

Jonestown (1987)

Concern about Moros proposed plan

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CA000330L

Borough of Jamesburg

INCORPORATED 1887

Municipal Building
31 East Railroad Avenue
Jamesburg, New Jersey 08831

September 9, 1987

Phone:
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CA000330L

Hon. Edward J. Boccher, Esq.
Steinberg & Boccher
65 Old Route 22
Clinton, New Jersey 08809

Re: Monroe Township,
Middlesex County-
Mt. Laurel Obligations

Dear Mr. Boccher:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear on behalf of the Borough of Jamesburg and voice our concerns on Monroe's proposals.

At our Council meeting of September 8, 1987, I requested an executive session (under the rules of possible litigation for purposes of the Open Public Meeting Act of 1974) and reviewed with those members of the council present, and the Mayor, the results of that meeting.

I also presented a rather hastily constructed document, which I enclose, entitled "Objections of the Borough of Jamesburg, County of Middlesex to Monroe's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan". The Mayor and four (4) council people present were unanimous in adopting this preliminary list of objections, with the understanding that a more indept study of the situation is needed, that the document is in a laymans terms, without benefit of advice from either our borough attorney, engineer or planner, none of which could be present at this meeting.

The feeling is that many more objections may be raised, and feasibility studies, especially in the area of sewer line capacity is needed by our borough professionals.

The governing body is also questioning why the residents of Jamesburg should not be alerted to the Monroe proposals and why objections should not be publicized. I reiterated your request for confidentiality with regard to last week's meeting, however I also feel that Jamesburg has been kept in the dark with regard to sites 6, 6a, 5 and 8.

In reviewing correspondence from the Hon. Thomas R. Farino, Jr., who represents all of the builders involved in these sites, some mis-understandings or misconceptions are apparent.

August 5, 1987

RE: Site 5

Para 3 - Jamesburg is not, and to the governing bodies knowledge, has never supported a proposal to the Monroe Township development into the circulation network presently in place as part of the Jamesburg development.

Para 5 - The statement that the developer has already posted an appropriate sum with the municipality to reserve future capacity for that purpose, is also false.

I have confirmed with the Municipal Clerk, Helen Mychalchyk that a check in the amount of ten thousand (\$10,000.00) dollars has been deposited to the borough "sewer maintenance escrow account" from the developers of Beaver Brook Run, with a notation "sewer escrow". No correspondence accompanied this check and Ms. Mychalchyk could not at this time recall how or who turned the check over to her. It is her impression however that this check was deposited as part of the 337 units being constructed in Jamesburg.

August 4, 1987 RE: Site 8

Para 2 - The statement that "it should be clear that the Borough of Jamesburg supports the proposed petition for rezoning in Monroe Township.....etc..." is just not factual.

Para 4 - The statement "...the subject site would be serviced by an existing sewer line tying into Gatzmer Avenue which presently contains unused capacity." may or may not be true, but only a feasibility study by the borough engineer could ascertain this fact.

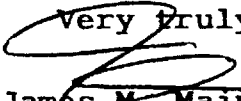
We feel we are looking at some mis-leading statements in these letters but would entertain any documentation that Mr. Farino wishes to submit to us.

As a matter of fact Mr. Jules Szalay, Jamesburg Borough Engineer has advised me that he had some "off the cuff" conversation with Mr. John Guyla, Jr. in which he noted the existence of a study which indicates the capacity of the Forsgate line would not facilitate his Monroe units and advised him that another route to the pumping station should be considered. He also confirms that the ten thousand (\$10,000.00) deposit into the escrow account was for future repairs and maintenance of existing lines, was an agreement made with the Jamesburg Planning Board and had nothing to do with guaranteeing future capacity.

He also advises that a conceptual plan by GGP Industries for construction at Site 8 (Jamesburg portion) was before the Jamesburg Planning Board approximately one year ago and at that time he advised that a sanitary study would need to be approved, and that this had never been completed.

Please advise the undersigned with regard to any and all upcoming meetings.

Very truly yours,


James M. Main, President
Jamesburg Borough Council

cc: Barbara J. Williams, Esq.
Thomas R. Farino, Jr. Esq.
Mario Appuzzo, Esq.

The concern of the borough of Jamesburg is that while Mr. Rogers made a statement that "Jamesburg is in the drivers seat", with regard to sewer service in Sites 5 and 8, he also stated that under the existing contract between the Borough and the MUA that we had no guaranteed capacity. An Engineer study was conducted and is available (VanNote Harvey Associates) on the impact of the proposed former high school conversion from a vacant building to an office building, and this included provision for the entire Beaver Brook project. That study indicated that the Forsgate Drive sewer line would be very close to recommended capacity on completion of both projects. Therefore an addition of 112 units in Site 5, would certainly over-capacitate the Forsgate Drive line. The "driver seat" comment apparently referred to the fact that the Site 5 project could not proceed without a provision from the builder to provide a larger line along Forsgate Drive. This cost could add thousands of dollars to each of the 112 proposed units.

Water

The Borough of Jamesburg is serviced with water by a private company (New Jersey Water Company, Lakewood, N.J.). The Monroe MUA has been granted a small franchise in the northernmost section of the borough and loops water service down Dayton Road (to some newly constructed homes) and up Rhode Hall Road.

Mr. Rogers has stated that water service is not a problem to any of the proposed sites, however since both Beaver Brook and the proposed G.G.P. project, in Jamesburg would be serviced by N.J. Water Company, it would seem natural that sites 5 and 8 would also be serviced by this private company. Therefore, Jamesburg would request a feasibility study in this situation as to available water supply in the area.

Also, on a regional basis, water shortages are a known fact in East Brunswick Township and Old Bridge Township and even in a year such as 1987 when reserves are high both communities suffered from restrictions. We have heard rumours that the State, mandating a regional solution to other area shortage problems may well place restrictions on the in ground reserves which the MUA (Monroe) must maintain. It may also follow, that N.J. Water Company may be mandated to maintain reserves.

Therefore, while water capacity has been handled in a rather cavalier fashion, the borough of Jamesburg would ask for a regional report on availability in future years.

Emergency Services

Jamesburg has a fire district and is serviced by the Jamesburg Volunteer Fire Company. While the Board of Fire Commissioners who are elected by the Jamesburg eligible voters has the responsibility of Jamesburg, the Volunteer fire Company, by mutual aid agreements covers areas of Monroe Township. They also answer many calls for backup assistance in other areas of Monroe. The Commission budget is approximately \$150,000.00 per annum, with a revenue figure of about \$10,000.00 coming in contributions from two (2) Monroe fire districts. A recent defeat of the district budget brought to light that over fifty (50%) percent of the fire calls answered were in Monroe Township. The volunteer fire company draws members from Monroe Township and indeed over the years this close relationship was built, because of the lack of protection in Monroe and the

servicing of large areas of the township by the borough volunteer company. As Monroe grew and fire districts were formed, less areas were covered by Jamesburg, however today's figures indicate that the Jamesburg taxpayer is somewhat subsidizing fire protection in Monroe. All of the proposed projects are contiguous to Jamesburg and further subsidation is foreseen, if the Sites are approved.

The Jamesburg First Aid Squad (volunteer) services one or more of the adult communities in Monroe and large sections of the Township. All volunteer squads are experiencing problems in today's economy. The borough taxpayer contributes through the Municipal Budget process about one (1) point of their tax bill toward this service. The squad solicits from both borough residents and township resident and receive healthy annual donations from the adult communities, and as a matter of fact a large percentage of their revenues come directly from donations from the adult communities. Monroe Township has now announced plans to establish a volunteer unit to service these adult communities, in effect dis-enfranchising the Jamesburg squad from the largest percentage of their revenue. However, all four (4) sites are again contiguous to Jamesburg and our squad would be the nearest emergency unit. The squad would not be able to replace the adult community revenues thru private solicitations in the four (4) sites and once again to maintain services the Jamesburg taxpayer would need to subsidize the operation.

While police service is a jurisdictional matter, both departments have the capability of calling the other for back up. Jamesburg maintains what we consider an adequate department and in fact the annual cost exceed twentyfive (25%) percent of the annual municipal budget. Some additional stress would be placed on our department by the very number of units involved. We would certainly need to factor in an increase cost for additional criminal and motor vehicle accident investigation time. Also, Monroe Township Police Headquarters is located just south of Jamesburg at the Municipal Complex on Perrineville Rd. The central third of Monroe is the most populous and in order for sector patrols to either back up other sector patrols or respond to emergencies they must traverse Jamesburg, both east and west and north and south. More and more we are experiencing Monroe police vehicles with flashing lights and sirens speeding through Jamesburg. This cannot be helped and Jamesburg is not objecting to this response, but a fact of life is that as Monroe expands this will increase and certainly cause more hazard to our residents. The Jamesburg Police Department, because of the increase in motor vehicle traffic is producing more and more summons. Two hundred (200) summons were issued in the month of August 1987, this computes to almost 30 per month per scheduled officer. Aside from the increase on police overtime, for court appearances, this has strained our part-time Municipal Court system, which would be even further strained if the four sites were approved, where proposed.

Population Density

The Borough of Jamesburg is an area of 9/10th of a square mile, and we are rapidly approaching a 5,000 per square mile population ratio. The approval of these four (4) sites could

easily produce a ratio of 7,500 per square mile. Monroe Township on the other hand is fortyfour (44) square miles in area. Over the years, their zoning regulations have insured low density in the Township and it is questionable, given all the available areas of little or no developement, where a low density situation could exist, just why Monroe Township has decided to inundate the Jamesburg area with high density.

Traffic:

The Borough of Jamesburg is already experiencing traffic pattern problems. The most pressing problem is travelling north from Englishtown onto Buckelew Ave-East Railroad Ave.-Gatzmer Ave-Dayton Rhode Hall Road. This is a County route and is a corridor route to people coming from the Freehold and Englishtown area and south Monroe Township and going toward the Dayton, North Brunswick and New Brunswick area. Also feeding into this bottleneck is Pergola Ave., which feeds in traffic from Manalapan and the populated east area of Monroe Township. The bottleneck is the point where Pergola Ave., Buckelew Ave. East Railroad Ave and Forsgate Drive come together. A Middlesex County bridge, which needs replacement and has a history of deterioration actually cuts the borough into two parts. When and if this bridge is replaced and/or major repairs made, the borough will be cut in two and no emergency services available to the southern end of the Borough. A similar situation would exist if motor vehcile traffic were to restrict movement in the area.

Also, when travelling north from Pergola and Buckele Ave's. a left hand turn onto Forsgate Drive provides access to Exit 8A of the New Jersey State Turnpike as well as access to the proposed large Industrial Park sites in Monroe and South Brunswick. In additi this is a corridor route to County route 130, State Route 1, and the Cranbury, Plainsboro and Princeton areas.

Another problem area is the intersection of East/West Railroad Ave's., Lincoln and Gatzmer Area, which is five (5) roads feeding into a major intersection.

We already face long delays at these bottlenecks during morning and evening rush hours. Jamesburg has requested that Middles County consider traffic control lights at the intersections of Forsgate Drive and Half Acre Road and Forsgate Drive and Perrineville Road. This seems a natural extention to the traffic lights already provided Monroe in an easternly direction on route 31, at the turnpik entrance and at the intersection of Forsgate Drive and Prospect Plain Road. The county and state has provided four lane travel in the areas of Forsgate Country Club and the Rossmoor Adult Community and area expanding the lanes of the bridge which goes over the turnpi but no provision have been made to upgrade the corridor road through Jamesburg, which feeds this expansion. To date the answer to the Jan burg problem at these two interesections has been a four-way stop sign at one and the elimination of some trees and brush at another, hardly adequate.

Infrastructure:

Sites 5 and 8 impact on the underground sewer feeder lines and have been previously outlined. Sites 6 and 6a would directly impact on municipal roads (New Street, Lake Street and Forge Road)

All of these roads must be maintained by municipal dollar and while D.O.T. grants might be used for Lake and Forge, we have prioritized other old roads in Jamesburg for D.O.T. money usage. These roads are narrow for the demand that would be placed on them and the Borough Police Department is already under orders to conduct a survey and recommend if one-side parking might be in order today, let alone to handle the impact of additional motor vehicle traffic.

Other Considerations:

For many years, the Borough of Jamesburg was under a mandate from the D.E.P. not to allow extensions to our antiquated sewer system. For many years while Monroe was able to expand their tax base, Jamesburg was hampered. Several years ago, with the agreement for the Jamesburg system to tie into the Middlesex County trunk line thru the Monroe MUA, Jamesburg finally was able to begin expanding its tax base and begin to stabilize its tax rate.

One method, thru the zoning process, that Jamesburg took to avail themselves of what they considered to be the best possible rateables available, was to zone for townhouse/condominium projects. The rationale being that homeowner associations were responsible for many of the infrastructure expenses as well as day to day operational expenses (snow removal, street lighting, fire hydrant service, garbage/trash removal etc....). We have steadfastly rejected requests for the borough to assume any and all of these responsibilities under the municipal tax structure. Monroe, on the other hand has already assumed some of these expenses in one or more of the Adult communities, and would need to extend this to any home owner association at either site 5 or 8. You would have neighbors in both sites, in effect being unfairly taxed for services and Jamesburg would be under pressure to conform to services afforded by the much richer community of Monroe. In addition, owners in units such as located in site 5 and 8 currently pay an annual sewer fee to the Borough of Jamesburg of \$15.86 per one thousand gallons of water use per annum, based on winter quarter usage. The fee to the Jamesburg resident for sewer fees is approximately three times higher than those in Monroe. In these sites neighbors would face a similar discrepancy.

Jamesburg has generally supported the Monroe authorities in opposing a use permit for a 12 acre (to be expanded to 125 acres) landfill site, south of Jamesburg, known as the "Etsch Landfill". Monroe's opposition lists traffic congestion and safety of school children as some main concerns, along with environmental issues. Jamesburg, in their opposition to the landfill lists the same concern and it would seem inappropriate for Monroe to be so concerned about Jamesburg in that matter, but to completely disregard the same issue in solving their Mount Laurel problems.

Jamesburg could easily support the rehabilitation of site 6a. While we do not have the resources of Monroe, we have for many years provided affordable housing units for the South County area, including federally subsidized low income units (Cherry Court) and senior citizen housing (Barclay Village). Early on Jamesburg was separated from legal action brought by the Urban League, and we have lived up to the spirit of the Mt. Laurel decision without pressure. We would, knowing the demographics of site 6a, support a comment by the Civic League, that a segregated community could easily emanate if site 6a were allowed to proceed as a separate entity.