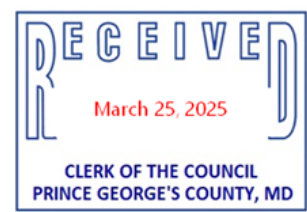


March 25, 2025
Re: Please **DISAPPROVE DSP-22001**



Dear Chair Burroughs, Vice Chair Oriadha, D2 Councilor Fisher, at-large councilor Hawkins, and council members,

Thank you for your service to Prince George's County. I appreciate your reconsideration of DSP-22001. I am a Person of Record and am sending testimony as I am unable to miss work to testify in person on April 1. Everything in this testimony is in the Record, as it reflects my prior and most recent testimony to the Planning Board.

As a Hyattsville resident who regularly drives, bikes and runs near the proposed McDonald's drive through in DSP-20001, I am writing to ask that you disapprove DSP-22001. It would have unacceptable negative impacts on public safety, related specifically to an increased risk of crashes that particularly affect vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists, such that approval would be counter to the purposes of the zoning ordinance. I understand that the DSP does not consider such externalities. However, as the proposed development has not been subject to prior review phases that consider such factors, the District Council must recognize this fault in the process and consider them now to align with County law.

Adjacent Roadway and Zoning Ordinance

(photos and video [here](#) and below, all taken 9/23 ~1:30 PM)

Site observations and crash data indicate the roadway along the site has a disproportionate number of crashes, as detailed below, and is prone to traffic jams that compromise level of service and increase crash risk. The site is within the watershed of two elementary schools, next to three bus stops that serve high-volume routes and surrounded by dense residential areas, making the site a high-pedestrian location and desirable bike commuting route. Section 27-102 of the Zoning Ordinance states that its purposes include: ***"To protect and promote the health, safety, morals, comfort, convenience, and welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the County"*** and ***"to lessen the danger and congestion of traffic on the streets, and to insure the continued usefulness of all elements of the transportation system for their planned functions."*** The Applicant has not provided evidence that the Proposed Development meets these purposes, other than a cursory analysis of impacts on level of service.

Crash Data and Increased Crash Risks

The proposed drive-through will exacerbate road safety issues and increase the risk of crashes, especially for vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians, because it will bring increased traffic to a section of a high-volume arterial (Westbound East West Highway/410) that lies between intersections with two other high-volume arterials (MD 212/Riggs and Ager Road). (Note: while the site address is 6565 Ager, it fronts East West Highway/410 and SHA's ["Know Your Roads"](#) Map and County Road map indicate SHA owns and maintains the road in front of the proposed development. Ager and East West/410 overlap along the site, with Ager running south of and parallel to East West Highway/410 from 19th Place to Tuckermann and the proposed development sitting on the north side of East West Highway/410.)

Maryland State Police [Crash data](#) for approved crash reports indicate that, ***from 2021-2023, there were 176 crashes within 800 feet (0.15 miles) of the site***, a conservative radius that extends just past the intersections of East West Highway/410 with Riggs/212 and Ager (Figure 1). ***Of these crashes, three were***

fatalities, all of which were pedestrians, and 25 were injury crashes, two of which were pedestrians (Figure 2). If we zoom out one-half mile from the site, it is visually apparent that the development lies in a local hotspot for crashes (Figure 3). This is a chronic, long-term issue: considering the most vulnerable road users - pedestrians and cyclists - there were three pedestrian fatalities, and additional bike and pedestrian injury crashes within one-quarter mile of the site from 2018-2021 (Figure 4).

Pedestrians regularly cross East West Highway between signalized intersections (Riggs/212 and Ager) to access bus stops, the shopping center and their homes across the street, as they would have to walk up to ¼ mile if using the intersections to cross the road (see photo and Figure 5). The increased traffic, including illegal U-turns, traffic crossing multiple lanes will increase the risk of crashes.



Westbound East West Highway/410 (oriented Northwest bound along development site) has a ***high volume of drivers rapidly crossing lanes*** between its intersections with Ager and Riggs in order to move from one road to another, which is already precarious for drivers (e.g., Ager

westbound to 212 northbound, 410 westbound to Riggs southbound, 410 eastbound turning left to remain on 410 or veering right to take Ager). There is an unsignalized mid-block turn lane where drivers make left turns onto 19th place or u-turns to Eastbound East West/410, often backing up as they wait for a break in oncoming traffic (see photo). There is a red light camera at 410 westbound where Ager merges with it, just before the entry for McDonald's, given repeated



illegal right turns on red. The proposed development would add high-volume drive through traffic entering and exiting the drive through just past the merger, ***increasing the risk of crashes***. The driveway into McDonald's is quite steep, forcing cars entering the proposed development to slow down suddenly, exacerbating current backups (see photo) and the risk of rear end crashes (video [here](#)).

Pedestrians who cross mid-block dart among this erratic traffic and ***will be at greater risk*** with more cars in more erratic traffic patterns. Finally, it is likely that more drivers will use the left turn cutout, which already experiences backups, to make u-turns onto Eastbound East West Highway/410, increasing the risk of rear end crashes or crashes with Westbound drivers (see [video](#)).



Eastbound East West Highway/410 (Southeast bound along development site): While DSP 20001 states that drivers will be able to make only right turns in and out of the site (to and from East West Highway westbound), it is certain that eastbound East West Highway/410 drivers who plan to walk into the McDonald's will use an existing left turn cutout for the adjacent shopping center buildings on East West Highway/410 eastbound. Such drivers would cross three lanes of busy, rapidly moving and lane-changing westbound traffic to park in the adjacent area of the shopping center, and run into the McDonald's. During morning and evening meal times on weekdays in particular, drivers that are waiting to turn left at this cutout already have a very precarious route because westbound East West Highway becomes backed up from Ager to 212 (Riggs). Adding a high-volume drive through will make the situation even more dangerous for all road users, especially for those waiting at or walking to the bus stop in front of the site, and pedestrians who cross mid block to avoid walking up to 0.25 mile to access the shopping center from across the street. Additionally, drivers on eastbound East West Highway/410 already make illegal u-turns where East West Highway/410 meets Ager, which requires a very tight turn, and it is certain more drivers will do so to access the McDonald's (see photo above).



Given the above issues, please disapprove DSP-22001 on account of the increased safety risks and congestion it will bring to a road segment that is already prone to ongoing slowdowns and is a hotspot for vehicular crashes, unfortunately including vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Figure 1: Crashes 0.15 miles (800) feet from DSP-22001 site, 2001-23 ([MD State Police](#))

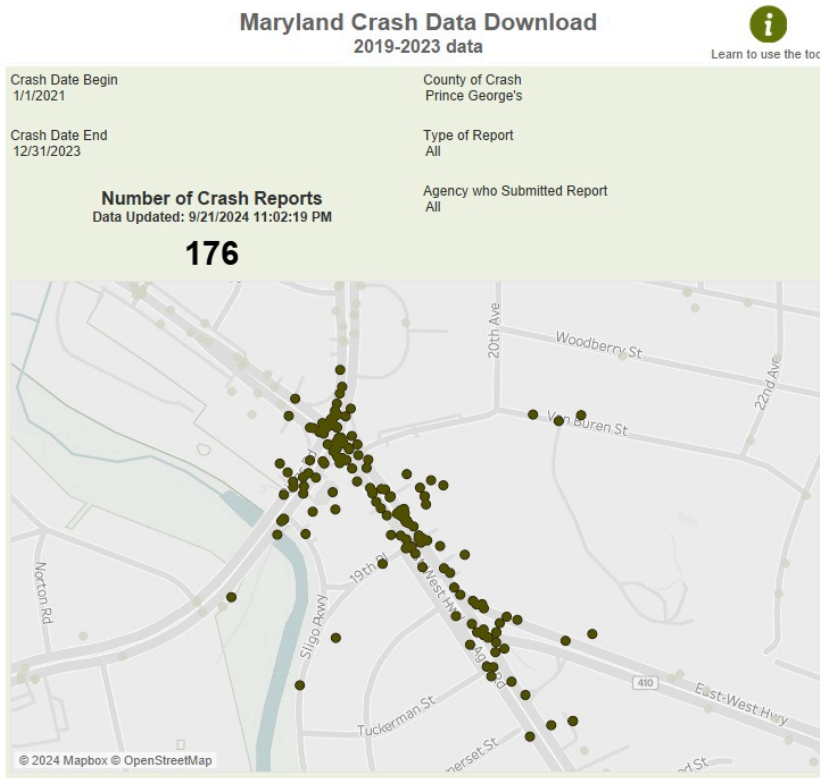


Figure 2: Crashes 0.15 miles (800 feet) from DSP-22001 site, 2001-23 ([MD State Police](#))

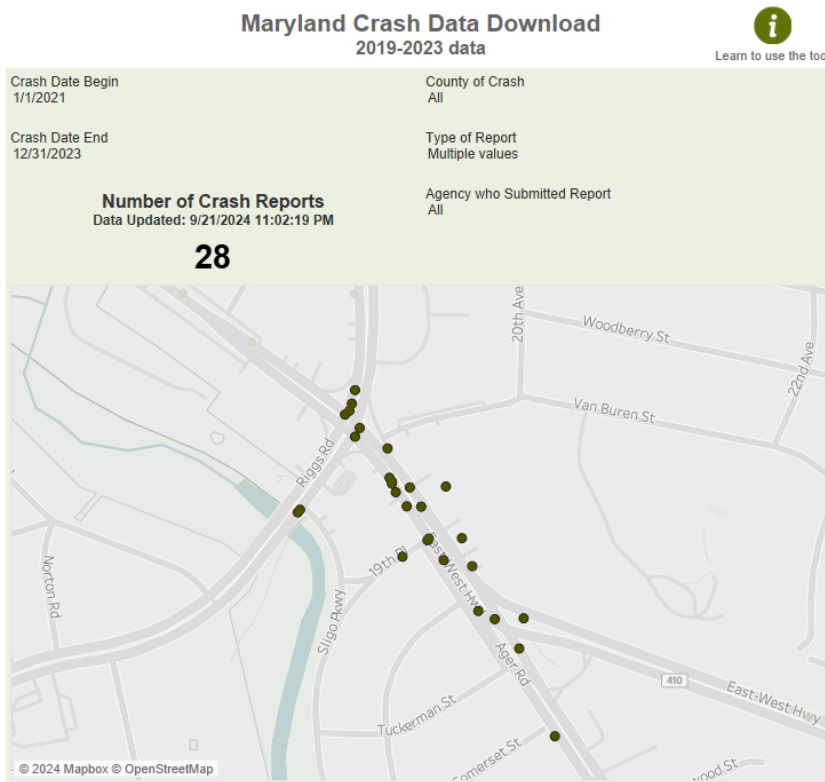


Figure 3: Crashes 0.5 miles (5,280) feet from DSP-22001 site, 2001-23 ([MD State Police](#))

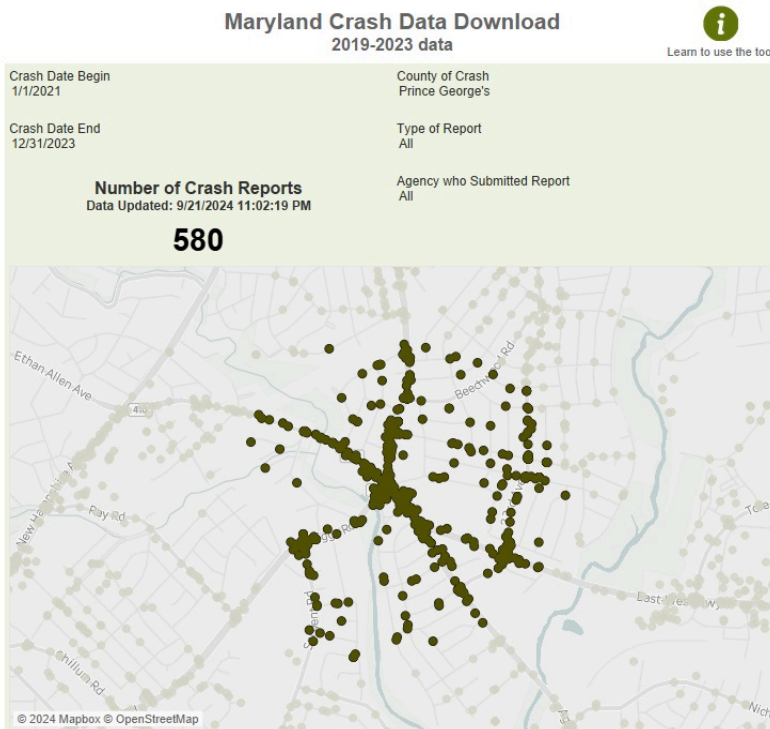
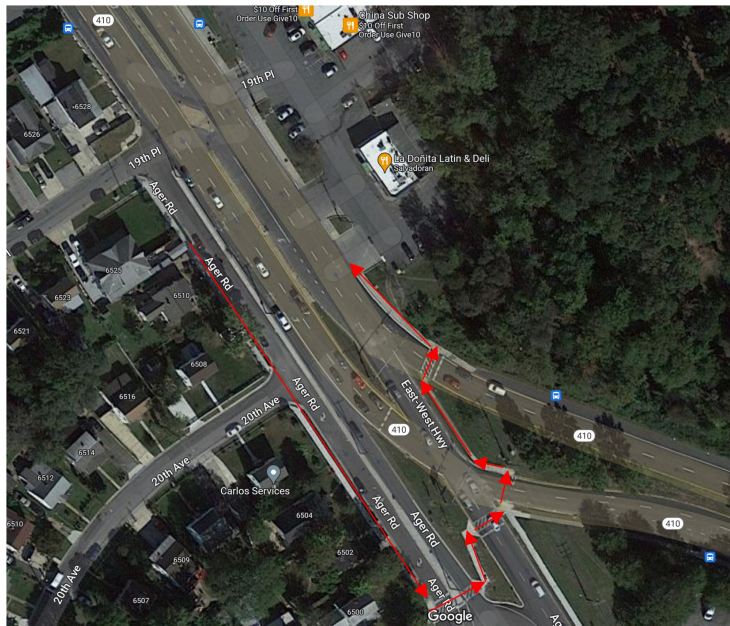


Figure 4: Motor vehicle crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists, 0.25 mile from DSP-22001, 2018-21 (MD State Open Data, created by Dan Behrend)



Figure 5: Pedestrian crossing route using signalized crosswalks at Ager and East West Intersection



Please disapprove DSP-22001, AC-23071 and DDS-23001 based on substantial impacts on road safety, especially for vulnerable users.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Melissa A Schweisguth

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