#20643, **March 9, 2022,** David Patton testimony (for Friends of the Field, Party in Opposition)
Transportation

Good afternoon, my name is David Patton. I live on 28th St., at the East end of the Rittenhouse Alley, and I'm a transportation planner. My friend Tom Downs and I are here to share some objections to Maret's approach to transportation.

The Maret sports field proposal has received conceptual approval for a new commercial driveway on residential Nebraska Avenue to serve the parking lot. But there are problems with that approval.

The traffic study that underpins that and other decisions was fundamentally flawed. DDOT, and Maret's engineering firm Wells + Associates, failed to account for the long-term closure of major roads nearby, and then used the wrong base year for traffic data. That resulted in estimates of future traffic that are too low and too rosy. Their assessment of safety concerns is also too narrow.

NEXT

Pre-pandemic, Nebraska and Oregon Avenues were a busy commuter route between Maryland and DC. But Oregon has been partially or completely closed since 2016 for major construction. First it was a huge new sewer line. Then Oregon was completely rebuilt and is only now nearing completion. And even though Oregon has been seriously disrupted since 2016, the traffic study used volume data from 2017 – during the closure – and a period of extraordinarily low traffic. Extrapolating those numbers led to unrealistically low future estimates for traffic volumes on Nebraska.

Two other important nearby roads have also been closed for years, compounding the underestimation. Bingham Drive has been closed longer than Oregon. And upper Beach Drive has also been closed, first for reconstruction, then throughout the pandemic, and now may be closed permanently to cars. This diverts even more traffic onto Nebraska. When Oregon Avenue reopens soon, volumes are likely to be 30% higher than they were pre-pandemic, and 2,000 vehicles per day higher than Maret's estimate.

A driveway entrance on a major street with 9500 cars per day and crowds of pedestrians at rush hour demands safety features entirely missing from this project's recommendations. Tom will elaborate on those safety concerns.