

Good evening Council Members.

My name is Rob Harding. I've lived in Howard County for 32 years. My wife and I now live in David Yungmann's District, District 5 (very close to the snowball stand on 99). Both my daughters went to Marriott's Ridge High School. Before that, I lived in District 2. In the 90s, I lived in District 4.

I'm a member of the Columbia Patuxent Rotary Club, which does a lot of good charity work in the local community. I've also been on the Science Advisory Board for HCC. All of that is just to say: this is my home; this is my community.

I've worked at W. R. Grace for 35 years. I joined the company right after getting my Ph.D. in Chemistry at Stanford. At Grace, I've mostly worked in R&D in Columbia.

I think that one thing that is causing the concern and emotion around this project is the **misunderstanding** that we are proposing to **burn waste plastic**. We are not. The neighbors are 100% right that burning plastic has harmful health and environmental impacts, and 100% right that a Columbia neighborhood is not the place to do that.

I want to set the record straight....the proposed laboratory pilot plant **will not "burn plastic" of any kind**.

- First, we are not even using **waste** plastic. Our proposed system can't physically take the plastic from one of those blue bins. Our input plastic will be a set of controlled plastics, carefully washed, measured, and sized.
- So it's not "waste plastic" but are we **burning new plastic**? **The answer is still no.**
- The technology we are inventing converts plastic to liquids and gases.
- We will carefully dispose of the liquids with a qualified vendor. These liquids will not enter into our water system in any way.
- The gas product will be a light hydrocarbon gas. We know it can't contain things like PFAS, microplastics, and other heavier chemicals that people have expressed concern about, because it passes through -20 degrees and a water wash before it ever gets to the thermal oxidizer.

- I think the misunderstanding about “**burning**” comes from our proposal to use a Flameless Thermal Oxidizer for the gas products. People may be imagining smoke and soot and other products of incomplete combustion.
- But that’s not true in our case. We will start with simple gas molecules and use the best available control technology, with no flame, to convert them safely into CO₂ and water.
- These Thermal Oxidizers are in use widely around the world and in many Grace sites for more than 30 years.
- Safety concerns generated by comparing our project with commercial refineries that are 300,000 times bigger are unrealistic. We chose this equipment because it has very low emissions, very low hazards, and a very high safety profile.
- The one we propose to use for this project is state-of-the-art, will have automatic shut-off and safety features and will not be used to burn any plastic.

I am here to urge you to vote NO on CB11.

Good evening, Council Members. My name is Scott Purnell. I am a Howard County resident and have lived in Ellicott City in Councilman Yungmann's district for nearly 30 years. My wife and I have raised two children there who are Mt Hebron HS graduates. I have worked for W. R. Grace since 1993, and at the Grace Drive location in Columbia since 1999. In my long tenure, I have held many roles, but am currently Vice President of Research and Development. I hold a PhD degree in chemical engineering, and I supervise a global team of more than 100, 25 of whom are also PhD scientists.

I am here to urge you to vote NO on CB-11-2025.

W. R. Grace is a leader in the industry, and the innovations developed by our team not only provide value to our customers, but also improve the world around us. As examples, Grace was the first to develop additives to reduce SO_x and NO_x from certain refinery gas streams. Grace developed a phthalate-free catalyst for the production of plastics, making them safer for consumers. And we have developed chemistries for pharmaceuticals like COVID tests, vaccines, weight loss medications and many other drugs in your medicine cabinet.

Research by its nature involves trial and error. Early experiments are often conducted at very small scale referred to as "bench scale". Once a product or process shows promise, work moves to an intermediate scale referred to as "pilot scale". This intermediate scale is still 1/1000th or even 1/10000th of the final

commercial size, but allows more reliable information to be gathered about operating conditions, yields, design considerations, etc. Building and operating pilot labs or pilot plants is a best practice and common throughout the industry.

Our researchers have developed an exciting new process that will dramatically improve the ability to recycle post-consumer plastics. Our bench-scale work has shown tremendous promise and now we would like to build and operate a pilot plant to gather more valuable data. If successful, we would commercialize the innovation at our customers' sites throughout the world. The proposed pilot facility, about the size of your kitchen or one-car garage, has been designed by experts using best available technology to ensure safety and regulatory compliance, as the safety of our employees, neighbors, and the environment is our top priority.

Misinformation and blatant falsehoods emanating from those in opposition to our project have led to this...the weaponization of the zoning process, specifically targeting this project and penalizing one company, its employees, and its customers. This is NOT how I understand the process should work.

I urge the council to ignore the false narrative, rely on the facts, and allow my team to continue their work to make the world a better place. VOTE NO on CB-11-2025. Thank you.