

HearingComments, DNREC (MailBox Resources)

From: DoNotReply@delaware.gov
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To: HearingComments, DNREC (MailBox Resources)
Subject: Public Hearing Comments

Comments on Docket #2024-P-W-0010 -- Quarry Walk Wastewater Systems

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Comments:

The community of the Village of Yorklyn is downstream from a lot of decisions being made without us. The first thing that needs to be said: Yorklyn is NOT Hockessin. It has never been Hockessin. It has no interest in being Hockessin. There is confusion about what is Hockessin and what is Yorklyn. If you have a PO Box in Yorklyn, the attendant address is Yorklyn. If you get Rural Route Delivery, the address is Hockessin, but... that is not the historical nor cultural dividing line. The line was seen as Old Wilmington Road and the Quarry. It is a small village no matter how you look at it with a small population. Unlike sprawling Hockessin which has few guidelines for development. Second the Greater Hockessin Development Association (GHADA) does NOT represent Yorklyn. They have often tried to subsume it by saying they do. They DO NOT. They are a DEVELOPMENT association, not a community association. They advocate for Development NOT community. Now... The history of Yorklyn is that of a factory town and it has been up until the 21st century when NVF, the last remnants of it, finally shut down. What precipitated that failure, ultimately, was Tropical Storm Henri in September of 2003. That's where this story begins. The flooding brought the burgeoning vision of Yorklyn as an art centered, small destination to a screeching halt. All the bridges that the Wilmington Western Railroad ran on were washed away. CCArts was severely damaged. Small businesses in the Snuff Mill Shops were forced out of their location. The covered bridge at Rolling Mill Road was destroyed. The Red Clay Creek changed its course. 194 homes downstream in Glanville were also severely damaged. Damage in Delaware totaled 16.1 Million Dollars. Why does all this matter? Because we are still downstream from projects that are undoing the very flood mitigation that the whole Auburn Valley Master Plan (AVMP) was premised on. The impervious surface area. The felling of 10 acres of wooded land that both held water and charged the Cockeysville Aquifer changed the formula. Adding impervious area changes it further. Where the water goes when it can't be absorbed. Downstream... to Yorklyn and beyond. So... (from DNREC's website) in 2011 the Auburn Valley Master Plan was set forth as a Development Plan for the Auburn Valley. The vision was to create a public/private partnership that would be sensitive to the community's history, culture, and aesthetic. While mitigating the underlying flooding, contamination through a return of built-upon lands to the floodplain and to wetlands, we could also connect to other mature, contiguous woodlands to create a corridor of preserved and protected land. All of which would be accomplished in keeping with DNREC's self-proclaimed mission: Engage all stakeholders to ensure the wise management, conservation and enhancement of the State's natural resources; Protect public health and the environment; Provide quality outdoor recreation; Improve the quality of life; Lead energy policy and climate preparedness; And educate the public on historic, cultural and natural resource use, requirements and issues. In 2016 things changed. While showing the connectivity to other preserved and/or open lands... as if all of them were protected, DNREC quietly re-designated an unconnected, distant, 10 acres of mature forest, to brownfield status and added it to the AVMP. In 2021 they did it again with a smaller parcel slightly closer to AVMP. No notice. The promises made in 2011 were based on a "need" to move quickly by bypassing New Castle County Planning and Unified Development Code. The promise of honoring Yorklyn's historical, cultural, and community integrity was now bypassed by skirting NCC processes and policies. When DNREC added Drake McNish Cattermole's 129 townhomes to the AVMP without NCC oversight they broke the community's faith in their self-proclaimed mission: Engage all stakeholders to ensure the wise management, conservation and enhancement of the State's natural resources; Protect public health and the environment; Provide

quality outdoor recreation;... And educate the public on historic, cultural and natural resource use, requirements and issues. Now... here is where are. * Skirting NCC code, ignoring public input, disregarding the flooding consequences, and not respecting the history of the industrial village have become the modus operandi. * The documents that were created to enable this "Re-development" have, in actuality, become a system for gaming the regulations, oversight, enforcement, and the very laws that should be governing this kind of "densification" and "rural gentrification". * Why does DNREC maintain the ability to circumvent the New Castle County Unified Development Code when, in fact, it's time should have expired with the initial parameters and the remediation? * Why are the developers being allowed to undo the flood remediation that has been accomplished to alleviate the original flooding issues that precipitated this whole action by adding impervious ground cover with 129 units in the "whole project".? * Why is the community not asked about what will happen and not being consulted in any way other than unmetered checkbox presentations called "meetings"? * Why is the state looking to put a cell tower on land that was donated by Tom Marshall as a preserve? Because Cattermole and his private development partners in collaboration with DNREC his public collaboration partner did not plan or vet the process of constructing the required sewage pump house and line to the County's high pressure sewer ling along Yorklyn Road... Because they did not consult with the County to understand that it was NEVER the County's responsibility to build those two components... only to take ownership upon completion and inspection... Cattermole and his public private partnership tried to pass off this notion of twelve 1,500-gallon tanks (18,000 Gallons of sewage) and related infrastructure to receive and temporarily store wastewater from 25 dwelling temporary holding tanks with pump trucks every two days as their only way to rectify the delay by requesting this permit. DNREC tried to verify this permit request WITHOUT (again) a public hearing unless there was a "meritorious objection". We objected to the false claims on a short timeline. We received no response from DNREC. We found out there was a public meeting by constantly monitoring the DNREC website. There is a serious lack of transparency here and what seems like a willful intent to circumvent the community of Yorklyn. Because the permit is either mistaken, deceptive, or lying about the County not moving fast enough to build what they were NEVER supposed to build... As a business owner in Yorklyn with a reach into the surrounding impacted communities, I object to this self-induced crisis as something we should help them to solve by tolerating the possible problems from an accident, the increased truck traffic and noise, this corrupted process of ignoring the community, and circumventing the County. No thank you. Cattermole and his partners created the problem. DNREC created the conditions. And we are not willing to suffer the consequences.