

ANNAPOLIS NECK PENINSULA FEDERATION
EASTPORT CIVIC ASSOCIATION

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(via email)

re: Traffic Impact Studies - Chesapeake Grove and Other Studies

Dear Pete and Sally,

We are leaders of local civic organizations whose members, reflecting the general public, express considerable concern over current traffic congestion and proposals for future development. As you know, the public's concerns about traffic congestion were clearly expressed in the first community survey conducted for the Forest Drive/Eastport Sector Study. Traffic was cited as the "most important area to focus on" and what respondents "most dislike about the study area". The assumptions and methods used in preparing planning documents, including the Sector Study and guidelines for traffic impact studies, are critical to Annapolis' continued attractiveness as a place to live or visit.

Although this letter is focused on our immediate concerns with the Revised Traffic Impact Study completed in October 2017 ("**TIS**") for the Chesapeake Grove (a/k/a the Rodgers Property), some of the issues identified are also germane to the work being done currently on the Sector Study. These TIS' issues point to the guidelines and standards of analysis we respectfully ask the City to consider including in current and future traffic analyses.

Our concerns arise because the Chesapeake Grove TIS, as have earlier TISes, reveals numerous movements with failing levels of service (E or F) at many key intersections in the existing, background, and future condition results. Considering that this TIS does not include in its' analysis any future developments other than those already

finally approved, it seems to us that future conditions could be very much of an issue if only a portion of the developments being discussed move to development. This is true even if some of the larger developments are scaled back from initial proposals.

To assist us, your responses to the following questions would be greatly appreciated.

1) Annapolis' Policies and Guidelines For Traffic Impact Analysis for Proposed Development in the City of Annapolis ("the Guidelines") form the basis of how developers must complete traffic impact assessments. As you know, these Guidelines are expressly incorporated into the adequate public facility ordinance at 22.21.010. Is it the City's position that all traffic impact studies, when required, must adhere to these Guidelines? If not, under what circumstances and through what procedures is the City allowing a revised approach to conduct a traffic impact study?

2) The TIS on page 1 refers to the contractor being provided the "methods of analysis, study time periods, etc." Can we be provided with a copy of these methods of analysis provided to Traffic Concepts and the developer when conducting the TIS?

3) Page 8 of the Guidelines provides the methodology for conducting traffic volume counts. This requires "average three to seven day machine counts to determine daily and peak volumes" among other requirements. The TIS includes the traffic counts in Appendix II (starting on page 60 of the PDF file).

The first two pages in Appendix II show counts for the Forest/Spa intersection. These appear to be manual counts and done only on two separate days. Is this correct? If so, why weren't average three to seven day machine counts required at each intersection?

Also, can we get actual physical copies of any traffic counts and associated reports completed for this TIS or the Forest Drive/Eastport Sector Study?

4) Page 3 of the TIS notes that "basic traffic signal and intersection design parameters were supplied by Anne Arundel County or gathered during our field investigation." Later in the TIS, on pages 5 and 22, it appears that 120 second traffic signal cycle times may have been used to run the modeling. Can we get copies of the "basic traffic signal and intersection design parameters" that were supplied by Anne Arundel County?

Also, can you confirm if 120 second cycle times were used to run the models in this TIS? If so, why was 120 seconds used when the Traffic Concepts Forest Drive

corridor model analysis completed in September 2015 notes it was using the 140 second cycle time at peak times as requested by Anne Arundel County along the corridor?

We ask this also because Anne Arundel County Traffic Engineering staff confirmed in December 2017 that the following cycle times are actually in use on Forest Drive:

Forest Drive Signal Cycle Times

06:15-09:00 140 sec
09:00-15:00 120 sec
15:00-19:30 140 sec
19:30-21:00 120 sec
21:00-06:50 120 sec (running free)

With this backdrop, we respectfully request that the TIS modeling be rerun using a 140 second cycle times. This may cause material differences in outcomes.

5) On page 5 of the TIS, Traffic Concepts notes that “The City of Annapolis traffic impact study guidelines require that the overall intersection operate at an acceptable “D” or better level of service to determine adequacy.”

Is this the City’s position such that failing individual movements at an intersection can be ignored and no improvements or mitigation will be required? We ask this because the Guidelines on page 4 require that existing conditions be assessed “for each movement.”

Moreover, on page 14 of the Guidelines assessing mandatory intersection mitigation or improvements it is stated that “Improvements are required if the roadway, the intersection, and/or a particular movement will operate below [level of service] D or worse with the proposed development.”

6) It appears in the TIS that the City is merely requiring that new background developments be built in to the TIS only if they are already approved by the City or County. For example, no traffic from potential growth from an Eastport Shopping center development or expansion at the Watergate apartments is assumed. A list of projects “in the pipeline” is attached.

Including in background developments only already approved projects concerns us

because the Future Condition as shown on page 21, even without including any proposed but not yet approved development, shows many individual movements failing. Indeed, the overall Forest Drive intersection is already failing in the PM rush hour under this TIS, with no “pipeline” development built in.

Is it possible to have Traffic Concepts run this TIS and build in varying amounts of development from the “pipeline” list? What would be the costs of this effort? It seems such a cost can be shared by the City, County and the State as all have roadways affected along this corridor. Spa Road is a State highway at the Forest Drive intersection. Obviously, this effort should be a City project and/or part of the Forest Drive sector study effort and not a cost of just the Chesapeake Grove developer.

We understand the Forest Drive sector study traffic study is looking more at various land use options as opposed to assessing levels of service. However, the entire Annapolis framework under the Guidelines for assessing traffic impacts is based on changes in the level of service. As such, it seems prudent for adequate planning to understand the traffic impacts of various levels of development being approved from the “pipeline” list as part of the sector study effort or otherwise.

7) On page 22, the TIS concludes that “side road approaches will not double-cycle and will experience acceptable delays.” We suggest that staff visit the Spa Road/Forest Drive intersection during the morning rush and do some measuring. Driver’s heading north on Spa are already experiencing double-cycles with the current conditions. It would seem to be the logic of this TIS, therefore, that the current delays at Spa Road/Forest Drive intersection are unacceptable.

8) In the conclusion section on page 27 there is an analysis of how changing green time at the various movements on Spa Road can help to eliminate the overall failure of the Spa Road/Forest Drive intersection. Have the suggestions for changing how this intersection operates been reviewed with the County and the State? If so, is the County or State amenable and can documents related to that discussion be made available for review?

We note, again, that the intersection's predicted failure occurs without considering any “pipeline” development, including the large development proposed at the Masque Farm (Crystal Spring) site.

We look forward to your response and thank you, in advance, for your efforts to

respond to our concerns.

Sincerely,

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s/Victor Pascoe
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cc: Mayor Gavin Buckley
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Robert Waldman, Chair, Planning Commission
David DiQuinzio, Member, Planning Commission
Dr. Eleanor Harris, Member, Planning Commission
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Attachments:

22.21.010_Traffic_impact_analysis
City Guidelines for Traffic Impact Analysis 2015
2017-10 Chesapeake Grove Rodgers Property TIS
Cycle Times - Forest Drive AA County
List of Annapolis Developments