

Planning Commission Draft of the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan

Summary of Verbal Public Hearing Testimony

Mayor and Council Meeting No. 36-08 – October 13, 2008

#	Name	Testimony	Plan Recommendation
1	Mr. Joe McClane	President of Cambridge Walk Homeowners Assoc. Chair of TNPAG composed of Twinbrook residents; have worked on plan since April 2005. Proud of progressive forward-looking plan that has included unprecedented outreach to community for years and reflects the needs of our fellow citizens. Support this plan. Want mixed use. Support closing the record.	
2	Mr. Peter Mork	Resident of the Burgundy Estates area. Original concerns about long-term growth and development have been addressed in the Draft Plan. The proposed zoning would be equivalent [to the current zoning] in terms of the use of the space and of traffic and parking, except that it would allow residential as well as commercial uses. There are restrictions on the use based on the parking available. New plan an improvement over what is currently allowed there. We should accept the plan and move on.	Proposed zone for Burgundy Center: MXC – amended to allow Dwellings, multiple-unit, as a Conditional Use. (Ch. 4)
3	Ms. Virginia Quesada	Concerned about the effect of change on diversity. Not hearing discussion about infrastructure, more subways, widening roads. Where is concern about more density?	Acknowledges increasing diversity in the area. (Ch. 1)
4	Mr. Karl Harger	No one has answered why the need for this plan. Development impacts home, livelihood and quality of life. Process has not been transparent; conflicts of interest; concern infrastructure cost will be passed on to residents. Communities will be unaffordable.	Plan proposed because residents expressed concern about encroachment on neighborhood from adjacent redevelopment. Plan confirms R-60 zone for the single-family residential neighborhoods and offers a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening residential areas. (Ch. 3)

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5	Mr. Doug Hernan	<p>Fifteen-year resident of Twinbrook. Plan represents forward thinking. More thought on Lewis Avenue/Halpine area. Stronger language about 5946 Halpine Road; not the worst neighbors, but do not belong in the neighborhood. More residential for Lewis Ave. Would like to see more of an “L” of townhouses. More park space per resident needed: National groups call for 10 acres per 1000 people; now have 3.8 acres per 1000 people. More bike and pedestrian overpasses needed between Twinbrook Metro Station and Edmonston.</p>	<p>Proposed zone for the Lewis Avenue industrial area is I-L, which is intended to allow the existing businesses to remain. Recommends I-L be amended to allow Dwellings, multiple-unit, as a Conditional Use. (Ch. 4)</p> <p>Plan recommends maintenance of the R-60 zone for 5946 Halpine Road – for single family housing on the site if it is developed, or acquire the site for additional park and green space, should it become available.</p> <p>Plan recommends the Mayor and Council should explore ways to eliminate the existing non-conforming use and convert it to parkland or single-family residential use. (Ch. 4)</p>
6	Ms. Cynthia Hernan	<p>Fifteen-year resident of Twinbrook. Support plan – really extremely strong plan. Support measures to get people out of cars – rapid transit, completing sidewalks. Supports development for Veirs Mill Road. Lewis Avenue should have more green space as opposed to light industrial. Taylor Property is nonconforming; should be made green space. Increase oversight to property maintenance; issue citations for maintenance. Against neighborhood conservation districts. Property values will increase with plan.</p>	<p>See #5 above.</p>
7	Mr. Tony Treston	<p>Only addressed Burgundy Village Shopping Center. Changing zoning to mixed use allows apartments amongst single-family homes near Burgundy Estates Shopping Center. Original plan called for shopping center to be within current zoning. Should be no more</p>	<p>Proposed zone for Burgundy Center: MXC – amended to allow Dwellings, multiple-unit, as a Conditional Use. (Ch. 4)</p>

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		<p>than 30 feet high, includes no more than two stories, maximum floor area ratio, etc. Center needs traffic aide to get in and out. History says present zoning should be maintained. No apparent support for change other than more housing is needed in Twinbrook. No warning that zoning would change. Change zoning ordinance for shopping center.</p>	
8	Mr. William Neil	<p>Lives in Twinbrook. Plan was developed under old world assumptions: the new world indicates that economic climate does not warrant building new developments. Unless there's a compelling reason to build, this model will not work. Twinbrook is last place the plan will work. Did not know about Taylor property and missed controversy regarding it.</p>	<p>Plan recommends zoning changes – it is not a development proposal. (Ch. 4)</p>
9	Ms. Judy Miller	<p>Was a member of the Twinbrook Advisory Group and is vice-president of TCA. Draft should have been beginning, not end. Plan creates more people, congestion, traffic and problems. Plan has been controversial from the beginning. TCA worked with City to put on two informational meetings. Constantly heard concerns about the levels of development in Twinbrook. Under guise of smart growth and being pedestrian friendly, citizens learned that usually means more people, traffic, and more problems in the neighborhood. Council should carefully review and change Twinbrook plan for responsible development and fiscal policy for our city. Would like to see the Taylor property zoned for townhouses.</p>	<p>Plan recommends maintenance of the R-60 zone for 5946 Halpine Road – for single family housing on the site if it is developed, or acquire the site for additional park and green space, should it become available. Plan recommends the Mayor and Council should explore ways to eliminate the existing non-conforming use and convert it to parkland or single-family residential use. (Ch. 4)</p>

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10	Mr. Kevin Gallagher	Lives on Highwood road. Project is heralded as having outreach, great expense. We have council people who were once on the Planning Commission. Process is incestuous; questioned ethics involved and decisions made. Taylor property is nonconforming. Believes Ms. Pakulniewicz-Chidiac was self-serving in lobbying against the Taylor property, encouraging stronger language in the plan for the rezoning in a way that the owner would lose the use of the property that has been satisfactory for the last 35 years.	See # 9 above.
11	Ms. Barbara Grewe	Past president of Burgundy States Civic Association, resident for 35 years. Concern is condition of shopping center. Opposes the apartments that result in additional traffic. Would like the neighborhood to remain as single-family units.	Proposed zone for Burgundy Center: MXC – amended to allow Dwellings, multiple-unit, as a Conditional Use. (Ch. 4) Confirms R-60 zone for the single-family residential neighborhood and offers a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening residential areas. (Ch. 3)
12	Mr. Paul Wolfe	Twenty-eight year resident of Rockville, 13 years spent in Twinbrook. Small business owner operating out of condominiums on Lewis Avenue. Companies will be excluded from the current plan. As the plan stands, no businesses would remain in the condominiums. The businesses service a lot of Rockville residents. No transparency in planning; concern over effect of all small businesses.	Proposed zone for the Lewis Avenue industrial area is I-L, which is intended to allow the existing businesses to remain. (Ch. 4)

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13	Mr. Dan Chwirut	Lived on Woodburn Road for the last 35 years. Big problem is traffic. Against mixed use. Good idea to get people out of cars, but it will not work: too much through traffic. Against mixed use, especially at Burgundy, but also the Twinbrook Shopping Center - change will bring more people and more problems into the neighborhood. Not a big proponent of eminent domain. Any change to improve traffic will take property from Burgundy Shopping Center.	Proposed zone for Burgundy Center: MXC – amended to allow Dwellings, multiple-unit, as a Conditional Use. (Ch. 4) Baltimore Road improvement project is underway. (Ch. 5) Plan does not recommend the use of eminent domain.
14	Ms. Naomi Belkin	President of the Twinbrook Mart Condominium Association. Staff did magnificent job of trying to get her involved - have gone to meetings. Site can only be redeveloped in an upward direction. Hesitates to approve zoning. Should not be treated like the huge shopping center that can do all kinds of things the small center cannot do. As a business owner; no input; property rights ignored; Plan diminishes property value of homeowner and shopping center.	Plan recommends MXNC zone with a maximum height of 65 feet. (Layback slope of 30 degrees) (Ch. 4)
15	Ms. Anabel Safire	Lives on Atlantic Avenue. Spoke to the water report; said there is dangerous bacteria in the water that will compromise immune systems for babies or young children. She feels held hostage by Comcast for poor service and outrageous prices due to a lack of competition. Need to be able to park in front of their homes. Very little disabled parking in Rockville; need a plan for parking.	

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16	Mr. David Greene	Lives on Bradley Avenue. Opposes mixed use, especially for Burgundy Estates. Need better way to get over railroad tracks. Crossing the tracks at Twinbrook Parkway is near a horrible intersection. All intersections where tracks exist are bad. No mention of tracks in Plan. Twinbrook Station is going to make crossing tracks much more difficult than it is now.	Montgomery County’s proposed Montrose Parkway East will offer an alternative to Twinbrook Parkway for east-west through traffic. Plan recommends a study of the feasibility of an additional pedestrian crossing across the tracks at Halpine Road, or another location. Twinbrook Station is expected to improve the cross track links - it includes a pedestrian link that is expected to be open 24-7. (Ch. 5)
17	Ms. Linda Bozzonetti	Member of the Advisory Committee; supports draft plan, and Planning Commission improved it. Would very much like to have good public transportation. Bothers her that people said they did not have any notification or there was no transparency - there was extended outreach. Thanked Ann, Jim and Staff for their work.	
18	Ms. Jennifer Hicks	Lives on Midway Avenue. Came because received letter from TCA that questioned whether they would lose the value of their home because of the plan. There’s a light at Broadwood, but a crosswalk is needed because of the distance walked to get to the nearest light. Asked if proposal would decrease property value.	
19	Mr. Phil Gerkin	Twinbrook resident since 1969. Saw the previous Town Center, when he sees what’s happening to the center of the City he wonders if it is really going or not. Has talked with a business owner who said one of the new restaurants was going bankrupt. Thinks caution	Plan recommends zoning changes – it is not a development proposal. (Ch. 4) Veirs Mill Road commercial area recommended for rezone to MXNC with maximum height of 65 feet.

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		<p>should be taken before moving forward. Concerned that new plan is rushing forward; Twinbrook Center is not meant for high income residents. The new plan is meant to serve the wrong people.</p>	<p>(Layback slope of 30 degrees.)</p>
20	Mr. John Tyner	<p>Lives on Halpine Road and a 38-year resident of Twinbrook. Thanked all who worked on plan; different views are immaterial as the input is needed to finish this plan. Was involved in 1982 plan, and there were objections remaining then. Council has the difficult decision of trying to put things together that will benefit the neighborhood and the City.</p>	
21	Ms. Christina Ginsberg	<p>Lives on Simmons Drive and is President of Twinbrook Citizens' Association. Floating zones should not be recommended; dangerous for Twinbrook and the rest of City. Asked Advisory Group that floating zones be removed. TCA voted twice to remove floating zones. They are dangerous for Twinbrook and the rest of the community. No one wants 1365 cars more to be added to Twinbrook Parkway and Veirs Mill Road. No statement that Lewis Avenue should not be cut through to Twinbrook Stations. Statements are needed in plan to direct our future. This is not the plan for Twinbrook.</p>	<p>Plan does not recommend floating zones – they are discussed as a tool that could be available. (Ch. 2)</p> <p>Veirs Mill Road commercial area is recommended for MXNC zone with a maximum height of 65 feet. (Layback slope of 30 degrees.) (Ch. 4)</p> <p>Number of cars stated emerged from a zoning study that showed that City's then parking standards would yield 1365 spaces: aided in discussion (and amendment) of City's parking standards as part of the Zoning Ordinance revision.</p> <p>Plan recommends improved transit for the area.</p>

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22	Mr. Donald Beck	Has lived on Ridgeway Avenue for 38 years. Walks to shopping and to metro station. Concerned about redevelopment and that Town Center has not met expectations; do not want to disturb the equilibrium in Twinbrook.	Plan recommends zoning changes – it is not a development proposal. (Ch. 4) Twinbrook Station development is under construction.
23	Ms. Tracy Pakulniewicz-Chidiac	Understand how important it is to hear from associations and presidents of associations, but less than 2% of Twinbrook residents belong to TCA. When she joined she wanted to understand their position on the Twinbrook Neighborhood Planning. Asked many times for minutes, budget and was refused. Letter sent to some TCA members contains misinformation: consider more than 1.5 percent of the 10,000 residents when deciding on the plan.	
24	Ms. Aly Dejesus	Lived on McAuliffe Drive for 20 years. Received letter from TCA, very concerned and brought a lot of family and friends to hearing. Are high rises really necessary on that site? Really consider the chaos that will be created during redevelopment and rethink the impact on Twinbrook.	Plan recommendation for Veirs Mill Road commercial areas is MXNC with a maximum height of 65 feet. Layback slope of 30 degrees from a single-family zone means that any development on McAuliffe might not be substantially higher than that allowed in the R-60 zone. (Ch. 4)
25	Ms. Patti Sullivan-Sten	Lives on Grandin Avenue. Not a member of TCA, although did receive the TCA letter. Against changing zoning at Burgundy Estates for mixed use. Does not think apartments and retail belong in the area. Wants more consideration for the parking and traffic and bike zones.	Proposed zone for Burgundy Center: MXC – amended to allow Dwellings, multiple-unit, as a Conditional Use. (Ch. 4)