

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
RELATED TO DVRPC BOARD ACTION ITEMS

March 24, 2016

Agenda Item:

6. Regional Project Selections and Statewide Project Recommendations for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

From: Laura Shields
County: Bucks
Zip Code: 18901
Date Received: 3/14/2016

Comment/Question: I am a resident of the Wyndam neighborhood on Willow Wood Drive in New Britain, PA. I am respectfully informing you that I am in opposition of the Neshaminy Greenway trail. When my husband and I purchased our house almost our years ago one of our main criteria was to find a place where our young and active children could safely play outside. We looked at new construction and even put a deposit down but chose against it because of the walking path that extended through the back yards. Our children are 10, 7 and 5 and enjoy playing outside. There are 18 children that get on our elementary school bus. We have several children with special needs in our community. I am frightened by the possibility of strangers walking coming through our neighborhood in along the perimeter of my neighbors' yards. In addition, the pathway gives anyone easy access to the wooded areas along the creek and the New Britain police force has already stated that they do not have the manpower to patrol this area in a regular basis. Please do not compromise the beauty and safety of our neighborhood for our children. In a country with a pediatric obesity epidemic, our young children need to be able to play safely outdoors in their own neighborhood.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Judy Hendrixson
County: Bucks

Zip Code: 18901

Date Received: 3/15/2016

Comment/Question: Please support New Britain Township's and Doylestown Township's grant application for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (Bristol Road to Upper State Rd.). I think this project is an important link in Bucks County's regional trail network and in the Circuit Trail Network. Thank you!

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Chris Stanford

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19044

Date Received: 3/15/2016

Comment/Question: Please support New Britain Township's and Doylestown Township's grant application for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (Bristol Road to Upper State Rd.). I think this project is an important link in Bucks County's regional trail network and in the Circuit Trail Network.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Tom Price

County: Bucks

Zip Code: 18901

Date Received: 3/16/2016

Comment/Question: Please support New Britain Township's and Doylestown Township's grant application for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (Bristol Road to Upper State Rd.). I think this project is an important link in Bucks County's regional trail network and in the Circuit Trail Network

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Roy Rieder

County: Bucks

Zip Code: 18976

Date Received: 3/17/2016

Comment/Question: Warrington Township supports New Britain Township's and Doylestown Township's grant application for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (Bristol Road to Upper State Rd.). This project is an important link in Bucks County's regional trail network and in the Circuit Trail Network. It will also provide an important link to Warrington Township's planned connector trail from the Route 202 trail to Bradford Dam and Reservoir.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Gerald Sapers

County: Bucks

Zip Code: 18976

Date Received: 3/17/2016

Comment/Question: We urge you to support New Britain Township's and Doylestown Township's grant application for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (Bristol Road to Upper State Road). This link in Bucks County's regional trail network would eventually facilitate a connection with Warrington Township's Trail System, thereby creating new hiking and biking opportunities for the residents of our township. At the same time, such a link would provide recreational opportunities to other communities in the trail network through access to Warrington's Bradford Dam Trail, PECO Powerline Trail, and other trails in Lower Nike Park. Sincerely, Gerald M. Sapers Chairman Warrington Township Bike & Hike Trail Committee We urge you to support New Britain Township's and Doylestown Township's grant application for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (Bristol Road to Upper State Road). This link in Bucks County's regional trail network would eventually facilitate a connection with Warrington Township's Trail System, thereby creating new hiking and biking opportunities for the residents of our township. At the same time, such a link would provide recreational opportunities to other communities in the trail network through access to Warrington's Bradford Dam Trail, PECO Powerline Trail, and other trails in Lower Nike Park. Sincerely, Gerald M. Sapers Chairman Warrington Township Bike & Hike Trail Committee

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Lynn Goldman

County: Bucks

Zip Code: 18901

Date Received: 3/20/2016

Comment/Question: Please support New Britain Township's and Doylestown Township's grant application for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail . The community trail network and the circuit trail network are tremendous assets to any community, let's take one step closer towards linking them together.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Shon Weldon
County: Bucks
Zip Code: 18901
Date Received: 3/21/2016

Comment/Question: I would like to comment on the TAP Grant funding for the New Britain Township portion of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Marilyn Jacobson
County: Bucks
Zip Code: 18914
Date Received: 3/21/2016

Comment/Question: Please support the construction of the Neshaminy Greenway trail in New Britain and Doylestown Townships and New Britain and Chalfont Boroughs. The trails that have been constructed are wonderful and continued linkage is important for our safety and quality of life. Thank you for your previous support.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened

by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

From: Elaine Apsche
County: Bucks
Zip Code: 18901
Date Received: 3/21/2016

Comment/Question: I would like to make a public comment about the trail being proposed very close to my back yard.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the project sponsor New Britain Township, and the Bucks County Planning Commission.

It is important to have local input in any planning process. DVRPC suggests that you become or stay involved in the local planning process by attending meetings convened by New Britain Township. The township's Parks and Recreation Board's webpage has links to previous studies and meeting minutes pertaining to feasibility of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail (<http://www.newbritaintownship.org/recminutes.html>).

Again, DVRPC thanks you for participating in the public planning process and appreciates your comments and concerns.

Weldon, Shon

From: Diane Weldon <diane.weldon@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2016 3:28 PM
To: Hhaun@newbritaintownship.org; JBodden@newbritaintownship.org; RCotton@newbritaintownship.org; WJones@newbritaintownship.org; JScanzillo@newbritaintownship.org
Cc: diane.weldon@verizon.net; Weldon, Shon
Subject: Neshaminy Greenway Trail Opposition
Attachments: Fax-Jan-27-2016-11-40-12-7635.tif

Importance: High

New Britain Township Board of Supervisors,

We have lived on Willow Wood Drive for 17 years and immensely enjoy the privacy that the woods backing up to our property offers. It's the main reason we chose this lot for our home and paid a premium price for this space.

If the trail goes through as proposed, we will have a very real safety issue regarding our 12 year old son, Shane. Shane has been diagnosed with an intellectual disability which prevents him from making good choices. We are rightfully concerned that this trail will basically open up our back area to strangers day and night. Shane thinks that anyone with a dog is his new best friend. This creates a real vulnerability issue for us as Shane has no basic sense of boundaries or safety.

Another concern is flooding. Last week, I walked along the proposed area where the survey flags were located just off Bristol Road and it was flooded. And, the creek hasn't receded much since the recent snow and rain. Not sure how that will ever be completely rectified as the main water source is the Neshaminy Creek?

Also, I have spoken directly with our neighbor that lives off Upper State Road, as well as the Goldeneye/Teal development neighbors, who have all told the Township they did not want the trail in their backyards, for all the same reasons. To our knowledge, they have all denied the Township's request for access to their property, for this trail.

Due to our opposition for the Township's plan to run a trail behind our properties, approximately 21 Wyndham neighbors met with Township officials. This meeting took place in October, 2014. At this meeting, township officials confirmed they did not have the resources to patrol the trail area nor did they have a vehicle that could go back on the trail to police it. At that meeting, we were verbally informed by Eileen Bradley that due to our opposition to the Township plan, she would not be able to proceed with the current plan. It was our understanding, that the Township would explore an alternative option of going along Bristol and Upper State Roads and connect to the trail in this fashion. If the option along Bristol Road was not a viable one, several members of our development volunteered to work with Baker Engineering and the Township regarding an option that was acceptable for everyone. We were never contacted about this trail again, even after Shon contacted both the Township and Chris Stanford, Baker Engineering, several times over the next six months. Each time, he was informed there was no funding for the project and no plans to proceed with the trail.

Imagine our surprise, when a neighbor who happened to be home, saw surveyors traipsing through 2 feet of snow to tie pink flags on trees in the woods directly behind our homes. Unfortunately, it took many calls and emails to the Township to finally receive an email from Eileen Bradley informing us that a grant for the trail had already been secured. (We now know this is not *exactly* true.) This goes directly against our agreement with her at the October 13, 2014 meeting (please see attached). After publicly stating to us that she could not proceed due to our opposition, at the very next Supervisor's meeting she put through a resolution of support for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail. She then wrote

our community a letter (please see attached) dated November 12, 2014 stating, again, that the plan was not to proceed behind our homes. We feel we have been purposely left out and misled.

Please see attachments outlining the above mentioned dates and points.

I would like to add that the current plan is to establish a trail to nowhere, ending in a loop! We are left to wonder how the trail will connect to Upper State Road? After all, isn't the ultimate goal to connect the entire trail to 202? Also, Eileen stated that all entities are requesting the trail be as close to the Neshaminy Creek as possible. If that is truly the case, why does a significant portion of the trail jog AWAY from the creek along Forrest Drive? It is our understanding that "right of way" could not be obtained? Could it be the neighbor along the creek refused it, same as us?

To recap, our main concerns regarding this trail are as follows:

- How do we secure this trail and protect our homes? Township already stated they do not have the resources.
- How do we ensure our privacy? We have been purposely left out of the planning stages due to our opposition to this trail. Also, we have walked significant portions of this trail in Bucks and Montgomery Counties. To our knowledge, none of these locations have the trail located so close to any private residences.
- This is a trail to "nowhere" as designed. What is the purpose of spending taxpayer's money for a trail that doesn't achieve its goal to connect to the trail in Doylestown due to the resistance of all of our other New Britain Township neighbors along Upper State Road?
- We have repeatedly asked to be updated and also asked to be part of any possible alternative plans; these requests have been ignored by the township officials.

I asked Eileen Bradley several times, via email, to include us on the Board of Supervisors February 22 agenda, but she never contacted me either way. We now understand, through Shon calling the Township office, that we ARE on the agenda for this Monday, Feb 22, 2016.

Thank you for listening and we look forward to discussing this further on Monday night.

Sincerely,
Shon and Diane Weldon
223 Willow Wood Drive
New Britain Township

New Britain Township
207 Park Avenue
Chalfont, PA 18914
Ph. 215-822-1391 Fax 215-822-6051

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Angela Benner
DATE: 10/14/14
RE: Neshaminy Greenway Trail

On Monday October 13, 2014 a meeting was held at the Township building at 7:00pm with the residents that reside on Willow Wood Drive. At the meeting the projects engineer, Chris Stanford, presented 2 sketch designs of the proposed Neshaminy Greenway Trail. Option 1 would go through Township open space, behind the Willow Wood development and down Coleman property (1606 Upper State Road) that would run behind some of the Willow Wood resident's properties. Option 2 would go through Township open space and come down through the Willow Wood HOA's open space to connect to Upper State Road.

Below is the list of concerns from the residents:

- Dividing the HOA's open space with a trail down the middle taking away their ability to use the open space for HOA activities and picnic's.
- Option 1 would put the trail in close proximity to the homeowners that abut Mr. Coleman's property where the trail would be placed.
- Concerned with safety of the neighborhood if a trail is installed.
- They bought their houses because of the privacy of the area.
- Concerned that trail users will park on their street.
- Liability of the homeowners and HOA from people who leave the trail and get injured on their property.
- The effect the trail would have on stormwater and wetlands and cause their properties to flood.
- Environmental impact.
- Crime rates elevating due to the trail being installed.

In summary, the residents in the Willow Wood Development are against a trail being installed on Mr. Coleman's property, in the Township Open Space, and in the HOA's Open Space. The residents in attendance did indicate that they would be in favor of the trail being installed along Bristol Road and Upper State Road.

At this time, the engineer will be looking at the feasibility of installing the trail completely along Bristol Road and Upper State Road.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

October 20, 2014

A Work Session Meeting of the New Britain Township Board of Supervisors was held on Monday, October 20, 2014 at the Township Administration Building, 207 Park Avenue, New Britain Township, PA, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Present were Supervisors: Chair John A. Bodden, Sr., Vice Chair Robert V. Cotton, Members William B. Jones, III, A. James Scanzillo and Helen B. Haun. Also present were Township Manager Eileen M. Bradley and Township Engineer Erik Garton.

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Bodden called the Meeting to order.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Mr. Bodden led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Announcements:** Mr. Bodden announced that the Board had met in Executive Session prior to this meeting to discuss personnel issues, land acquisition and litigation.
 - 3.1. **Ten-Year Service Award:** Mr. Bodden presented Jo Ann Lapp with a Ten-Year Service Award.
4. **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:** Mr. Bodden called for Public Comment.

4.1. **Neshaminy Greenway Trail** - Chalfont Borough Council Member Marilyn Jacobson requested the Board's continued support of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail system, specifically the section that was awarded TAP Grant Funding. Ms. Bradley presented the sketch plan option that showed the trail going from Bristol Road through Township Open Space, and down through Mr. Coleman's property to connect to Upper State Road. Ms. Bradley shared the residents' concerns with the trail near their properties.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mrs. Haun, and unanimously approved, to allow staff to move forward with the design of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail going through Township Open Space and Mr. Coleman's property.

4.2. **No Parking on Stewart Lane:** Mr. Ted Kuriger of Jillamy Warehouse and Distribution, Inc., located at 100 Stewart Lane, Chalfont, approached the Board about their recently passed "No Parking" Ordinance for Stewart Lane. Mr. Kuriger stated that sales representatives and potential clients have often parked on Stewart Lane when coming to their facility due to lack of parking in the existing lot. Mr. Kuriger asked the Board if there was anything that could be done so that passenger vehicles could be allowed to park on Stewart Lane or in the cul-de-sac. Ms. Bradley stated that the "No Parking" Ordinance was passed due to large trucks parking on the street and blocking the way for emergency vehicles to get through. Ms. Bradley said she would have the Township Fire Marshal drive out to Stewart Lane to see what accommodations could be made.

5. Approval of Minutes:

5.1. Minutes of October 6, 2014 Board of Supervisors' Regular Meeting:

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Scanzillo, seconded by Mr. Cotton, and unanimously approved, to accept the October 6, 2014 Minutes as written.

6. Departmental Reports:

6.1. **Code Department Report:** Ms. Bradley presented the Code Department Report for September 2014.

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Eileen M. Bradley
Township Manager

TOWNSHIP OF NEW BRITAIN

Bucks County, Pennsylvania
Founded: 1723

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

John A. Bodden, Sr.
Robert V. Cotton
Helen B. Haun
William B. Jones
A. James Scanzillo

November 12, 2014

Wyndham Community Association
P.O. Box 5226
New Britain, PA 18901

Re: Neshaminy Creek Greenway Trail Project

Dear Wyndham Community Association,

As you are aware, New Britain Township, Chalfont Borough and New Britain Borough have received a grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission for the planning and design of the Neshaminy Creek Greenway Trail between Blue Jay Road and Upper State Road.

After meeting with the residents of Wyndham and hearing the concerns of the residents, the municipalities involved have, at this time, decided to take the trail straight down Bristol Road to the 202 Parkway trail head. If money from the grant funding allows, however, the New Britain Township Board of Supervisors plans to install a trail from Bristol Road to the Neshaminy Creek, in New Britain Township Open Space.

As the trail is no longer proposed to go along Mr. Coleman's Property or through Wyndham HOA's Open Space at this time, there is no need to have any site walks. Therefore, no site walks will be scheduled in the immediate future. Our consultants will be working toward resolving any issues related to bringing the on-road trail from Bristol Road to the 202 Parkway.

Sincerely,

Eileen M. Bradley
Township Manager

Thank you Board Members for allowing me to speak this morning. My name is Elaine Apsche and I have lived on Willow Wood Dr. in New Britain for the last 17 years of my life. This is a property that I bought deliberately because of the view and paid a premium for the lot that was described to me as being designated open space. During the last 17 years, I have enjoyed the view, the wildlife, and the privacy of backing to the woods along the Neshaminy Creek provides. In Oct. 2014, the residents were invited to the township building to discuss a proposed trail going ~~is~~ either in the woods behind our homes, in the field next to our homes, or down the street in front of our homes. The residents strongly opposed any plan that would bring a trail near the resident's home or on the community property and requested that the trail go down the street as the best option. In addition, at that same meeting, several residents volunteered to help the township to investigate other options for a trail. In Nov. 2014, we received a letter from the township saying they understood that they residents were against the trail on or near our property and would investigate other options, including the trail along the side of the road. That was the last communication from the township the residents ever heard.

In Jan 2016, I was home sick and noticed several men in the woods with survey equipment. I contacted my neighbor who walked back and spoke with the men and they informed him that they were surveying for the Neshaminy Greenway trail. This was the first time we found out the township was going forward with the trail along the creek, against the resident's wishes, and without the resident's knowledge.

In addition to my outraged that my own township would be so deceitful in their planning, I am also very concerned about the trail being put in right behind my home. With the trail comes bikers, hikers, children and dogs, turning my wooded serenity into a park-like-setting. I have great concerns about the vulnerability of my home and property with this influx of people. The trail increases the likelihood of trespassers on my property and also forces me to increase my homeowners insurance to protect myself from lawsuits. In addition, I have several pets that I would no longer feel safe to let out for fear of someone or someone's dog might hurt them. The trail brings an eye-sore to an undisturbed part of the woods that is home to no less than 12 deer as well as many other animals. Finally, the trail would be installed in a part of the woods that routinely

floods and now with more impermeable surfaces being installed, the risk of my home flooding is even greater, and again, forcing me to insure my house for even more money.

I realize I am but one person, and one voice, however, I do believe that there are other possible options to putting in the trail without hurting me, my home or the lifestyle that I have created over the last 17 years of my life. In addition, I do believe that if the township were open and honest with the residents over the last 15 months, that a compromised could have been found and the trail would be moving forward unopposed at this point.

I thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns and hope that you will consider other options for the trail.

The Board of Supervisors of New Britain Township, as well as the elected and appointed officials of Doylestown Township, Chalfont Borough, New Britain Borough, Bucks County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania wholeheartedly support a trail system along the Neshaminy Creek, including this portion planned through the Township's Open Space. The Board of Supervisors has requested we move forward with surveying the property, in anticipation of future construction of the trail.

*Elaine
Fischer*