



Dear Members of the Board,

I am writing to you as a concerned neighbor and in my capacity as Vice President of the South Laurel Civic Association, a group committed to preserving the rural residential character of our community. I wish to express our collective deep concerns and opposition to the proposed development at 11801 Laurel-Bowie Road.

The proposed construction of a 6400 square foot temple, a 32-foot statue, and an accompanying asphalt parking lot, are unreasonable, incongruous with our community's character, and appear to violate local zoning regulations in rural residential areas. Such expansive development disrupts the peaceful and natural beauty that our neighborhood has cherished and worked hard to maintain over the years.

Moreover, the current occupants have demonstrated an alarming disregard for regulations and the rights of their neighbors. They constructed a much larger addition to the house than their building permit allowed for. They have deforested the property without county approval, causing significant environmental impact.

Our community is directly adjacent to Patuxent Research Refuge, a critical habitat for migratory birds. This proximity to the preserve not only adds to the natural beauty and tranquility of our area but also strengthens our commitment to preserving its rural residential character. The proposed development and the increased human activity it would bring present serious environmental concerns.

The deforestation already undertaken and subsequent flooding not only negatively affect our properties, but also have potential detrimental impacts on the ecological balance of the preserve. Increased noise and light pollution, potential habitat loss, and the disturbance of wildlife — including migratory birds the preserve is designed to protect — contradict the principles of stewardship for areas of natural importance.

The resulting increase in flooding on downhill properties and burgeoning mosquito populations have hampered the reasonable use and enjoyment of our properties and community, raising serious health and safety concerns, as well as damaging our real property.

There have also been instances of boundary encroachments, with activities extending onto property of members of our community, as confirmed by a professional survey. Members of the 11801 property removed the stakes placed by a licensed land surveyor of Maryland without legal authority. This brazen disregard for established property boundaries further illustrates the disruptive and damaging actions taken by the occupants.

Further exacerbating the situation, the influx of visitors to the property has led to a significant increase in traffic, both within our neighborhood and on the main road leading to it. This road, particularly the northbound stretch, has already been the site of numerous accidents and at least one fatality. Such an increase in traffic, combined with

parking behavior that blocks access routes, is creating a dangerous situation for everyone involved.

There have been instances where vehicles associated with the property have parked in such a manner that they significantly narrow the entrance to our neighborhood, rendering it inadequate for vehicular access, particularly for emergency vehicles. Furthermore, vehicles have also been parked on private property and have blocked a fire hydrant adjacent to my land, thereby violating traffic and safety regulations and potentially endangering lives and property in case of an emergency.

Lastly, the continual excessive noise levels exceeding a reasonable volume represent a clear violation of local noise control ordinances. Our community's quiet and peaceful environment has been repeatedly infringed upon, causing distress and discomfort among our residents, diminishing our ability to enjoy our properties. Often disrupting the ability to rest and recuperate where we live.

In my role as Vice President of the South Laurel Civic Association, I am duty-bound to advocate for the interests and wellbeing of our community members. I therefore implore the committee to consider the negative ramifications this proposed development would impose on our community. We trust in your commitment to upholding the zoning regulations designed to protect and preserve the integrity of our neighborhood and the rights of its residents and neighboring communities.

Thank you for your time and attention. We are confident that our concerns will be duly noted and given careful consideration in your decision-making process.

Sincerely,
Gabrielle Masten
Vice President,
South Laurel Civic Association