

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:

There are real concerns here, dating all the way back to the arson at the NVF building that occurred on Thursday, April 29, 2021. In short, the less-than-transparent real estate deals had already happened, and private developers got developable land. Regarding Quarry Walk, DNREC admits that: "DNREC should have done a better job communicating the specifics of the residential portions of the plan now coming online, including the critical role they play in the public-private partnership. DNREC had a responsibility to communicate directly with the public on the specifics of the residential portions of the redevelopment, and we should have done so." This statement was in response to the inclusion of 61 townhomes, designated Quarry Walk, into the Auburn Valley Master Plan without consulting the community. The lack of transparency was laid bare when the community noticed 10 acres of trees disappear. Only when the community rose up about this event was a meeting held and only then was it revealed that 61 townhomes were added to the plan. This seems in direct conflict with one of DNREC's missions to Engage all stakeholders ... It should not require a PhD in research and engineering and land use and topography and construction and easements and traffic for private citizens to be proactive in their communities. The process is burdensome and requires a level of time and attention that most hardworking folks do not have to spare. State agencies are tasked with being transparent and timely and accurate. Which is why it was head-snapping to see the Legal Notice published by DNREC which claimed: The subdivision consists of 61 attached dwelling units to be serviced by a pump station that is to be constructed by New Castle County and connected to the sanitary sewer in Yorklyn Road. Unfortunately, the County's timing for the construction of the pump station does not coincide with that of the construction of the dwellings by the developer; therefore, we are requesting permission to install a series of temporary holding tanks (10 total) to provide sanitary sewer service for 25 lots (referenced above) until such time that the pump station is constructed and functioning. Did DNREC NOT KNOW that NCC Public Works will only operate the wastewater system once it is completed and accepted by the County? Did DNREC not know that the County had been carved out of this development deal? Did DNREC not know that the developer is responsible for constructing the pump station? This self-imposed hardship is not one the community should have to bear due to a developer's delays and funding issues. All of the harm is to the village of Yorklyn, its residents, and its quality of life. The attendant effect on wildlife, air and water quality, and the view corridor is acutely felt by all who live in the community. So the question becomes: Is DNREC this careless about reviewing applications for projects of this magnitude or was the developer outright misleading DNREC? Both are very concerning, particularly since there is also not a clear sense of who will monitor and collect data if this project is approved. Given the state's reluctance to enforce its codes on this developer in the past, what guarantees can Yorklyn residents expect this time around? To elaborate: This developer has proven himself NOT to be a good neighbor. His most recent development project resulted in 'demolition by neglect' of an historic property in Wilmington, DE. For 13 years, the community had to suffer the impact of this developer's neglect—of the parcel in question as well as an additional parcel he bought to 'box in' this corner. Both parcels suffered from his neglect. Property values were affected. The STATE and the CITY refused to enforce its land use/easement codes/historic property codes. Then, in a most jarring turn of events, over \$1 million dollars of taxpayer funds were used to buy back the parcel; significant additional taxpayer funds are being used to clean up the destruction of the building and grounds. This is the developer who has now moved on to Yorklyn and who wants

DNREC to trust him to do right by the community. DNREC does itself a disservice by going by the moniker "DEN-REC" – it obfuscates the actual name of the organization and it's mission: The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control envisions a Delaware that offers a healthy environment where people embrace a commitment to the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of the environment in their daily lives; where Delawareans' stewardship of natural resources ensures the sustainability of these resources for the appreciation and enjoyment of future generations. You control what happens with our air, water, fish, wildlife, parks, waste and hazardous substances. Please do the right thing this time and deny this application.