

WESTTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

SPECIAL MTG: 12/15/2016 @ STETSON

RE:CREBILLY

Mr. Pomeranz, Planning Commission Chair

I want to congratulate you! Good on ya!

To all of you—Westtown residents and non-residents for sticking with this process...as Scott Yaw, one of my Planning Commission colleagues encouraged you to do at the last meeting.

Your continuing involvement is admirable...It sends a message that you care about something that is much greater than any of our own needs.

And in so doing, you have awoken others to get involved...

It suggests each of the stakeholders in this process has a 'job to do': each of you have yours whatever that might be...The Planning Commission has its mandate. The consultants and the experts on all sides have theirs. The applicant Toll has its...The media has its role...As does the Board of Supervisors...others too.

To me, all of this sends out a ripple of hope that whatever transpires —when the Board of Supervisors eventually makes the final decision—the final result will reflect something everyone then and years from now will be able to point to and say: we did the absolute best we can be...

It will take courage and forethought throughout the process: which will not be easy...or as Pericles wrote: there is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things...

Which is what we must recognize we are all dealing with the Crebilly property:
“whatever the result will be the introduction of a new order of things.”

One last thought based on two very personal life lessons gleaned personally and professionally along the way I trust my PC colleagues, the BOS, the experts, and the applicant might keep in mind:

The two are separate but intrinsically linked.

The first is a plot of land my life partner Bobbie and I and two of our best friends got to experience first-hand, and which for me as Canadian-born meant so much, for it was...is...in France and is at the core of every Canadian and Canadian student's proud history...It's called Vimy Ridge...It's a battlefield...from WW1...where Canadian soldiers are credited by the French for helping defeat an entrenched enemy...

What I won't forget is the awesome respectful silence it brought out in four individuals: one American...two Brits...and one Canadian...in response to a simple sign that said: YOU ARE ENTERING HALLOWED GROUND...PLEASE BEHAVE ACCORDINGLY.

The second life lesson came as a result of a luncheon meeting I had with the Mayor of Milwaukee...On behalf of the Minneapolis St Paul Chamber of Commerce I was interviewing him about a subject that was not about hallowed ground. Rather it was about Milwaukee having lost something that was so strategically core to its identity: their major league baseball franchise the Milwaukee Braves had picked up and moved to Atlanta...and now the Minnesota Twins franchise was about to do the same...they were going to move to Tampa...indeed Sports Illustrated at the time reported that it was imminent...a deal had been struck... the only question left to be decided, the magazine reported, was the color of the owner's office bathroom in Tampa.

I ended the interview with the following question:

Mr. Mayor, you have given me a fifty things to think about, ten priorities that deserve full consideration...five must do's...but if there were only one thing you want me to take-away and must communicate to my client in the Twin Cities...what would that one thing be?

His answer was as direct as it was succinct:

Richard, you will never know the value of what you have allowed yourself to lose until you have lost it...and after it's gone you will regret it forever.

And then he said:

“YOU WILL WANT TO BE ABLE TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR DECADES LATER AND BE ABLE TO SAY:

EVERYONE CONNECTED WITH THIS EFFORT DID EVERYTHING WE COULD, THAT COMMON SENSE SAYS WE SHOULD HAVE”

IT IS MY FERVENT DESIRE, WSH, AND INTENT THAT EVERYONE OF THE
STAKEHOLDERS:

EVERYONE PRESENT HERE & THE COUNTLESS MORE FOR WHOM CREBILLY--
THIS TOWNSHIP'S ICONIC CENTERPIECE-- IS NOT MERELY A SPECIAL PLACE,
BUT EVEN MORE SO REFLECTS THE SOUL AND MORAL VALUE OF A
COMMUNITY—PAST, PRESENT, & FUTURE...BOTH LOCAL AND BEYOND ...

& NOT JUST THEM BUT AS WELL WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP'S MGMT,
CONSULTANTS & EXPERTS, & MY COLLEAGUES ON THE PLANNING
COMMISSION, THE BOS & TOLL...ESPECIALLY THE BOS & TOLL

WILL BE ABLE TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR DECADES FROM NOW & SAY:

“WE DID EVERYTHING WE COULD, THAT COMMON SENSE SAYS WE SHOULD
HAVE.