

**FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE
NORTH PENN U.S. MEMORIAL ARMY RESERVE CENTER
LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (LRA)**

APPENDIX VI

PUBLIC PLANNING MEETING

Letters Received from Community Organizations

Memorandum Submitted by Worcester Planning Commission

Minutes of February 21, 2007, Public Meeting

Comments from Residents Received Following Public Meeting of February 21, 2007

Farmers' Union Company for the Recovery of Stolen Horses and Detecting the Thieves

ORGANIZED A. D. 1834

Fairview Village, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania



February 21, 2007

Board of Supervisors
Township of Worcester
1721 Valley Forge Road
Worcester PA 19490

Gentlemen:

The Farmers' Union Horse Company strongly supports Worcester Township's vision for the Army Base to become open space for the benefit of all Township residents. It is an ideal parcel for walking and equestrian trails.

It would be particularly beneficial if the Cross Township Trail could be continued farther East to this property. There is plenty of parking to accommodate horse trailers. It would be wonderful if riders could park their trailers and conceivably ride to Evansburg Park.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to ride on the township's roads, as people used to do, creating more of a need for passive recreation sites like this one, where residents can walk, ride, and jog in safety.

We do hope to see this property become open space for public benefit.

Sincerely,

Michele Romano
President
1401 Hollow Road
Collegeville PA 19426

P.O. Box 545
Worcester, PA 19490



Phone: 610-584-1805
friendsofworcester.org

Worcester Township Board of Supervisors
1721 Valley Forge Road
P.O. Box 767
Worcester, PA 19490

February 19, 2007

Re: North Penn Army Reserve Base

Dear John, Chase, and Art:

We are writing concerning the Army Reserve base on Berks Road, which will be closing in the next few years. The township has wisely chosen to become involved in the planning process, so that any inappropriate development can be avoided and this property can be reused for the benefit of the entire township.

We are aware of several proposals to reuse this property, including an animal rescue operation and a school bus depot. However, we support the option of acquiring the property at no cost for open space and passive recreation. The property is located in a very rural area of the township and is surrounded by active farmland and low-density residential population. It is across the street from one of the highest priority areas in the township for natural resource and scenic viewshed preservation – the Stony Creek headwaters area along Bean Road. Any intensive reuse of the property would be very inappropriate for this area.

This 18-acre property would be an excellent addition to the township's park system, to meet the needs of the residents of the southeastern portion of the township. It already has adequate parking facilities and a network of paved trails for walking, bicycling, jogging, and horseback riding. The large paved areas could easily accommodate several tennis courts and outdoor basketball courts, if these are needed in the future. The property is very close to the powerline corridor, which is designated in the Greenway Plan as a future township multi-use trail. This would provide off-road access for many township residents. The base is also close to Nike Park, which is a link in the cross-township hiking/bridle trail. Connecting the base to Nike Park with a trail along Potshop Road would allow the cross-township trail to be extended even further toward the eastern edge of the township.

We support the township's efforts to acquire this property for open space and parkland, so that Worcester can continue to retain its rural character and address the recreational needs of its residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Kimber David".

R. Kimber David

ONCE IT'S GONE, IT'S GONE FOREVER!

Contributions to Friends of Worcester are tax deductible

Given these outstanding assets and the considerable cost of their removal, we recommend very serious consideration of a community-based adaptive re-use strategy as the first priority. A conceptual reuse plan we would support would include:

MEMORANDUM

To: Worcester Township Board of Supervisors

cc: John Cornell, Township Manager
Joseph Nolen, Township Engineer
James Garrity, Township Solicitor
Matt Schelly, MCPC

From: Worcester Township Planning Commission **Pages:** 2

Re: North Penn U.S. Army Reserve Center
Base Redevelopment Planning

Date: February 20, 2007

As we understand it, the existing North Penn U.S. Army Reserve Center on Berks Road is being prepared for closure and the Township has assumed the role of the local redevelopment authority (LRA) to take the lead in planning the site's reuse or redevelopment.

At a recent Planning Commission Meeting, we were asked to provide the BOS with our recommendations on potential end uses which would be consistent with the Township's Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Plan. In order to recommend such specific end uses, we would need more information about the facility, its operations, and site conditions as well as time frame requirements for coming up with a viable plan. Furthermore, we would need more information about the legal options available under base closure procedures. To date, very limited information has been provided to the WPC, but we do understand that a Facility Assessment is being prepared by a private consultant and a closure report, including environmental assessment, is being prepared by the U.S. Army. Our assessment, therefore, is incomplete and limited to certain basic assumptions and is subject to modification based on new or more complete information.

In general, the WPC is very supportive of the site's redevelopment for a community use and recommend that every effort be made to exhaust all potential community uses, both single and multi-use options. We believe the reuse options are a function of a full understanding of the present facility assets and potential liabilities. The key assets appear to be:

- 47,000 +/- square feet of useable building space, in apparently good condition
- Over 180,000 square feet of paved parking
- On-site sewage treatment facility with capacity for 2,000 gpd
- On-site potable water with 50,000 gallon storage tank and public water available at street
- Presence of 3 underground Nike storage silos

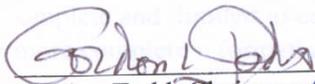
Given these outstanding assets and the considerable cost of their removal, we recommend very serious consideration of a community-based adaptive re-use strategy as the first priority. A conceptual reuse plan we would support would include:

- Memorialization of the Nike site at the rear of the property with self-guided tour or other on-site interpretation
- Development of active recreational facilities in central, paved portion of the site for rehabilitation as basketball courts, tennis courts, or seasonal ice skating rink
- Use of some of the paved parking for future trail head parking to support potential expansion of trail network
- Exploration of adaptive reuse of the building for:
 - Community library
 - Elementary school/special needs school
 - Possible relocation of Variety Club
 - Possible satellite for Montgomery County Community College or other school

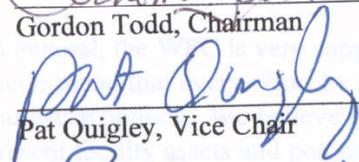
In addition, we strongly recommend the following:

- The scope of the facilities study should define the full costs of demolition, including subsoil contamination issues and potential remediation costs associated with demolition, such as asbestos removal, tank removal, etc.
- We should look closely at the option of purchasing the site for fair market value and how this is determined; site ownership may allow Township greater flexibility in subdivision and control of end uses
- All options should be clearly identified including costs, benefits and impacts to the Township
- Assessment of alternatives should include full Public involvement.

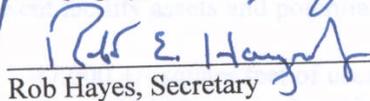
In closing, we appreciate the opportunity to be involved with an important redevelopment plan for the Township and fully support the redevelopment of the site for community-based use. We strongly urge the full evaluation of the existing building resource as an asset that should not be wasted without full consideration of alternative costs and benefits. The Planning Commission would like to remain involved in the redevelopment process as more information becomes available.



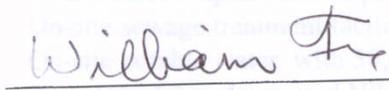
Gordon Todd, Chairman



Pat Quigley, Vice Chair



Rob Hayes, Secretary



William Fox, Member

WORCESTER TOWNSHIP
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
FAIRVIEW VILLAGE, PA
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2007 7:30 P.M.

LRA PUBLIC PRESENTATION BY SUSAN CAUGHLAN

8:30 P.M. John Harris gave history of the Army Reserve deactivation, stating that the Township has formed an LRA to study and recommend projects for the site.

Susan Caughlan, liaison for LRA, presented a slide show of the process using the following:

- Identify goals = Planning Elements.
- Comprehensive Plan goals
- Growth and Development goals
- Park land and recreation goals
- Open Space Plan
- Greenway Plan
- Current zoning and land uses

On March 21, 2007, the Methacton School District will make a public presentation for their proposed use.

George Hill asked if the township's actions will eliminate private sale of ground.

Jim Phillips asked what community groups are interested and if the Bookheimer family was contacted to see if they are interested. He also asked Susan Caughlan what qualification she had for handling the project and if she was getting paid.

James Rees, Merrybrook Road, representing the Historical Society, asserted that the society supports township efforts to preserve the Army property and its history.

Stocky Allen asked about hazards or contaminants on property and if an inspection of lead paint was conducted in the building constructed in 1978.

George Hill asked if Methacton School Board showed interest in the site.

Carol Allen inquired about the status of a under ground tunnel on site. Ms. Caughlan stated that there was no such tunnel as far as anyone was aware.

Jay Rees asked what does Nike stand for.

Dorothy McGrane, representing the Farmer Union Horse Company, said the Company strongly supports the township's efforts to preserve the property.

Kim David, representing the Friends of Worcester, said that FOW supports efforts for open space and park land on the site.

Gordon Todd, Chairman of Worcester Township Planning Commission, presented recommendation to LRA after a site tour and inspection of the building. The WTPC supports the

site for community development. A sewage treatment plant that serves DEC must be considered and environmental issues may be involved. He supports a park at this site to leave Heebner Park open and green. He indicated that the buildings are in good shape with sound concrete. The site would be well-suited for a community library, school, satellite college, state police barracks. A study to define costs of demolition or renovations is needed.

Leslie Margolis, 2600 Bean Road, inquired whether there are more opportunities for other groups to comment, now or in the future.

Public Presentation closed at 9:15 PM

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vince Galet, 1585 Broadview Lane, adds support to use of Army base facility as a park. He opposes a parking lot for buses.

Comments from Residents Received Following Public Meeting of February 21, 2007

From: "Kim David" <KimDavid@davidbrothers.com>
To: "Susan Caughlan" <sgc@dca.net>
Subject: Re: Army base
Date: Thu, 22 Feb 2007 07:33:27 -0500

Susan,

Great presentation! Very informative and some interesting pictures.

Kim

From: "Janice Hutt" <janice.hutt@theavocagroup.com>
To: <sgc@dca.net>
Cc: "Harold Hutt" <Harold@reliancehomehealth.com>
Subject: Worcester North Penn Army Reserve Base
Date: Sat, 24 Feb 2007 23:37:35 -0500

Dear Susan:

Last week my husband Harold and I attended your presentation during the Board of Supervisor's meeting. We appreciated the overview of the history of that site and the outline of ideas for the future use. We have been at 2720 Potshop, right across from the site, for 27 years. My husband's family lived on the corner of Berks and Potshop since the early 1900s.

There have been many changes to our township over these years and an enormous increase in the cut-through traffic on Potshop. We would not support any use of that site that would increase traffic. The entrance to the site is a very blind section of the road and cars go very fast on Berks. (As on many of our township's rural roads). Accidents at Bean and Potshop have been increasing each year. We would like to see open-space preserved there and hope that the LRA will consider this.

I would be willing to help in any way if a committee is formed to determine the future of that site.

Thank you for your very professional presentation.

Kind regards,

Janice Hutt
610-584-6650

From: RTaylorCraven@aol.com
Date: Thu, 22 Feb 2007 13:41:21 EST
X-ASG-Orig-Subj: Army Site Tour
Subject: Army Site Tour
To: sgc@dca.net

Sue,

We were very impressed with your presentation concerning the future redevelopment plans for the Army's Training Center last night at the Worcester Supervisors Meeting.

We would be very interested in touring the site. If there is a time when other concerned folks are planning to tour the site, we would like to be included on that tour.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

George H. Hill, Sr.
Randall Taylor-Craven

To: sgc@dca.net
Subject: Army Base Reuse
Date: Wed, 07 Mar 2007 19:29:53 -0500
From: angeubank@aol.com

Hi, Susan. I have a concern about using this Army Base for a park or some type of recreation facility. Isn't this a Superfund site? If you need help pulling info on this as a Superfund site, I can be of assistance. I was sure that you were aware and I'd like to see this as open space for the Township, however, not if it's a superfund site. Thanks. Angela Eubank

Date: Fri, 09 Mar 2007 16:31:00 -0500

Susan. Thanks so much for clearing this up for me. I was thinking of the property on Trooper Road. As usual, you are so on top of things. We are very fortunate to have someone like you keeping an eye on what goes on in the Township. Thanks for getting back to me and doing such a great job.

Angela Eubank

From: "Joan Harvey" <joanharvey@comcast.net>
Date: March 19, 2007

Ms. Susan G. Caughlan
Administrative Coordinator
North Penn US Army Reserve Center LRA
Worcester, PA

Dear Susan,

We live on Broadview Lane, Worcester Township, at the corner of Berks and Potshop Roads. Our home was completed this past November. We moved to Worcester because we wanted to live in a quiet community where we would not experience everyday the effects (noise, traffic, crime) of dense population and sprawl. I should point out that building and owning a home in Worcester is a very expensive commitment, but we had been told and read on Worcester's website that "preservation of

quality of life and open space is of paramount importance to the township,” so we proceeded. In the process of buying our property and building our home, we have often wondered what would become of the property which is the former North Penn Army Reserve Base. We had heard that perhaps a park would be built there, possibly a nursing home or corporate facility, but most often we heard that the area would be dedicated as open space. We were very disturbed to learn recently that the Methacton School District is asking to relocate the district bus depot to the site.

As you know, Berks and Potshop Roads are popular cut-through roads to Routes 363 and 73, and Township Line Road. Traffic at the intersection of the two streets is very heavy throughout the day, especially in the mornings between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. and from 3:00 in the afternoon through rush hour. The buses will definitely be leaving the depot and returning during these busiest of hours. The traffic volume will also be increased significantly by the bus drivers who have to drive to and from the depot twice each day to get to their buses.

Some of the buses will leave the depot by turning left onto Berks Road. This is an almost impossible feat. The cars moving along Berks Road in both directions go too fast for the buses to get out on Berks which is a narrow street with poor visibility to begin with. There have been many serious accidents at the intersection of Berks and Bean Roads because of speeding and poor visibility. Most of the buses will leave the depot by turning right onto Berks Road; then drive the short distance to the intersection of Berks and Potshop Roads. Berks Road is too narrow a road to accommodate buses coming and going in both directions, and the intersection at Potshop is very tight with poor visibility. Cars coming from the direction of Route 363 need to slow down significantly to make the left turn onto Berks, which is less than a 90 degree angle, while watching for cars coming up the hill in the other direction. Buses need a much longer clearance time to make a turn in front of opposing traffic, especially from a stop, so the buses and cars will likely get tied up at the corner. This area slows to a crawl when the weather is bad.

It very well could be that the Army Reserve Base is a suitable property for the bus depot, but the roads in this quiet section of the township simply were not built for this volume or type of traffic. We are afraid that eventually traffic lights will need to be installed, which will further snarl the area. We are also worried that eventually Berks Road will need to be widened. Worcester Township’s Open Space policy states that “preserving open space is a core initiative in Worcester,” and “Worcester is working to maintain the quality of life to which its residents have become accustomed.” Because of this issue, we have become very concerned about our quality of life here. Further, we are concerned that our property value will be severely diminished by the constant coming and going of buses, and by the added traffic and noise directly in front of our home.

We are hoping that the LRA will decide that it will do what is best for the taxpayers of Worcester Township, and find a more suitable use for the Army Reserve property. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Very truly yours,

Frank and Joan Harvey
1588 Broadview Lane
Norristown, PA 19403
484-437-4580

From: "Joan Harvey" <joanharvey@comcast.net>