

Dear _____,

I remain concerned about the Board of Education's decision to terminate the Brickyard School Site lease to farmer Nick Marvell and instead enter a public-private partnership with MSI to build soccer fields on this site. It seems that at every turn, the BOE and County kept the public in the dark and out the process. MSI and the County have been in talks since 2009 about this property, a letter went to the BOE about this plan that same year, planning staff told the County one year ago this month that public dialogue needed to be started on this controversial land use change; and yet both the tenant of the property and the public at large did not find out about this change until three days before the BOE hearing.

The BOE and the County have maintained that legally they were not obligated to alert the public. Legal or not, these actions represent a serious breach of trust and transparency, *Montgomery County citizens expect and demand better*. The scant opportunity for comment at the BOE hearing has not added the needed transparency. This is where the issue remains today- the public is told that there will be an opportunity to weigh in on the lighting and parking at the soccer fields, but there will be no other opportunity to discuss what should be done with this publicly held land. Trust has been breached and remains un-repaired.

More than being a rushed- closed door decision, this plan is a faulty one that may cost tax payers money. I understand that the County must reimburse MSI for any improvements made to the property when the land reverts to the BOE for school construction, there seems to be no cap in place on how much this payment will be. On the flip side, the current tenant is making the county money, not making any expensive improvements, and at the same time not using overtaxed County services such as fire/rescue/ police.

On the topic of the farm, it is a unique resource for the wider farming community and the whole region, proving organic and non-gmo seed to the many organic farmers that would otherwise have to drive 4 hours to get the same quality products. The County has stated they want to support locally grown sustainable food, county residents have voted with their wallets; farmers markets are booming, direct sales clubs for farm products have long waiting lists. The BOE's decision takes a hub of this local food economy out of the County for good, and sets back any attempts at a thriving local food system.

It is up to the County to set this right and restore trust, please hold open and public hearings on this issue as soon as possible. People across the county have different ideas of what should occupy this public land and each opinion is valid, but to not provide for open and timely discussion in the public sphere continues to be a serious breach of trust.

Sincerely,

Name

Address

email