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IN RE: HILLSDALE DRIVE EXTENSION

PUBLIC HEARING

TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2007

HELD AT

SENIOR CENTER, INC.

1180 PEPSI PLACE

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22901

PUBLIC COMMENTS

4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

REPORTED BY: Kimberly L. Krett

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1 (May 8, 2007, 4:30 p.m.)

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CITIZEN COMMENT:

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I have two questions and two concerns
10 since I live facing Hillsdale. And one is
11 doing something about the crosswalks right
12 now so there's more safety.

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I walk early in the morning and come
14 here, and I notice that people have their
15 cell phones on and they don't look who's
16 in the crosswalk and they just make that
17 turn onto Hillsdale and they don't always
18 stop. So I think we need either a
19 stoplight or even a sign that says if
20 somebody's in the crosswalk you need to
21 stop. And that can be done easily and we
22 don't have to wait for it.

23

The second thing is my concern about
24 noise since there are so many bedroom
25 apartments of elderly people along

1 Hillsdale. And I was wondering what
2 they're thinking about of some kind of a
3 sound barrier. And I know there's been a
4 little bit of testing, but I think you
5 need to consider it or the county needs to
6 consider it much more. And a sound
7 barrier, I think, would be very helpful in
8 at least part of that area. And I would
9 like some kind of a response.

10 The third thing is that I feel the
11 publicity and the communication for this
12 session was not clear to many people. And
13 many, many people felt that there was
14 going to be a meeting with comments
15 because we've had something similar to
16 this before, and they need to be clearer
17 about their public relations.

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21 CITIZEN COMMENT:

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23 And when we came to this meeting
24 three years ago, the very first meeting,
25 Kevin Lynch stated at that point, "We are

1 going to build this road."

2 And I stood up and said, "Then why
3 are we here? Why is there any discussion
4 whatsoever? You have stated that the
5 city" -- we live in the county -- "insists
6 that it's going to build this road."

7 And he said, "Well, that's our plan."

8 So it was a very contentious meeting
9 from the beginning to the end.

10 I wish I still had my statistics,
11 which I don't. I think there are
12 something like 8,000 people who are senior
13 citizens or young parents with children
14 who live off of this road. Senior
15 citizens, people of The Laurels, Rosewood
16 Village, Our Lady of Peace, Bright
17 Beginnings, The Laurels.

18 The problem is Mrs. Tahboub, who owns
19 RoseWood Village, had done the research
20 and she stated at that initial meeting,
21 "What you're telling us is that our road
22 use is going to go from 3,500 cars a day
23 to 35,000." That is -- for us who live in
24 Brookmill, which is a small condo
25 association on the other side of the

1 creek, you are polluting, noise, dirt,
2 unbelievable. And we have no recourse,
3 none whatsoever.

4 I've talked to the lady from
5 Culpeper. They're moving the pond. We
6 are supposedly on the fringes of a
7 floodplain. That water is going to come
8 across the road into our little creek.
9 And when we have a heavy rain, that creek
10 goes over its banks and up almost to the
11 back of the condos on the side of the
12 creek. Now what's that going to do to us?

13 And I think -- it would be my
14 understanding in the reading that I've
15 done is that the Virginia Department of
16 Transportation, who has the funds now to
17 build the Meadowcreek Parkway, the
18 timetable was that was to be built before
19 this road. And it's not. So you're going
20 to have people racing to get off of Rio
21 Road to take a shortcut to the get to
22 Hydraulic through this.

23 There isn't another side road in this
24 county that goes through as much -- as
25 many -- as highly a populated area.

1 Berkmar is a perfectly straight road,
2 it's nothing but businesses. There are no
3 homes on it. This is a curvy road with
4 nothing but homes and institutions. It
5 doesn't make sense. But we have no -- no
6 matter what we said, it didn't make a
7 difference at all.

8 So I think the only difference we did
9 make was that we made such a fuss that
10 they did plan -- they changed the design
11 to plan C. I think that's our only input
12 that we've had. But nothing else. We
13 feel like we're sort of being hung out to
14 dry.

15 They talk about bike paths. Well,
16 that's not for us. Most of us are over
17 70, we don't ride bikes. Thank you.

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21 CITIZEN COMMENT:

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25 I actually come from Branchlands

1 Village. And when I come out of the
2 village, there is a stop sign where I have
3 to, you know, really cross that part of
4 Hillsdale, and people coming on
5 Greenbrier. So people are -- I stop and
6 people chase in front of me to take this
7 shortcut from Hillsdale.

8 So I am all for the roundabout. And
9 especially for that particular part, I'm
10 all for it. But we need to make the
11 roundabout sufficiently large and
12 sufficiently lighted up because there is a
13 roundabout at the airport here in
14 Charlottesville, but it's not lit well
15 enough and does not give enough
16 information who has the right-of-way, the
17 one who is in the roundabout or the one
18 who enters. And I think we are not used
19 to that, that's why we get accidents.

20 The other thing I saw on the plan
21 that they were going to make a bicycle
22 path, a walking path -- I think it's
23 walking path, barrier, bicycle path,
24 barrier, highway.

25 And I think we should not only talk

1 about bicycles, we should talk about
2 motorized wheelchairs because that's the
3 model they use in Holland, where I'm
4 originally from too.

5 You have bicycle paths -- no, I take
6 that back -- pedestrian paths, bicycle
7 paths, and if you're in a wheelchair for
8 any reason at all, you are using the
9 bicycle paths, and you have the highway.
10 And they all have the same traffic.

11 So it doesn't matter if you're in a
12 car or on a bike or in the wheelchair,
13 everything from the right has the
14 right-of-way.

15 So they need to come up with a plan
16 who has the right-of-way. If I come off
17 my bicycle path and I cross the highway,
18 who has the right-of-way? I think that's
19 very important.

20 In Holland, to make a right turn, you
21 cross bicycle paths and the walking paths.
22 I have to look over my right shoulder in
23 my car if there's not a bicycle coming,
24 because if I hit that bicycle, I'm
25 automatically at fault.

1 And I think for this, where we have
2 all of these older people on this stretch,
3 we're going to have a lot of motorized
4 wheelchairs. I'd love to plan that people
5 in the wheelchairs can go to the shops on
6 that path, but we have to have good
7 signage.

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11 CITIZEN COMMENT: I have reservations about
12 the efficacy of the Hillsdale connector,
13 which supposedly is to divert traffic from
14 29 and Hydraulic Road, which is the second
15 most dangerous and congested intersection
16 in Charlottesville.

17 That particular intersection's
18 problems have existed prior to granting
19 Albemarle Players a building permit. They
20 haven't been addressed with the potential
21 construction of Hillsdale.

22 Now if you try to access the 250
23 Bypass through Hydraulic, the Hydraulic
24 intersection at rush hour, you will find
25 that the traffic to the bypass is backed

1 up roughly to the traffic light that the
2 connects Kmart and Kroger.

3 Now this diverter is going to enter
4 through the area between Kmart and Kroger,
5 bringing more traffic in of the people who
6 supposedly will choose it rather than
7 Route 29.

8 Where's the traffic going to go?
9 It's going to back up to beyond where
10 Kmart is into Seminole Square, because
11 with these very short traffic lights, you
12 can't get through.

13 Meanwhile, the people who live on
14 Brandywine already have trouble during
15 rush hour to get in or out of Brandywine
16 because of the traffic that comes up or
17 goes in 250. This is going to get worse.
18 So their choice is probably to go the
19 other way by Fashion Square and come back.

20 There are so many issues that are not
21 taken into consideration because the
22 planners are not aware of the traffic
23 problems here during rush hour, for
24 instance.

25 Now parking problems for the Senior

1 Center. The Senior Center is the first
2 accredited one in Virginia. We need
3 additional parking because we grow, we
4 have additional programs, we have extended
5 hours. So we have to park in the street
6 because we have a nice, small parking lot.

7 The Laurels nursing home is also
8 parking in the street, which makes for a
9 very narrow two-way road as it is now with
10 minimal traffic because it's a dead end
11 street.

12 If you have through traffic, you
13 can't extend the road, you can't make it
14 wider later or anything because of the
15 terrain. Laurels, you can't take anything
16 away because they are on an incline and
17 you can't shave anything off. Senior
18 Center, you can't take anything off
19 because the building is going to be smack
20 on the road. So how is that going to be
21 addressed?

22 How is additional -- they promised
23 additional parking. Where? Are they
24 going to give us a garage in the existing
25 parking space or how are they going to

1 address it, because it's not just a
2 question of not wanting to do it, but a
3 spatial problem. So the practicality of
4 it is doubtful to my way of thinking.

5 I also see roundabouts. Roundabouts
6 in an older population is a fairly deadly
7 combination. A traffic light would solve
8 that problem, but then that of course
9 slows down the traffic.

10 But roundabouts, you have to be a
11 pretty astute driver to know when to get
12 off, otherwise you end up all morning
13 driving around the roundabout.

14 So roundabouts in an area where the
15 majority of residents are older people,
16 it's not a good idea. It sounds nice, but
17 not a good idea.

18 Albemarle Players bring in additional
19 traffic, but of course there's a delay
20 there because of problems with drainage
21 and runoff waters and something, so
22 building is delayed. But sooner or later
23 it will generate tremendous more cars to
24 get in.

25 Well, speeding. It's all very nice

1 to put in 25 mile an hour speed limits,
2 but as you know even in subdivisions
3 nobody drives that, they just don't obey
4 the speed limits.

5 The only way to slow them down would
6 be speed humps, because people hesitate,
7 hopping along like a rabbit to get in.
8 But that would also be less of an
9 incentive to use Hillsdale Drive, so it's
10 counterproductive. It would solve the
11 speeding problem, but, you know -- so
12 again, I don't know how they are going to
13 make sure that we don't have cars race
14 through.

15 And again, with an elderly
16 population, that is very dangerous. If
17 you have a sidewalk only on one side of
18 the street and people have to cross the
19 street to get to the extension of the
20 sidewalk or get to an intersection and
21 cross it, I guess there's a stoplight,
22 you're going to have trouble because
23 roundabout doesn't stop anybody. So
24 again, I can foresee a lot problems.

25 And I asked myself whether it

1 justifies the expenses of the
2 construction, because to my way of
3 thinking, if anything, it adds problems to
4 the area rather than be very productive in
5 alleviating the traffic on 29 and the
6 problems with Hydraulic Road.

7 So that's sort of my general view of
8 it.

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12 CITIZEN COMMENT: My concerns about
13 the Hillsdale Extension are all this
14 traffic is going to be coming off of
15 Hydraulic Road being diverted in from the
16 businesses, and then when it gets to
17 Greenbrier, what are they doing different
18 about the Hillsdale that's there
19 currently? Traffic will just keep
20 continuing up the Hillsdale that's there,
21 and then when they get to the Rio they're
22 not going to turn left to go to Rio to 29,
23 they're just going to keep going straight
24 and go through Northfields Subdivision.
25 And so it will be dumping all this traffic

1 into those neighborhoods.

2 No sidewalks, there's no -- anything
3 like that. So why would they turn to go
4 to a bigger intersection, just like
5 Hydraulic and 29? They're not going to go
6 through Rio and 29, they're going to go
7 straight through the subdivisions.

8 And I also thought that it wasn't
9 supposed to happen until after the
10 Meadowcreek Parkway. Most of the traffic
11 will be coming either from the businesses
12 or if they're already coming from
13 Hydraulic Road, they're probably coming
14 maybe from downtown or somewhere like
15 that, going to where they live north in
16 Greene County or Forest Lakes and that
17 sort of thing. And so the Meadowcreek
18 Parkway would alleviate a lot of traffic.
19 If that was built first, then people
20 wouldn't be in the habit of cutting
21 through by Hillsdale from downtown through
22 our neighborhoods.

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1 CITIZEN COMMENT: I'm concerned
2 about the incidence of accidents in the
3 roundabout. And I would like to know what
4 they plan to do in the area between
5 Greenbrier, Hillsdale and the back of
6 Sycamore Court.

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10 CITIZEN COMMENT:

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12 I am very concerned about the amount
13 of traffic that will cross Rio Road, and
14 Hillsdale Drive runs into Northfields.

15 There's one stop sign. If you take
16 the road Northfields to Carrsbrook, and
17 you take a left at that stop sign, you can
18 go all the way to the bridge on 29. If
19 you take 29, you have seven red lights
20 before you get to the bridge. So the
21 projection is 8,000 to 10,000 cars during
22 peak periods of time will be at the
23 intersection of Rio Road, Northfields and
24 Hillsdale. And that's my concern, the
25 traffic.

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CITIZEN COMMENT: My major concern in coming here today was the traffic flow on 250 onto Hydraulic Road in both directions currently. Any more feed-in is just going to make it a nightmare, and it won't work.

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Hydraulic Road for this project is broke. And they need to put Hydraulic into this plan to do something major with it or it's not going to work.

10

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12

We live here, we travel it. I think a lot of the politicians either don't live here or don't travel these roads. If they live downtown, then they don't have to worry about this, but we do. The backup is tremendous. So that's the main thing.

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And even if they fixed Hydraulic right now, when Albemarle Place comes in, it will be obsolete again. And so they need to take that into consideration with the planning of fixing Hydraulic Road.

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2

3 I, KIMBERLY L. KRETT, do hereby certify

4 that I reduced the notes of the foregoing

5 proceedings to typewriting; that the

6 foregoing is a true record of said

7 proceedings to the best of my knowledge and

8 ability; that I am neither counsel for,

9 related to, nor employed by any of the

10 parties to the action in which these

11 proceedings were held; and further, that I

12 am not a relative or employee of any

13 attorney or counsel employed by the parties

14 hereto, nor financially or otherwise

15 interested in the outcome of the action.

16 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set

17 my hand this 9th day of May, 2007.

18

19

20

21

22 Kimberly L. Krett

23 Court Reporter and Notary Public

24 Commonwealth of Virginia at Large

25