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March 8, 2018

Honorable Michael Gossert, President
Cumberland Valley School District
Board of School Directors
6746 Carlisle Pike
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Dear Mike:

Following numerous constituent communications with our County offices, we are writing to respectfully request the Cumberland Valley School Board's reconsideration of its plans to acquire, via eminent domain, the preserved McCormick farm property in Silver Spring Township.

While we can understand the district's need to plan for the future, we are, nonetheless, deeply concerned that the school district's proposed action appears to unnecessarily pit one public purpose, or interest, against another.

For nearly 30 years, through our County's Farmland Preservation Program, Cumberland County's past and present Boards of Commissioners have taken action, in conjunction with the state's Farmland Preservation Program, to preserve, in perpetuity, nearly 19,000 acres of rich farm acreage in our County for the generations that follow.

While our County program does not include the 116-acre, historic McCormick tract, the preservation of this acreage by the Natural Lands Trust, which predates our County's preservation program, is an important component of our County's overall need to balance our County's population and economic growth with the preservation of some of the most fertile farm land and soils in the world.

Along these lines, with respect to planning for the future, it is important to understand that our County's Comprehensive Plan, which was just recently updated following extensive public review and input, along with its Future Land Use Map, designates the McCormick property as agriculture/prime farmland area.

As the stewards of one of the finest school districts in the state, one that we as your County Commissioners are extremely proud to say we also represent, we would ask that you seriously consider other properties or alternatives for the district's school expansion needs – options that don't place one important public purpose at direct odds with another.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

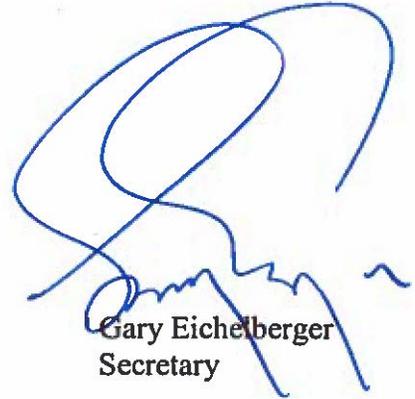
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