

Good morning / afternoon everyone!! My name is Donna Shriner and my husband, Dennis Kane, and I live on Brown Street ... lower Brown Street to be exact ... and we are very much in favor of a shared use pathway from the end of Brown Street to Crabbs Branch Way. So much so that the possibility of a shared use path, as described in the annexation agreement for Brown Street extended and as included in the Town of Washington Grove Master Plan at the time we bought, was a contributing factor in our purchase of 503 Brown Street in October 2012. This was to be our “forever home” and the shared use path was part of our “aging in place” strategy.

A bit of history ... we moved to Washington Grove from Tildenwood, a community of 33 townhomes on the south side of Montrose Road between 270 and 355. Our southern border was forested when we bought in 1999; but, is now the Montrose Parkway.

When the county began construction of the Parkway, they came to our community and offered us a safe connection from our community to the shared use path that would be constructed as part of the Montrose Parkway project. The path would be at their expense and would cross mostly their land.

Of the 33 townhomes, I believe we were the only one strongly in favor of accepting the county’s offer. The president of the HOA at the time was strongly opposed to the connection, pretty much cut off discussion of the offer at our annual HOA meeting, and refused the county’s offer on our community’s behalf. Flash forward 15 years. Almost all of the 33 townhomes have turned over ... the population is younger now ... more interested in connections ... more open to the communities surrounding them. And one of the first questions they routinely ask is whether the community could build a safer way to get down the embankment to the shared use path. As mentioned, that pathway would need to utilize county lands ... and the county is no longer interested in funding, or even allowing, the connection. An opportunity forever lost ...

Which brings me back to today ... and our opportunity. Again at county expense. Again largely crossing county land. Again an opportunity in danger of being lost.

As mentioned previously, the potential for a shared use path from the end of Brown Street to Crabbs Branch Way was a significant contributing factor in our decision to purchase our current home on lower Brown Street. With our current health status, it would provide walking access to Giant, to the metro, and even to the super cool BWI commuter bus ... as well as a biking connection to Montgomery County’s extensive bike trail network and, from there, to bike trails throughout the DC metro area. Looking into our uncertain health future, it would also provide access for, say, a motorized scooter, opening up the possibility of continued independent access to grocery shopping at Giant, to health care appointments at Walter Reed, and to events at Strathmore, the Kennedy Center, or the National Zoo ... all of which offer the potential for “aging in place” beyond our ability to walk or drive. And all of which are benefits to current Grove residents ... and selling points for future Grove residents as supported by our prior Tildenwood experience.

Our grateful thanks to the Task Force for their extensive review of the criteria and the options for the shared use pathway. You truly represent the very best of what makes Washington Grove so special. Thank you! - Donna Shriner and Dennis Kane; 503 Brown Street; Washington Grove