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Kentlands is one of the first, and probably the best known, of the archetypal towns and villages of country and city which are designed by architects who actually plan, not just buildings, but entire communities and the towns in which they exist. Lakelands is a similar, adjacent, community with a character of its own.

Editorial

The County's Plans from Lakelands' Point of View

A Lakelands resident wrote a letter to the *Kentlands Town Crier* in the July issue stating a position that the Lakelands community has different concerns from the Kentlands community and therefore is not opposed to the County's plans for taking over the G. E. Tech Park. We (Maryland 20878[®]) feel that this is a very important letter and wish to commend the writer for taking the time and initiative to express this viewpoint.

We also feel, however, that there are several misconceptions that those who endorse this position need to consider. One is the statement that there have been after-hours problems at Lakelands Park and Billy's Playground, and the extra police presence would be welcomed. Captain Christopher Bonvillain of the Gaithersburg police department told us that there would be no extra police presence as a result of the county's plans. In addition, six of the police personnel located in the proposed facility would be doing desk work and would leave as soon as their duties were concluded.

It stands to reason that since members of the police force have specific assignments, they would not be likely to be able to spend time around the local parks.

A very important point that the writer made was:

I and many other Lakelands residents have been waiting for five years for someone to come up with a reasonable plan for that parcel that would make good use of the campus, preserve the environmental open spaces, leave the school system unaffected, and prevent the added congestion that would result from turning that spot into a residential development area.

The concern that the services may be disrupted, especially the school system, with over-crowding is an extremely serious one as is the concern for the environmental open spaces, and congestion.

Unfortunately, the county's original plans would be likely to create all the problems and many more that Ms. Emami considers in her letter. The county has been planning to put a liquor warehouse and a school lunch facility on that property. The congestion from the liquor warehouse and the school lunches being distributed from the cite would likely be far worse than what would result from a residential development. In addition, while the county seems to feel that it is exempt from laws that preclude the proximity of a liquor facility to a school, we feel that their putting themselves above the law is a terrible precedent in all kinds of ways.

Worse yet, in terms of congestion, in the county's January 7, 2008, presentation at the city Mayor and Council meeting, they outlined plans for a helipad at that location. This would be a far greater problem than any congestion seen or foreseen so far in the area [see our editorial [County Plans Threaten 20878 Area](#)]. While the county has backed down from this damaging proposal, the county representatives constantly state that they will make no binding agreements because they don't wish to encumber future county governments. There goes Ms. Emami's very sensible requirement for "firm commitments regarding their plans for development."

The most reasonable yet ironic part of the letter is a statement that would certainly seem to be logically true: "... from a political point of view the County is much more likely to be responsive to the residents' needs than a commercial developer." Most regrettably, the county has been extremely unresponsive to it's constituency. Read the Day Laborers issue as reported in depth at www.gaithersblog.net and in particular, read Gaithersblog's current page on these G. E. Tech Park county plans.

Unlike the county, the City of Gaithersburg has had a good record for being responsive to its citizens. They cannot force the county to do anything, but they can force a developer to obey the laws and be responsive to the community.

Logically, it is nearly impossible for something to be good for Kentlands and bad for Lakelands. The residents go to the same schools. If the schools become too crowded for Lakelands kids, they will also be too crowded for Kentlands kids. Kentlands residents use the same roads and same public transportation that Lakelands residents use. We implore our Lakelands residents to consider the information and re-examine their position.

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