

April 25, 2025

Howard and Tanya Aldag
8485 Springfield Road
Glenn Dale, Maryland 20769

RE: Stewart Property (SE-22002/AC-23008) Variance

Dear Clerk of the County Council:

This is testimony that will be given by Howard Aldag during the Zoning Hearing for the Stewart Property residential development SE-22002/AC-23008 Variance proposed on Springfield Road, Glenn Dale MD 20769. The 11.94-acre Stewart Property site would be developed as a planned retirement community consisting of 57 single-family attached homes. Please make this testimony a part of the record for the hearing.

I moved to Springfield Road in 1986. It was a wonderful country road with acreage, and everything was green and beautiful. The houses were all on 1 to 10 acres or more. The Stewart's had a horse that was fenced up to Springfield Road. It was a pleasant rural residential atmosphere and a nice place to live. Now, there is construction everywhere and approximately 150 houses are being built right now. Literally there is approximately 50 or more acres of ground being cleared on 3 jobsites, where not a single tree is left standing. These homes have sold very well and some of the construction projects are completely sold out. Now to add this high-density retirement community on top of the present construction it will totally destroy the beautiful place we moved into 38 years ago.

We are here to strongly oppose the Variance request for the Stewart Property. This development as a planned retirement community is out of character with our rural residential neighborhood, and it directly conflicts with the zoning intent of the RR zoning. This Variance should not be approved.

There is no hardship regarding this property. Not once but twice in these zoning hearings it was shown that there are not 12 acres of continuous acreage and there never was 12 acres. According to SDAT, two deeds from 2018 (401916/00567) are associated with 8215 Springfield Road for Assessment Year 2023. Based on those deeds, 8215 Springfield Road is identified, in relevant part, as tax map 28 and parcel 131. SDAT indicates that the legal description for "all" of parcel 131 consists of only 10 acres of land that was recombined with another deed on July 1, 2010. SDAT also indicates the property land area for parcel 131 is 11.94 acres - i.e. - more than 10 acres but less than 12 acres. SDAT further indicates that for Assessment year 2023, 8215 Springfield Road, was identified as Map 28 and Parcel 131, was not land assessed as containing 12 or more acres.

Mark Ferguson, land planner for Applicant, testified that the subject property would be less than 12 acres when the prescriptive easement is conveyed out of Parcel 131 as defined by SDAT. Then Steven Jones, land surveyor for Applicant, testified that the prescriptive easement, approximately 3,524 sf was conveyed in one of the deeds provided in the record - which when

deducted - results in a legal description of the property area - as defined by SDAT – being only 11.83 acres – less than at least 12 contiguous acres required for a Planned Retirement Community use. (12/20/2023, Tr., pp 25-26) ZHE Exhibits at 782/Exhibit 107.

Thus, the Stewart's and Developer knew several years before submitting the Special Exception to the Zoning Board that there was not 12 acres of contiguous land. They thought that it was so close that the Special Exception would be approved, and the project and the size of the parcel would not be scrutinized.

Also, finding 12 acres of contiguous land is not unusual or a hardship in this area; for instance, a 12-acre property just became available on Greenbelt Road which would make a much better site and location for a planned retirement community.

In essence, they tried to pull a fast one on the Zoning board and Community. As you can see there was no hardship plea that would justify granting this Variance. They knew the parcel was too small for the project years before they submitted for the Special Exception.

This Special Exception and Variance will negatively affect the surrounding area and contradicts the spirit of the zoning code. On Springfield Road there has been approximately 150 detached single family homes approved and under construction. There is no commercial, multi family dwellings or office buildings. Springfield Road is just a two-lane rural road with houses on it. To put a retirement community on this road will negatively impact this community and change the rural residential nature of the Springfield Road area. Having single family houses is much different than having a retirement community. There will be 57 attached houses with one entrance, on 11.94 acres that will need to have more services coming into the property such as ambulances, nursing care, wheelchair transportation and other community services that are related to the elderly community. There are no hospitals or shopping centers 2 miles or less from this property as discussed in the zoning requirements, making this property not an appropriate fit for the use. The proposed construction on the Stewart's property is so extensive it is too dense and not compatible with the area. Being that the County has approved the construction of approximately 150 houses, and all the construction is presently going on, the timeline to approve this project has passed. The approved present construction on Springfield Road has already maximized the infrastructure and the volume the roads can handle. This project is not a compatible use and contradicts the spirit of RR zoning. Literally, adding this project to what has already been approved would destroy the urban nature of the immediate and surrounding area.

There is no demonstrable urgent need for this type of housing in the Glenn Dale/Springfield Road marketplace. Presently there are 7 large senior living facilities in and around Bowie/Greenbelt. To name a few of them:

Woodlands at Reid Temple – Glenn Dale MD, 62+ seniors, 252 units

Pin Oak Village – Bowie MD, 55+ seniors, 220 units

Evergreen Senior Community – Bowie MD, 62+ seniors, 108 units

Tribute at Melford – Bowie MD, 55+ seniors, 150 units

The Willows – Bowie MD, 62+ seniors, 79 units

Vistas at Lake Largo – Largo MD, 55+ seniors, 111 units

Manor at Victoria Park – Temple Hills MD, 55+ seniors, 148 units

Presently there are 1,068 Units for 55 to 65+ senior living, with literally 100s of available units.

In and near Bowie there are 52 independent Assisted Living facilities.

In and near Greenbelt there are approximately 199 assisted living facilities.

Presently there are approximately 251 independent Assisted Living Facilities all around and near the Bowie/Greenbelt area. These Assisted Living Facilities also provide senior living accommodations.

TRAFFIC - Each housing unit has a 2-car driveway, and in the published Bowie demographics the average household in Bowie has 2 vehicles. Thus, we are looking at approximately 114 cars that would be added to the overused Springfield Road. Finally, this project has only one entrance for ingress and egress which is not sufficient in handling the coming and going traffic of this subdivision. There would be an unacceptable traffic jam inside the project subdivision and on Springfield Road every day.

This development is supposed to be a planned retirement community. Per the Bowie MD demographics the average age of retirement is 65 years of age. This project is for 55+ years of age which means the occupants may have an additional 10 years of working after purchasing a home in this subdivision. That means the traffic in the rush time periods would be similar to other houses in the immediate area and would not have a greatly diminished traffic load as was portrayed by the retirement community developer.

This project was designed to maximize revenue not functionality and does not take into account it's negative impact on the immediate area.

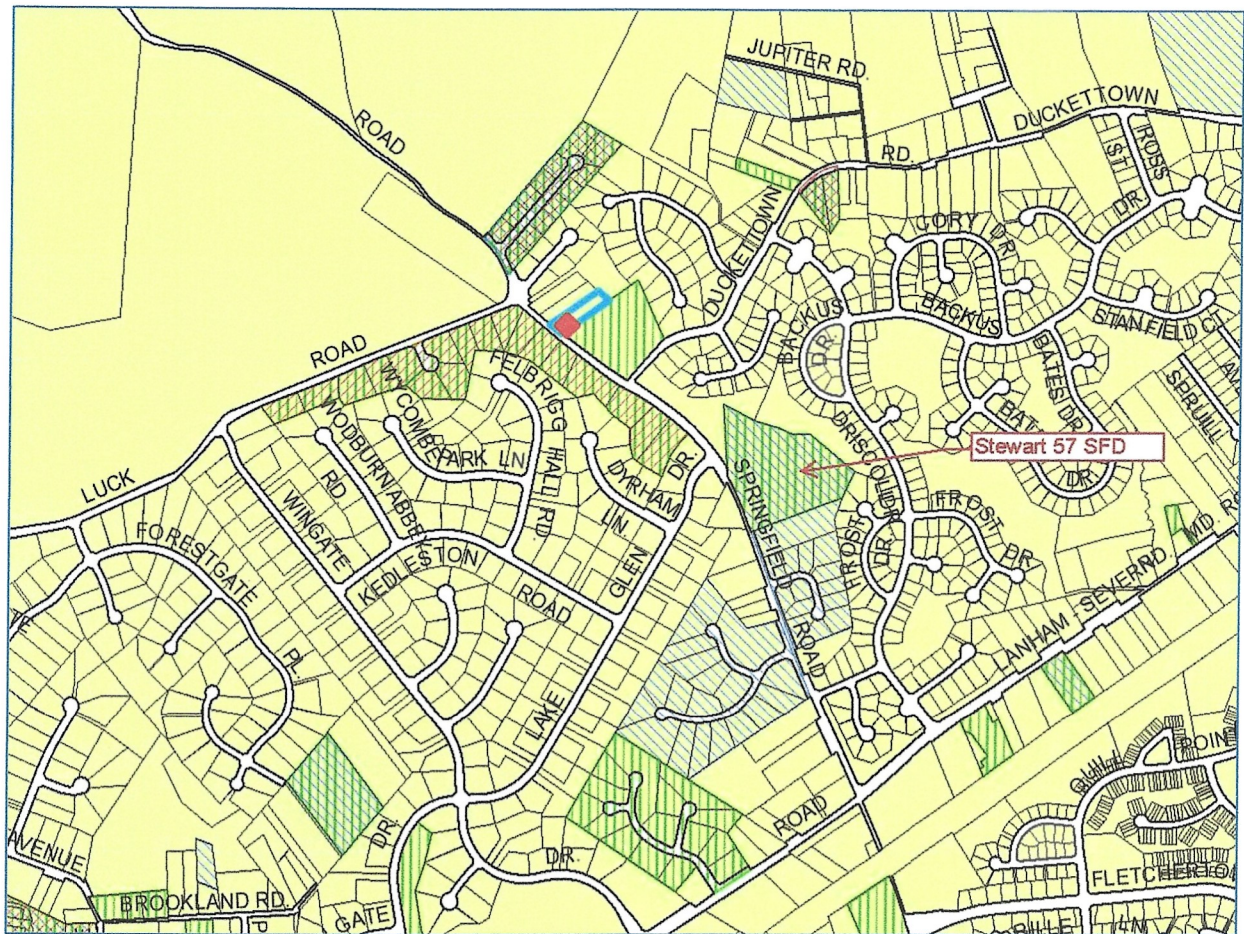
The traffic concerns of our neighbors include:

- There is substantial cut-through traffic from the USDA Beltsville Agricultural Research Center,
- The current traffic volume is such that it is difficult to safely turn onto Springfield Road from driveways and intersecting residential streets,
- Area residents experience substantial delay in turning from:
 - Driveways onto Springfield Road, and from
 - Stop-sign controlled intersections such as:
 - Springfield Road-Lanham Severn Road,
 - Springfield Road-Lake Glen Drive, and at
 - Good Luck Road-Springfield Road.
 - And when turning from Springfield Road onto Lanham-Severn Road

- Personally, I need to plan an extra 10 minutes to get out of my driveway. (8485 Springfield Road)

I believe that these concerns are valid and could be exacerbated by the traffic from the Stewart's Property plus other future developments affecting Springfield Road. This added traffic could lead to significant safety concerns and delay everyone owning property abutting Springfield Road.

The map on the next page is from [PGAtlas](#) and shows that the Stewart Property is one of a number of development projects proposed for the area as indicated by the hatching.



Unfortunately, it appears Stewart Property trip generation falls below the threshold for a full Traffic Impact Study (TIS). There is presently approximately 150 home not including this proposed retirement community that are under construction or proposed on/around Springfield Road. It is likely that other developments under construction or proposed for the Springfield Road area may also fall below the TIS threshold. As a result, an assessment of the cumulative impacts of existing and future traffic volume does not appear to exist. Already, the traffic volume on Springfield Road is too much for the two-lane road.

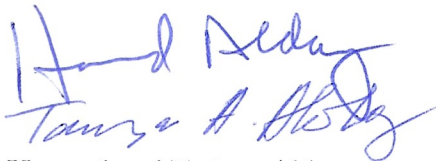
also fall below the TIS threshold. As a result, an assessment of the cumulative impacts of existing and future traffic volume does not appear to exist. Already, the traffic volume on Springfield Road is too much for the two-lane road.

I recommend that the Zoning Hearing Examiner deny this Variance; because this project has **environmental issues**, is **too high of a density of housing for a rural residential area**, and **not compatible with surrounding housing** units, it is demonstrated that there is no urgent need for this retirement community, will increase the amount of traffic on Springfield Road, and is a dysfunctional community layout. This project will diminish the area for every resident if it is allowed to proceed.

I want to be clear that my wife and I do not support this Variance. This use is not compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, a planned retirement community is not an appropriate land use on Springfield Road. This use is just a way to have almost 3 to 5 times the density of use on this piece of land using a Variance so that the developer may obtain a Special Exception to do it.

This is not an acceptable project for the surrounding residents and will change the Springfield Road area forever. This Variance should not be approved.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Howard Aldag" on the top line and "Tatjana A. Aldag" on the bottom line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Howard and Tatjana Aldag