

August 25, 2025

Township of West Orange Planning Board
66 Main Street
West Orange, N.J. 07052

**Re: West Essex Highlands, Inc.
PB-24-01**

Dear Members of the West Orange Planning Board,

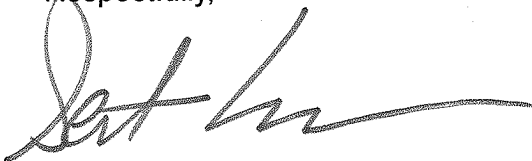
I live on Howell Drive and have been following the testimony about the steep slope on the eastern end of the property, directly below the proposed Building "D" in the development application. The conflicting reports from Langan Engineering and Geoffrey M. Goll of Princeton Hydro only raise more serious questions. For those of us whose homes sit at the bottom of this slope and already rely on retaining walls, the stability of this steep slope is a major safety issue.

I cannot forget what happened a few years ago on Northfield Avenue in West Orange, when a rockslide forced families from the Ron Jolyn apartments. That disaster displaced residents and showed that the risks could have been avoided if they had been studied and addressed earlier. A report prepared for the township on nearby properties found conditions "conducive to periodic rockfall" and recommended immediate and future protections. The report also highlighted the importance of examining surface drainage patterns during normal and extreme rainfall. I am not convinced that this has been fully studied for the slope directly below Building "D" for this project. We must not repeat that mistake.

Given these facts, I respectfully request that the Planning Board retain an independent geotechnical engineer to conduct an independent study of the slope stability and the potential risks to the homes below from blasting and construction of Building "D". This study must be performed using the highest recognized professional standards available to assess rockfall, slope failure, flooding hazards and recommend pre and post construction mitigation steps where appropriate. These risks need to be measured and addressed now, not after the fact. This will ensure that our homes will remain safe in the long term.

On behalf of my neighbors on Howell Drive, we are relying on the Township of West Orange Planning Board to take every reasonable step to ensure our safety and well-being, making it your top priority. Nothing can override the laws of physics. Let's have all the answers up front, not after the fact, when it may be too late.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Seth Weisleder', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Seth Weisleder
17 Howell Drive
West Orange, NJ, 07052