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## Testimony at January 22, 2019 Public Hearing on Proposed Amendments to the Public School Capacity Test of the Adequate Public Facilities Standards

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Good evening Mayor Newton, City councilmembers, and fellow City of Rockville residents. My name is Marissa Valeri, and I am the current president of the Twinbrook Community Association, the officially recognized community organization for the Twinbrook neighborhood. As the Twinbrook community will be directly impacted by the loss of economic development opportunities, it is my privilege to testify before you today.

**Our message to you is this: Invest in Twinbrook.** Invest in our community, our small businesses, new economic opportunities, our public school students, and in our community - young, old, new residents and lifelong residents alike.

We support **any** solution that allows for economic development around Twinbrook Metro to move forward without delay, to ensure that we are afforded the same economic opportunities as the rest of the City.

The Twinbrook community is a vibrant and diverse community, and many of us are working families just trying to provide the best we can for our family and loved ones. We are in need of good jobs, affordable housing, and a connection to the rest of the city across the railroad tracks.

The current champion project would be a significant investment in our community - one that we have, quite frankly, not seen in recent history. It would literally build a bridge between our neighborhood and Rockville Pike, and provide amenities such as affordable housing, greenspace, a dog park, and retail options. Many of our fellow Rockville residents in other neighborhoods already enjoy these community resources.

**Housing is a critically important issue in Twinbrook.** The lack of affordable multifamily housing leaves many families without any real options. Our transit-oriented location – with easy access to the Twinbrook Metro, Rockville Pike, Veirs Mill Road, Metrobus Q series and various RideOn bus routes – increases the demand for affordable housing without any increase in supply to compensate. Many houses have become de facto multifamily within the Twinbrook neighborhood due to a lack of affordable housing options for working families. With an increase in housing near Twinbrook Metro, our community will be able to provide affordable workforce housing that is currently severely lacking.

**Twinbrook is very concerned about the environmental impact of any new development.** We are therefore very excited that the champion project around Twinbrook Metro will result in significantly improved stormwater management. The current development is a sea of asphalt that is 97% impervious - with approximately 50 trees on 18 acres. Runoff from Rockville Pike conveys polluted stormwater through Twinbrook's namesake network of streams, and eventually contributes to pollution of the Chesapeake Bay

watershed. This is not the legacy we should leave behind to future generations, and so we are happy that a new development will go a long way towards keeping our brooks free from pollution.

**We value our local public schools in Twinbrook.** I have a son who currently attends Twinbrook Elementary School, and will soon be headed to Julius West Middle School. I want the best possible education for him, for his classmates, and for generations of classes yet to come. City of Rockville officials have an absolute obligation, in light of the APFS discussion, to immediately increase their advocacy for Rockville public schools with MCPS and Montgomery County government officials. We reject the false choice which pits our economic opportunities against our public school children's' education.

We know that the City of Rockville has no legislative authority over the funding of public schools or school boundary issues within city limits, but can advocate on behalf of our public school students. **We urge you to do so immediately.**

Too often, our public school students in Twinbrook become bargaining chips as other jurisdictions seek to diversify their student population or attempt to control their own school capacity issues. **Enough is enough.**

We look to the Mayor and City councilmembers to advocate on behalf of our students each and every day - not just within the context of the discussion of APFS. We look to the Montgomery County Board of Education for leadership, and we ask that all elected officials prioritize needed school renovations and expansions in our public schools. This will go a long way towards ensuring that we are not at overcapacity, and our children de

We believe that the city needs to revisit the APFO and its APFS in its entirety to determine if is working against the stated obligations regarding access to community amenities, environmental benefits, affordable housing, and economic development. However, this should not be done at the cost of economic development and opportunity in Twinbrook.

**The Rockville City Council must find an immediate solution to issues that may prevent economic development around Twinbrook Metro.** Twinbrook deserves nothing less.

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