, please consider the following;

1. Density levels of office/commercial/residential that are **significantly** greater, by a factor of at least 5:1, than the Woodlands, leading to serious safety issues for residents of Knowledge Farms, such as emergency vehicle access if needed.
2. A 24/7 public storage facility with all-night lighting and access will significantly impact homes along Thornapple Drive and Herb Garden Drive, with noise and light pollution further

diminishing property value. Knowledge Farms' latest concept is incompatible with the all-residential nature of the Woodlands

3. A single ingress/egress will significantly overburden Thornapple Drive, increasing non-resident traffic through the Woodlands, reducing safety, and restricting safe traffic flow.
4. The lack of a traffic light at 355 and Thornapple Drive intersection dramatically increases congestion, particularly during school arrival and departures, limiting any left turns onto 355 out of the Woodlands.
5. The lack of **advanced approval** of a second ingress/egress onto 355 further stresses Thornapple Drive, dramatically impacting access and safety.
6. Should a second ingress/egress be approved, the adamant refusal of Knowledge Farms to eliminate or restrict traffic between its office/commercial area and the residential area.
7. There is a lack of any public transportation serving the Knowledge Farms development and its senior citizens or residents of the identified assisted living facility.
8. There is a lack of an adequate buffer zone between Knowledge Farms and the Woodlands, with landscaping and physical barriers to mitigate the impacts of the proximity of the residential units to the Woodlands villas and homes. At one point, there were only 26 feet between the residential property lines of Knowledge Farms and the Woodlands.
9. Without any restrictions on Knowledge Farms to limit any new buildings to only residential, they **would not be compatible** with the Woodlands 100% residential makeup. They could build 24-hour retail, 24-hour gas stations, 24-hour storage, or 24-hour continuing care. Including these land uses is of great concern for the Woodlands residents.
10. A complete lack of stormwater retention, relying 100% on access to the Woodlands, could dramatically impact the Woodlands – particularly homes along Herb Garden Drive and directly next to the identified storm drain connection – with localized flooding during heavy storms.

Thank you for considering my comments. I request that you reject, with prejudice, Knowledge Farms' request to change zoning from ORI to MXD.

Kind Regards,

David A. Boyd

Planning Commissioner,

I'm a resident of the Woodlands, and my property backs up to the Knowledge Farms (KF) property. As a resident of The Woodlands, I'm very concerned about the potential of rezoning this small property to MXD, and I request that the Planning Commission rejects Knowledge Farms' request.

Many of my concerns precipitate from the single ingress/egress from Thornapple Drive. There seems to be a disconnect, or a complete lack of concern, with the KF's apparent refusal to recognize and address the severe safety issues this single entry point will promote.

Should KF receive rezoning to MXD and move forward with their notional plans, there will be an enormous impact on traffic coming into and out of KF and the Woodland's Communities via Thornapple Drive and generate a significant amount of congestion at the MD 355 intersection. Traffic heading southeast on MD 355 is already very heavy in the morning. The same is true in the evening, heading northwest on MD 355. This congestion is even higher, with the High School sharing the same intersection during arrival and departure times. ***If you have not had a chance to drive onto the KF property, I would advise you to do so before considering the rezoning change from ORI to MXD.***

Of note is that the small drive to get to the back of the existing medical building is very tight, with tight turns transitioning through parking. This tiny drive is the proposed route to access the 24/7 storage facility and residential and assisted living facilities. How will emergency vehicles maneuver around these obstacles, including the existing building's tight parking lot and all of the other new buildings proposed?

Imagine emergency vehicles entering and exiting KF with a single ingress/egress at Thornapple Drive. Heaven forbid if there should be a significant incident where an emergency exists, such as a major fire, a possible gas leak, CO2 poisoning, or other life-threatening situations. The proposed high density includes a 24/7 storage facility, a 24/7 Assisted Living facility, Condos, and Villas – all using this single ingress/egress. The question is not ***if*** there will be a catastrophic impact on emergency services but ***when*** this impact will occur. Imagine if your loved one lived in an assisted living building, condo, or villa and had a life-threatening emergency during peak traffic congestion, delaying emergency care. A situation that EMTs would handle now has taken a much more ominous turn. In those cases, seconds count. KF does not mitigate the added traffic and resulting congestion. Without additional and guaranteed ingress/egress points, their application to rezone to MXD is critically flawed.

Rezoning to MXD with this critical flaw is, at best, reckless. At its worst, it is a callous disregard for the safety of future Knowledge Farms residents and current and future Woodlands residents.

KF's latest suggested concept indicates they would have a second ingress/egress onto MD 355, yet the state has previously denied this. In earlier discussions with the Woodlands, KF

acknowledged that they may not get approval for the second entrance off of MD 355. If this is the case, how can the rezoning be approved?

This second access point should be a firm requirement and imperative that KF meets **before** any rezoning consideration. The Planning Commission should require that KF establish an escrow account with sufficient funds to provide for the planning, approval, and execution of a second ingress/egress on MD 355 **before** the submittal of any rezoning application.

KF's actions suggest that their motivation and focus are on near-term results. Since they have been unsuccessful in leasing their existing medical facility, let alone building a second office or research facility, KF may be looking for an exit strategy to mitigate their current situation. Once they receive approval for MXD, their property becomes more valuable, providing them with a quick profit by selling to another developer or group of developers. In this case, any concessions or agreements are moot, presenting even more challenges and negative impacts to the Woodlands and surrounding communities. This scenario is more likely than not, given the stagnant growth of KF with its current zoning of ORI.

Based on the significant flaws and safety issues noted, the Planning Commission should reject KF's application to rezone to MXD.

Sincerely,

Penny Coco-Boyd

From: Marian Callahan <mcallahan3311@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 8:19 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@FrederickCountyMD.gov>

Subject: KNOWLEDGE FARM OVER-DEVELOPMENT

DEAR COMMISSION:

Each day I read in the Frederick News-Post the news of still another housing development — age-restricted or otherwise. The Problem here is one of OVER-development! The KF piece of property is far too small to pack in a number of residential homes — the density is not in compliance with the LIVABLE FREDERICK plan, and the possibility that the developer would include a Storage Unit facility is simply bizarre. What is the greater good and the best use of land? In this case, we already have an enormously underserved Urbana population — we need a kidney DIALYSIS facility as the nearest one is at least 10 miles away!! We have an already dangerous traffic situation in Urbana, with crowding onto Rte 270. There is absolutely NO reason to move from an ORI zoning to Mixed Use; it is the responsibility of the Planning Commission to consider the highest and best use of our land. It is NOT the mission of the Planning Commission to permit development without consideration of the needs of the existing population.

——Thank you for carefully considering mine and other concerns.

Marian Callahan

3311 Ivy Meadow Drive

Urbana, MD 21704

301 213 8325

Chris & Lori Heslen

3237 THORNAPPLE DR
FREDERICK, MD
•21704•


Hicks

RE: Knowledge Farm RE-zoning → 10/11/2023

- 1). WE PURCHASED NEXT TO EXISTING OFFICE Bldg
AT KNOWLEDGE FARM KNOWING USE & ORI ZONING.
- 2). APPROVED NATELI' TRAFFIC LIGHT AT CAMPUS DRIVE
DOES NOT CONSIDER THIS K.F. ZONING CHANGE TO MXD.
HEAVIER USES LIKELY FROM K.F. w/ MXD CHANGE.
- 3). SECONDARY ACCESS TO/FROM RT 355 HAS ALREADY BEEN
DESIGNED YEARS AGO DUE TO TOPO ISSUES.
- 4). K.F. UNFORTUNATELY MISSED AN OPPORTUNITY TO
JOIN IN ON NATELI' MXD ZONING. NOW IT'S
TOO LATE - NOW!
- 5). RECOMMEND NO CHANGE TO ORI ZONING

10/16/2023


CHHESEN


LHHESEN

Chris & Lori Heszen

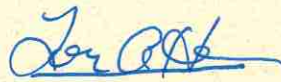
3237 THORNAPPLE DR
FREDERICK, MD
•21704•

White

RE: KNOWLEDGE FARM Re-zoning → 10/19/23

- 1). We purchased, in early 2020, adjacent to existing OFFICE Bldg + ORI Land USE.
- 2). YES Traffic w/3 improved w/ Light at Campus Drive. But MXD will likely create heavier uses.
- 3). Knowledge Farm should have joined Natelli years ago w/ MXD. Now they want change - Too Late!
- 4). 2nd ROAD ACCESS to K.F. onto/From Rt. 355 has already been DENIED - Topo REASONS.
- 5). RECOMMEND NO CHANGE IN Zoning.


CHESZEN


LATHESZEN

10/16/2023

Chris & Lori Heslen


3237 THORNAPPLE DR
FREDERICK, MD
21704

Davis

RE: KNOWLEDGE FARMS RE-Zoning → 10/19/23

- 1). We purchased adjacent to existing Bldg + Land knowing ORI in Early 2020.
- 2). Traffic w/b improved by Natelli Traffic Light.
- 3). Change to MXD will alter available uses + likely create heavier traffic.
- 4). Secondary road access on Rt 355 onto proposed MXD Land use has been denied in Early 2000 - 2004 due to TPO issues.
- 5). Recommend no changes to ORI


CHESLEN


LA HESLEN

10/16/2023

Chris & Lori Heslen Rensberger


3237 THORNAPPLE DR
FREDERICK, MD
•21704•

RE: KNOWLEDGE FARMS RE-Zoning → 10/19/2023

- 1) WE PURCHASED NEXT TO EXISTING OFFICE Bldg AT K.F. KNOWING USES + ORIG ZONING.
- 2) YES TRAFFIC AT NEW NATOLI TRAFFIC LIGHT W/ B IMPROVED. BUT MXD CHANGE AT K.F. WILL CHANGE COUNTS + USES NOT DESIGNED CURRENTLY.
- 3) SECONDARY ROAD ACCESS TO/FROM K.F. HAS ALREADY BEEN DENIED YEARS AGO DUE TO TOPO ISSUES.
- 4) RECOMMEND NO CHANGE IN Zoning TO MXD.
- 5) UNFORTUNATELY, KNOWLEDGE FARMS MISSED AN A CHANCE TO JOIN NATOLI w/ MXD ZONING. NOW TOO LATE!

10/16/2023


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Chris & Lori Heszen

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3237 THORNAPPLE DR
FREDERICK, MD
•21704•

RE: KNOWLEDGE FARM RE-zoning → 10/19/2023

- 1). WE PURCHASED 2020 ADJACENT TO EXISTING OFFICE Bldg KNOWING USE + ORI ZONING NEXT DOOR.
- 2). APPROVED TRAFFIC LIGHT DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ANTICIPATED MXD ZONING APPLICATION, WHICH WILL CREATE HEAVY USES.
- 3). SECONDARY ACCESS TO/FROM Rt. 355 ON TO THE SUBJECT PROPERTY HAS ALREADY BEEN DENIED DUE TO TOPO ISSUES.
- 4). RECOMMEND NO CHANGE IN ZONING.
- 5). K.F. SHOULD HAVE CHANGED TO MXD ALONG W/ NATALI YEARS AGO. NOW TOO LATE!


CHESZEN

Oct. 16, 2023


CHESZEN

Chris & Lori Heslen Tressler


3237 THORNAPPLE DR
FREDERICK, MD
21704

RE: Knowledge Farm RE-zoning → 10/19/2023

- 1). WE purchased next to existing OFFICE Bldg
At Knowledge Farm knowing USE + ORE zoning.
- 2). APPROVED Natelli: Traffic Light At Campus
DRIVE DOES NOT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION
OF HEAVIER USES FROM ADDED K.F. MXD.
- 3). SECONDARY ACCESS PROPOSED BY K.F. HAS ALREADY
BEEN DENIED YEARS AGO DUE TO TOPO REASONS.
- 4). RECOMMEND NO CHANGE IN ZONING.
- 5). K.F. SHOULD HAVE JOINED w/ NATELLI YEARS AGO
IN A MXD ZONING. NOW TOO LATE!

10/16/2023


CHRISEN


LA HESLEN