



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 872 - Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission - Service in Regional Transit Districts in Prince George's County - Contracts MC/PG 111-23

SPONSOR: Montgomery County Delegation and Prince George's County Delegation

HEARING DATE: March 30, 2023

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 872 - Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission - Service in Regional Transit Districts in Prince George's County - Contracts MC/PG 111-23**, which authorizes the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) to enter into contracts with the District of Columbia or the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority for the construction, maintenance, and operation of a water supply, sewer, or drainage system for certain limited property located within a regional transit district in Prince George's County. The details provided in this bill are very specific and are intended for a Southern Avenue development project that is critical to Prince George's County's economic vitality for this area.

The Southern Avenue project is a shovel ready development consisting of 900+ residential units, approximately 19,000 square feet for grocery stores, and approximately 9,500 square feet for retail space. The primary obstacle now for the project to move forward is that private development property on Southern Avenue is in the WSSC service area but there are no WSSC water or sewer mains in close geographic proximity to the proposed development.

There is a DC Water water main in Southern Avenue adjacent to the site and a DC Water sewer main nearby in Southern Avenue. The applicant has requested connections to the DC Water mains since they are closer to the site.

In order to connect to the DC Water system, an agreement between WSSC Water and DC Water would be needed. A separate agreement between WSSC Water and

the developer would also be needed. These agreements would need to address items such as billing, maintenance, handling of customer complaints, etc. Without this mandate, WSSC cannot enter into an agreement of this type with the developer.

If connection to WSSC water and sewer mains is required, then costly and lengthy off property water and sewer extensions and off property WSSC easements will be required. A WSSC sewer pumping station and force main may also be required. For two (2) years the property has sought to find a technical solution, with none immediately apparent.

As written in this bill, the location criterion for parcels is very restrictive, limiting application to parcels on Southern Avenue, within one-half mile of an existing metro rail station, and in an area designated as a regional transit district in Plan 2035. Additionally, the project must qualify as an expedited transit-oriented development project under Prince George's County zoning laws, a determination made by the Prince George's County Planning Department. The Office of County Executive is not aware of any project other than the proposed development that could possibly meet all the listed criteria.

WSSC is currently researching a technical solution; however, this solution does not provide a guarantee to the developer or the County of being viable or cost-effective. If a technical solution is identified, the developer would have the ability to move forward with this alternative. If this bill is not enacted, it will potentially prevent the developer from moving forward with a shovel-ready project.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 872** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.