

October 31, 2019

Re: Crebilly Farm, Westtown Township/Toll Brothers

Thank you, all, for taking the time to be here today, as I appreciate your very busy schedules. Thank you, Senator Killion for graciously hosting all of us. I initiated this meeting for numerous reasons, all pertaining to the same subject: Crebilly Farm in Westtown Township. For me, this has become an ongoing, one-woman awareness campaign, in pursuit of the best possible outcome for Crebilly Farm and the surrounding area.

The fear level runs high in communities next to and surrounding Crebilly Farm. The fate of the residents and the fate of the region lies in the hands of Westtown Township and those of us in this room. When I try to imagine how it must feel for residents that have spent an entire lifetime here, raising their children, and young families that have recently moved here, unaware of the dark cloud looming over us all, it makes me shudder. I was born and raised in Westtown Township. I attended Stetson Middle School. I road my horse to Crebilly Farm almost every day after school. This pending development could be the critical change of the century and I think, just like the residents, Westtown Township is overwhelmed, and needs outside support.

The land of Crebilly Farm is unique because it is where the Battle of the Brandywine took place in 1777, during the Revolutionary War and our fight for Independence. It is one of the only remaining view sheds. In the Summer of 2016, an agreement of sale was reached between the Robinson Family (the land owners) and Toll Brothers, pending Conditional Use approval by the Westtown Township Board of Supervisors. In December of 2017, the township denied Toll Brothers Conditional Use. This was appealed by the developer to the Court of Common Pleas, which upheld the decision of Westtown Township. The developer appealed again to Commonwealth Court, which is still in litigation. This past August, Toll Brothers submitted a second application, currently in the Planning Commission stage, with the first Conditional Use Hearing scheduled to begin November 19.th At which time, the Planning Commission meetings and Conditional Use Hearings will run concurrently.

For the past three years, with the help of a devoted husband, I have maintained a website regarding Crebilly Farm, with regular updates, information and ongoing details of the pending development. My goal has been the same since day one: raise awareness by providing and empowering others with knowledge, through a reliable source, containing accurate and up-to-date information. I am not a group. I am one, deeply concerned citizen trying to do my small part in a very big picture. To date, I have attended every single Planning Commission meeting and every single Conditional Use Hearing. When I have questions, I contact the township, the county, politicians and other experts to find the answers and learn. Some of those I have called upon are in this very room.

Many of you are aware Crebilly Farm abuts the intersection of 926 and 202, a main artery in our region. The proposed plans by Toll Brothers are much too large for the infrastructure to bear and if this developer succeeds, the development will cripple this region of Chester County. The traffic impact, the storm water impact, the environmental impact and the loss of our National history will be catastrophic and permanent. I fear for the health, welfare and safety of our entire community.

I commend our Chester County Commissioners for their continued preservation of open space. And I respect and believe in *thoughtful* development and landowner rights. In this case, however, the potential impacts of this development are staggering. There are recurring themes by Toll Brothers and many are stated in the review letters from the county, PennDOT and other experts. Past behavior is the best prediction of the future. While Toll Brothers may be meeting the letter of the law, they are not meeting the intent of Zoning and Comprehensive Plans. Incomplete and vague applications and lack of collaboration with municipalities are just some of the common traits from this developer. Toll Brothers counts on fulfilling the minimum through the path of least resistance. In fact, I equate their tactics to the raging wildfires currently devastating parts of northern and southern California. Toll Brothers desecrates land at an alarming rate and leaves a path of destruction in its wake. Toll Brothers purposely counts on other parties involved to grow wary from the daunting task of holding them accountable. Yet that is precisely what each of us needs to do. They must be held accountable to the highest standards. And this will take all hands on deck.

Time is now. My goal was to have each of you in the same room to start a dialogue that I hope will result in a public meeting. I am not convinced we have exhausted all options to mitigate the damage a development of this magnitude will have on the region. I want us to be proactive in contributing to a better solution and I believe that begins with clear communication and a willing listener. In recent years, I have learned never to assume 'everyone knows' and how important it is to continue to connect the dots. And I realize if I say nothing, I will never be heard.

Thank you for your time, your undivided attention and thank you for hearing me.

Sincerely,

Mindy Rhodes

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