

*Chairperson Sigaty*, and fellow members of the County Council, as you know, I am Ryan Miller, Director of Emergency Management for Howard County. Thank you for recognizing this need *Chairperson Sigaty*, and other members for each co-sponsoring Council Resolution No. 117-2018, which will extend until July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the Declaration of Emergency declared by Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman on May 27, 2018.

As you know, during a declared Emergency, Section 6.104 of the Howard County Code provides certain emergency powers to the County Executive, including the ability to close off streets, control vehicle and pedestrian traffic, and designate zones where use and occupancy of buildings can be restricted. Through the local Emergency Declaration and the associated emergency powers, the County Executive has created a protected area where recovery personnel, business owners, property owners and residents can focus on the tough work of restoring and recovering infrastructure and property. While we have made tremendous progress, the continuation of the Declaration of Emergency would allow the County Executive to continue to exercise his emergency powers. We believe the current situation on Main Street in Ellicott City warrants an extension to provide safety to both 1) those working in the area, as well as 2) the public, who would otherwise be permitted to re-enter the area.

Our first concern is the safety of those who continue to work in the area of lower Main Street; the area hardest hit by the flood. Currently, it is only open to those who are familiar with the conditions and are credentialed to be there. They are working hard every day with the appropriate situational awareness, necessary safety precautions, and with planning and coordination. Those working in the area are able to move about the street without the additional concern of roadway traffic. Without the Declaration of Emergency, roadway travel will return to pre-flood levels with all associated commuter and commercial vehicle traffic starting on July 4<sup>st</sup>.

I should also note that due to the ongoing closure of Ellicott Mills Drive, we will see even more traffic pressure on west Main Street where residents are still actively cleaning out and recovering. Unless the Declaration of Emergency is extended, we believe those currently working in the area will have an increased risk to their safety.

Our second area of concern is for the general public, who will be able to travel by vehicle through all of Main Street, and will also have pedestrian access to any public area not secured with a fence. This could potentially expose them to safety situations for which they are not aware, or prepared. Dumpsters are currently placed strategically along the street and are at times in the travel portion of the roadway as they are quite large and difficult to deploy. These dumpsters present a hazard for vehicles navigating the roadway and can obscure sightlines and the movement of pedestrians. Unless the Declaration of Emergency is extended, we believe those traveling by vehicle and on foot will have an increased risk to their safety.

As an example, this past Friday evening while escorting a FEMA official we stopped our ATV Gator to allow a property owner to step out on the street away from a fenced section of sidewalk to provide direction to a contractor; and on the way back we stopped a second time to allow a business owner to carry heavy buckets of debris across the street.

Council Members, we feel the current conditions on Main Street warrant an extension to the Declaration of Emergency so that the County Executive can continue to protect the health and safety of the public.

I would also now like to give you a high-level overview of what we have accomplished since June 1<sup>st</sup>. When the EOC technically demobilized on June 18<sup>th</sup>, we shifted fully into Recovery Operations to include the hiring of a Recovery Manager, Steve Watts. Mr. Watts will

continue to focus on four main areas of short and medium-term recovery through cross functional teams and meetings, namely:

- Community Planning;
- Safety and Security;
- Health, Housing and Human Services; and
- Economic Recovery

The Office of Emergency Management has also provided the Maryland Emergency Management Agency with all of the necessary information for a Presidential Disaster Declaration Request. The Governor submitted the request, which also includes Baltimore County and Baltimore City, to the President on Monday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. MEMA continues to work with us proactively in anticipation of a Presidential Disaster Declaration and has hosted a Recovery Workshop for us and other jurisdictions affected by major storms that occurred in May. They even brought a recovery-focused FEMA official to visit with us on Friday.

The amount of work done at this point by the Department of Public Works is too extensive to detail in this testimony, but they have now shifted their focus from critical infrastructure stabilization and repair to the larger and more complex projects, such as the replacement of the culvert and roadway at Ellicott Mills Drive and Main Street, the wall failure on Hamilton Street, and the major slope failure on New Cut Road.

Economic Development continues to work closely with businesses as does the Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits and the Howard County Health Department, who have already inspected and authorized the reopening of several restaurants. We can't understate the value of the Department of Community Resource and Services and their Disaster

Assistance Center (DAC). While the DAC is now closed, DCRS and their team of county, community and state partners continue to provide timely and relevant resources. Between their DAC and now, "Virtual DAC"; they have had nearly 300 customer contacts.

Council Members, while an incredible amount of work has been done in just over a month, there is still a lot of recovery activity on lower Main Street. Respectfully, I'd like to ask that you support this resolution so the work can continue at its current pace and so that it can be done safely.

TESTIMONY CR 117-2017 July 2, 2018

JOSEPH RUTTER - OFFICE 8318 FORREST STREET, SUITE 200 ELLICOTT CITY

I am the property owner of 3 buildings on Main Street and Vice president of Linwood center.

I realize that Council action on this resolution is necessary if the road is not opened by midnight, so it is unlikely it will not be approved.

My request on behalf of myself as a property owner and as a representative of Linwood that has the boutique on Old Columbia Pike just above the closed portion of the road is that you continue to work with the administration to get Main Street open to traffic as soon as possible.

Another month of very limited traffic on Main Street would be devastating to merchants who have been able to open and are now able to keep employees working. This includes the Linwood boutique that needs the foot traffic generated by shops on Main Street.

My properties as well as many others are managed by Waverly Real Estate Group. We have been working with tenants to help them get back into their businesses or to help find an alternative location in Ellicott City. Like Taylor properties said last Thursday, if any tenants impacted by the flood damage to their building want out of their lease we will release them even if the lease was initiated after the 2016 flood.

Any assistance in working with the administration to get the section of Main Street open quickly will be appreciated. Perhaps a compromise is to prohibit parking except for owners, tenants and contractors who are working on repairs. Perhaps the road can be closed only on Monday when most businesses are not open or Monday and Tuesday. This could provide a time when the county can come back in and complete its repairs.

Finally, Great progress has been made in completing the emergency repairs. However, do not do like in 2016 when emergency patches like the macadam sidewalk was installed quickly and then 22 months later it was there for the next flood and much of it is again destroyed. Stop the brick and macadam that does not hold up and put back the concrete sidewalks that have held up much better.

I have included a picture of the latest flood that clearly shows why the culverts cannot contain the flood water. This picture shows both the cars and dumpsters in the stream channel along with the split rail fence boards. One of the repairs to parking lot D last week was to replace the split rail fences along the Tiber. Cars float through these fences. We saw that in the last 2 flood events as well as earlier floods of parking lot D. Please get guard rails along the lot D open channel section and get guard rails on lot F before it is ready to open. It is the little improvements like this that do not take two years of study and community meetings before they are put in place.



# Flood Safety and Preparedness

## Catastrophic Flooding Hits Ellicott City, Maryland (PHOTOS)

By Jeffrey Kopman | May 29 2018 05:30 AM EDT | weather.com



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Residents gather by a bridge to look at cars left crumpled in one of the tributaries of the Patapsco River that burst its banks as it channeled through historic Main Street in Ellicott City, Md., Monday, May 28, 2018. Sunday's destructive flooding left

Extreme flooding caused major damage Sunday in Ellicott City, Maryland, washing away vehicles and even some buildings less than 24 months after another catastrophic flood struck the town.

