

Vienna Woods, Growth in Vienna

AS: When Yeonas was supposed to...

SM: 1952 to '53.

AS: '51 to '61 is the official Vienna Woods time. Then it was East Vienna Woods, West Vienna Woods, and others. So the town itself got big. Then you had just all outside the town. Apartments, too. So your change, you're not just talking about the town becoming more than ten times bigger, you're talking about the area becoming twenty times bigger. Talk about that more. You would've seen the pace of construction in what was farmland, and on top of that tons of new buildings.

SM: Well, number one, we had to go to Clarendon or Washington to buy clothes or anything like that. It's nice to have things closer, but I'd really just like to have it the way it used to be. I'd rather have to go to DC or Clarendon to get my clothes. Well, I still have to go someplace now. Vienna doesn't have anything like that.

CG: How did you get there?

SM: My mother drove. Sometimes, when I got older, and some of my friends wanted to go into DC for the movies or something, we'd take the bus and go in and spend the day and go shopping and see a movie or see a show. But no, I really preferred to not have it so easy to get things than to have it so big. It was really nice when everybody knew everybody and the kids knew everybody knew everybody so they'd behave themselves pretty much. It just took something away as far as I'm concerned when we had so many more people and so much more traffic. Nobody knew anybody anymore. It's changed over the years, people have gotten—Vienna Woods has become a very close community. Some streets are very family-oriented. I have friends that live over on that side, and they look after one another. And that's good because that's the way it used to be in Vienna when I was growing up. If anybody had anything that went wrong, everybody was there to help. They never had to worry about whether they would have anything to eat that night or what, because somebody was going to bring it. It's gotten to be more that way now with Vienna Woods than it was at the beginning, because nobody knew anybody. They were all strangers. It has changed. But I still prefer Vienna the way it used to be.

AS: What was it like when Maple Avenue was widened?

SM: Well, traffic was a lot more, for one thing. And all the trees were gone. It just wasn't a pretty street anymore. It *was* a beautiful street. I don't think things were, as businesses came in, there wasn't any plan to it. It was one thing here, another thing here. Things that usually aren't on the same streets, or aren't together. It wasn't thought out.

AS: Do you think the town was surprised? The town leaders were really blind-sided. They weren't prepared for this explosive growth.

SM: I don't think they were prepared for it.

AS: How would they be?

SM: I don't see how they could have been. It was so much so fast. They did the best they could under the circumstances.

AS: Did any of the people who lived here at the time resent the different farm-owners and land-owners who sold to Yonas?

SM: I don't think so, no. I never heard any of it if they did. It's their land, they can do anything they want to with it.