



Crossgates Development Proposal

1 message

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To: "kovalchikk@togny.org" <kovalchikk@togny.org>

Tue, Oct 1, 2019 at 12:15 PM

October 1, 2019

Dear Mr. Kovalchik,

I am a resident of Greenwich Drive in Albany which is very close to the border of Guilderland. I am writing this letter to request that the Guilderland Town Planning Board require the Rapp Road Development project to provide as much information as possible and be as transparent as possible in the scope of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the project.

The proposed Rapp Road Project is too large in scope and will be located on acres of woods that will be torn down in very sensitive and important areas that must be preserved and protected. I don't understand the need for more stores when many malls are being abandoned.

The developers of the project have many reasonable alternatives including moving the project closer to the Mall. The parking lots between Macy's and the proposed location of the project are typically vacant and used for storage. They also have a significant amount of property along Western Ave. The lots on the western side of Rapp Road should be left undeveloped and purchased for preservation. Alternatives to this proposed area of development along Rapp Road need to be seriously assessed.

The Albany Pine Bush is a National Landmark that is a habitat for many endangered and threatened plant and animal species. It is also a benefit to the community in that it has many beautiful hiking trails that are free to the public. A full environmental impact study must be completed that will study the existing conditions, the potential impacts on endangered species and habitats and the mitigation efforts that are necessary to preserve the area.

The Rapp Road Historical Neighborhood is living history. It was settled by people fleeing discrimination, racism and lynching in the South. The Rapp Road neighborhood has been threatened by growth and development to the point where it could cease to exist, which would be a loss not only to the residents, the descendants of the original settlers, but to the whole Town. The Rapp Road Historical Neighborhood should be preserved and honored so that future generations will never forget the horrors of segregation and prejudice.

The residential streets and single family homes in close proximity to the proposed project also need protection from the impact of development, including the impact of traffic and loss of green space. The assurances and promises Crossgates/Pyramid to be made to the people who live in close proximity to Crossgates must be put in writing so years from now, these promises will not be forgotten.

A full traffic study, not just limited to peak hours, must be conducted that will study the impact of traffic and development on existing neighborhoods and include an assessment of what needs to be done to mitigate and lessen the impact on residential neighborhoods. The Planning Board must also ensure that existing neighborhoods continue to have access to necessary public services like emergency fire and ambulance and trash service.

In addition, Crossgate/Pyramid must be transparent and disclose to the Planning Board and the residents of the Town its long range plans for the many properties it owns in the vicinity of the Crossgates Mall so that the Planning Board can make an informed decision about a project that will have a long term impact on our Town. Crossgates/Pyramid owns many properties outside the site plan. Will there be a second hotel, more apartment complexes and a Costco with gas station? The Planning Board must be informed about Crossgates/Pyramid's intentions to continue to develop the area so that the Planning Board can understand the compounded impacts of development on the environment, traffic and existing neighborhoods. To make a decision about the Rapp Road Project without considering the future projects that may be on the horizon would be a mistake.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lawrence D'Arco

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