

March 27, 2018

Leslie S. Richards
Secretary of Transportation
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
1101 South Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104

Secretary Richards:

I am writing from [*INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION OR BUSINESS NAME*]. I support the mission of Building a Better Boyertown (BBB) to keep Boyertown a special place by preserving its historical heritage, maintaining its link to the past and cultivating a vibrant present and prosperous future by providing opportunities for business, industry, and the arts while enhancing the quality of life today and for future generations. Because of this mission, I am strongly invested in the future of Boyertown and its environs. I am committed to protecting the economic interest and quality-of-life of this region for the people who live here and for the people who come here to work, visit, and play, both for today and for the future.

I write with three requests. First, please mandate inclusion of the Borough of Boyertown as part of the PennDOT traffic study being conducted in connection with the Delaware County Solid Waste Authority's ("DCWSA") permit application seeking to expand the Rolling Hills Landfill in Berks County. The issue of traffic congestion in and around Boyertown will be key to the harms-benefit review the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection ("PaDEP") will perform on DCSWA's permit application. At present it appears DCSWA intends to exclude the Borough from its traffic study. Please acknowledge that traffic flow impacts beyond the immediate approach road to the landfill and must form a part of the data submitted to PaDEP for consideration. Second, PaDEP is in the process of scheduling a public hearing on DCSWA's permit application for June of this year. Because transportation issues associated with landfill traffic significantly impact the social, economic and environmental components of the analysis PaDEP is required to perform, please direct PennDOT to schedule its own public hearing, and in fact, for the sake of streamlining testimony, please schedule the public hearing jointly with both PaDEP and PennDOT. Finally, in order to better measure traffic impacts associated with DCSWA's permit application, and in connection with local efforts by the Boyertown Area School District, BBB and other non-profits like the Colebrookdale Railroad to promote walkability in the community, please conduct a walkability audit through PennDOT's Smart Transportation initiative, with the goal of submitting the results of that audit at June's public hearing.

The Delaware County Solid Waste Authority's proposed landfill expansion in Earl Township, PA will only serve to exacerbate the transfer trailer problem that has plagued the idyllic Borough of Boyertown for the past 30 years. I refer to the congestion and noise generated in this highly walkable and pedestrian-friendly urban community by upwards of 500 construction vehicles and transfer trailer one-way trips per day attempting to navigate through downtown Boyertown via East Philadelphia and North Reading Avenues, to say nothing of the damage being caused by that heavy traffic to historic store-fronts and homes, structures that were not engineered for the nature and volume of such traffic.

The proposed landfill expansion portends a substantial long-term detriment to the economy and environment of several eastern Berks municipalities and to Boyertown Borough in particular. This organization has made significant investments, supported by sizeable development grants, to promote

Boyertown as a tourist destination. The endless stream of transfer trailers slogging through the town's quaint streets is, however, antithetical to an economy increasingly based on tourism.

Berks County's Disposal Agreement with the Authority provides that the Authority's pending major permit modification application is subject to and cannot be granted without affirmative approval by the Berks County Commissioners. Will you please urge the Commissioners NOT to provide their consent to the permit as presently constituted, as the Authority has not detailed its plans to mitigate the burdens expansion will disproportionately place on Boyertown as a non-host community, burdens we are sure the Department of Environmental Protection's harms-benefit analysis will confirm. I also feel strongly that any consent be further conditioned upon consideration of a non-host community impact fee, and the Authority providing a mechanism to repair those historic store-fronts and homes along East Philadelphia and North Reading Avenues that have been damaged by 30 years of heavy truck traffic.

A Petition that generated nearly 1,500 signatures suggests there is widespread community support in Boyertown behind efforts to condition permit approval upon finding an interim alternate transportation route to the landfill. I request the Department to condition approval on the use of local rail infrastructure, the Colebrookdale Railroad, as the preferred alternative to a presently unsustainable means of transporting ash. The Colebrookdale Railroad has the capacity to provide the required transportation infrastructure, and the Railroad is prepared to work closely with the Authority, PA DEP's Waste Program and the Borough to site an environmentally friendly transfer station and to engineer rail as an alternate means of transporting loads of ash for disposal. Using railheads at transfer stations to transport waste to municipal solid waste landfills has proven successful elsewhere. This mode of transportation would be more environmentally friendly, more fuel efficient, safer for pedestrians in this walkable urban community, and impose fewer burdens on a region already adversely impacted by compromised air quality. I fear that the burdens imposed upon the local community will only be made worse if the landfill's permit application is granted without such a condition, further hampering efforts by the community to offer enhanced investment opportunities to promote economic growth.

Thank you again for your public support of this effort to protect Boyertown in this process.

Sincerely,