



Kenneth Kovalchik <kovalchikk@togny.org>

Will a Ghost Mall Replace Crossgates?

1 message

Laura Shore <laurashore.me@gmail.com>

Tue, May 26, 2020 at 12:26 PM

To: Kovalchikk@togny.org

Cc: Peter Barber <barberp@togny.org>



May 26, 2020

To: The members of the Guilderland Planning Board

From: Laura Shore, [751 Route 146, Guilderland](#)

Re: Pyramid expansion plans

Many have written in support of the Pyramid expansion plan at Crossgates. They have cited the benefits of new jobs and sales tax revenues. Others have written to oppose further development in the Pine Bush and the impact of explosive traffic growth will have on surrounding neighborhoods.

I believe that the town should take its time on this project. While it would be nice to have a shiny new Costco nearby, the economic assumptions that undergird this project must be re-evaluated in the wake of COVID-19 and its attendant shutdowns.

Do we know how much of the promised sales tax revenue and jobs will come at the expense of other, existing businesses? How many big box stores can our region support? How will the supply chain disruptions that are sure to follow Covid 19 affect warehouse stores?

People have been talking about a "retail apocalypse" for a while, as shoppers move on-line. Pyramid has been trying to adapt by replacing shopping venues with entertainment venues. However, many are questioning the future of these in an era of social distancing. Forever 21 is now vacant and Macy's, JCPenney's and Lord and Taylor are all under heavy financial pressure. Smaller specialty stores use the departure of anchor stores to break their leases. It is not impossible for Crossgates to become a Ghost Mall.

Under the circumstances, I understand why Pyramid would wish to diversify their real estate into apartments and big box stores. However, I don't believe the town should allow them to build a Costco and 700 parking spaces outside the perimeter road of Crossgates – when the parking lots at Crossgates have not been full for years and there may soon be several prime anchor slots ready for renovation.

Rather than an 18-pump gas station, wouldn't it be better to construct a public transportation hub there with a Park and Ride that could service Guilderland with bus service? This would bring customers to Crossgates, improve traffic and provide a real benefit to town residents.

What a horrible waste if so much Pine Bush is destroyed to build a ghost mall! Our town boards seem to be captive to real estate interests. It's important that we all think more creatively as we look ahead to challenging economic times.

Laura Shore

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/29/50percent-of-all-these-malls-forecast-to-close-by-2021-green-street-advisors-says.html>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/stores-closing-in-2020-list-2020-1>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/lord-and-taylor-prepares-to-liquidate-all-its-stores-report-2020-5>

<https://altamontenterprise.com/05142020/retail-sector-shutdown-places-pyramid-payment-pretzel>