

Ms. Francoise Carrier, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
M-NCPPC  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RE: Preliminary Plan #120100170 (1000 Westmore Avenue)

Dear Ms. Carrier:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Preliminary Plan for the proposed development at 1000 Westmore Avenue (Preliminary Plan 120100170). As described in the materials submitted to the City, the project consists of a 15,000 square foot utility building proposed for the storage of vehicles. We are writing to express our strong opposition to the project, and urge the Planning Board to deny the preliminary plan application.

The property is bordered to the south (across Ashley Avenue) by property within the City of Rockville, zoned and developed for detached single-family residential use. These abutting residential properties are located within the City's Lincoln Park Neighborhood and subject to the goals and policies of the 2007 Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan and Conservation District Plan. A primary goal of both plans is to maintain and enhance Lincoln Park as a stable and secure residential neighborhood, while ensuring that redevelopment is compatible with the community.

A primary objective of the plan addresses the subject property specifically (referred to as the WINX site, p. 16):

“Eliminate industrial uses and zoning for redevelopment areas such as the Board of Education property on North Stonestreet Avenue, the WINX site on Ashley Avenue, and the industrial areas on Frederick Avenue and North Horners Lane.”

The neighborhood plan encourages the redevelopment of this property as residential, which should “seamlessly relate to the eclectic and vernacular nature of the existing homes in the Lincoln Park neighborhood”, and be a mix of single-family detached, attached and semi-detached units. The City, working with the Lincoln Park neighborhood in developing the neighborhood and conservation district plans, has adopted them in order

to protect the predominantly single-family character of this area. The proposed project is inconsistent with these adopted policies, and serves to continue the use of the property as industrial, clearly inconsistent with the goals and objectives of the Neighborhood Plan.

Additionally, the City has significant concerns related to the operation of the proposed use and its potential impacts upon the surrounding residential properties. Notably the areas of concern include lack of adequate fire suppression; the impact of additional traffic and access to the site; the potential for excessive noise generated by the proposed use; negative air quality impacts; and visual impacts resulting from lighting of the site. Access to the site is limited and the potential for cut-through traffic in the Lincoln Park residential neighborhood south of the property is high. Any increases in the volume of commercial traffic in this area create a concern for pedestrian, as well as vehicular safety.

As you may know the City of Rockville has extended a very limited water and sewer connection to the property. The service is limited to the 597 square foot building on the site that served the previous radio transmission facility. The expanded use of this site from the 597 square-foot building to the proposed 15,000 square-foot facility, represents a substantial change to this utility service. The City is not prepared to upgrade the utility service for this proposed development.

In closing, it is the City's position that the industrial use of this property should be not continued, nor expanded. This proposed application is an effort to intensify the industrial use of the property. The application represents an opportunity to look at the long-term use of the site, and encourage the type of development that is compatible with the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood. This was the purpose and intent of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan, and this site is a key component to the overall success of that Plan.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this project. We understand that County staff is requesting plan revisions, and additional materials, as a result of the initial development review committee meeting on this project. The City anticipates providing additional comments once these revised plans have been submitted.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Marcuccio  
Mayor

C: Scott Ullery, City Manager  
Susan Swift, Director of Community Planning & Development Services  
Debra Yerg Daniel, City Attorney  
Craig Simoneau, Director of Public Works  
Bobby Ray, Principal Planner  
Hjarman Cordero, Senior Neighborhood Resources Coordinator  
Rose Krasnow, Chief of Development Review - MNCPPC  
Erin Grayson, Senior Planner - MNCPPC