

***Comments to the NT Board of Supervisors (BoS) on behalf of the NCCA regarding the
Arcadia Green application during the public comment segment of the hearing***

***Prepared & presented by: Peter Ancona
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My name is Peter Ancona and I am Vice President of the Newtown Crossing Community Association (NCCA) board of directors, a voluntary board. I have lived in Newtown Crossing since 1986. I am here representing the 630 homeowners in NC, and am standing in for James Downey, our President, who is recovering from an illness.

I am here to tell you why I believe the application for Arcadia Green, as submitted, **should be denied**. I believe this for two reasons for which I will expand on shortly:

First, because, although I am a layman and am not involved with how applications for developments are processed, it appears to me that the normal process of Planning Commission(PC) due-diligence on behalf of the BoS was short-circuited by this applicant.

Secondly, and most important, this is a bad project that while it proposes to address safety and traffic issues that led to the denial for the first application (Arcadia I) presents two design scenarios that are non-starters (High Street egress connection & Newtown By-pass egress ramp) and a third, conceptual alternative, that is not even addressed in the application or preliminary plans (access road to Millpond Rd through condemnation of NCCA or Eagle Ridge (ER) property). And while the applicant's expert witnesses testified that everything that was submitted either does, or will, meet all applicable codes or planning standards, the bottom line is that for all practical purposes, what they are proposing comes down to a single-access/egress PRD (the same as Arcadia I) with 2 ½ times the housing units—which means at least 2 ½ times the traffic for the residents of NC, ER and Liberty Square (Sq), Crown Point (CP) and the motorists that utilize the North and Southbound Buck Rd roadways. This traffic will also affect pedestrians and bicyclists in these same communities.

To provide more detail on the first point of contention, the Process:

-Isn't the normal process for the processing of a PRD that the application is submitted, reviewed by the PC, questions/concerns vetted and addressed (or not) and a recommendation from the PC to the BoS on whether to approve or deny the application?

-Isn't it expected that the applicant answer the questions by the PC, providing enough time for both the PC and applicant to address the issues?

-If hearings result and dates outside of regularly scheduled PC or BoS meetings, then dates for those meetings are coordinated with the counsel of parties to the proceeding so that full participation can occur, including review time, preparation time, and examination of witnesses?

-This application and the process seems to have short-circuited the PC. Have they ever made a recommendation to the BoS to approve or deny the Arcadia Green application? If they have, what was their basis, since they were not a part of the process?

-Our attorney, Steven Harris, could only participate in 1 of the 5 hearing dates due to previous commitments and no consultation to coordinate mutually acceptable dates.

To provide more detail on the second point of contention, the Plan, specifically, pedestrian/bicyclist and traffic safety flaws:

-The development proposed presents an egress scenario to the Newtown Bypass which PennDOT has already said is a non-starter.

-The development plan also proposes an egress road into Newtown Crossing, an approved & filed PRD that, per law, cannot be changed without an application and review process.

-That aforementioned application cannot be approved without agreement by NCCA and its members whereby they derive some benefit from the change.

-I think it is clear that one-way traffic IN to a small residential NC street (High St cul-de-sac) that was never designed for this use or additional traffic is NOT going to benefit either the residents of this street or the entire development, from a safety, traffic, property value or quality of life perspective.

-And, in fact, PennDOT, the township's traffic engineer and even the applicant's traffic expert all have testified that the connection is sub-optimal at best, and at worst, not even allowable.

-The option of an egress road from Arcadia Green to Millpond Rd in NC is not even on the plans or the application, has been rejected by the boards from NC and ER (the owners of the ground needed to construct such a road), and should be rejected in whole as part of this application.

-The traffic into NC would have NO positive benefits to the residents of NC, ER, LS, and per the applicant's traffic expert's own actual measurement of speed on Millpond Rd, will lead to significantly more vehicles travelling at speeds 20-25 mph over the posted speed of 25 mph.

-The applicant's traffic study and testimony by their expert admitted in his conclusions that a *single access/egress point to Arcadia Green* is the best and most viable option for the development, hence their offer to improve the flow of traffic on Buck Rd to facilitate that option. However, this option, even with the proposed improvements to Buck Rd that will, by design, take property from either ER or Crown Point, or both, will STILL lead to additional traffic through NC, ER, LS roads:

-It assumes that cars leaving Arcadia Green for the by-pass (E or W) will exit the development, make their way across two lanes of traffic to get to a left-turn lane approximately 100 yards away so they can make a U-turn to get to the by-pass.

-That may be possible and may work with traffic planning standards and criteria, but in reality many, if not most, motorists, especially during high-traffic periods, will probably just turn right onto Buck Rd and then right into NC and either make an illegal u-turn or drive through NC/ER or both to get to their destination.

-Planning criteria, tables, standards and other tools are necessary for engineers to design buildings, bridges and roads, but they do NOT account for what real people will do in the real world, after their work is done.

To summarize, you folks on the board have to use your judgment, experience and good sense to cut through all the presentations and noise and do what is right for the safety and quality of life of the people, children and motorists that are ALREADY HERE, not just think about those to come.

You also have to look beyond the developers and engineers that are here right now but will soon be LONG GONE, leaving you, us and the future BoS's to deal with the decisions that are going to be made with the information before us now.

We are asking you, on behalf of those that are sitting here tonight and those that are not here—the people that elected you to represent OUR interests—to DENY the Arcadia Green application.

Thank you.