

966 Home Development in Londonderry Twp

The proposed School Heights Village development would have 290 single-family homes, 390 town houses, 286 apartments, and 125,000 square feet of commercial space on 196 acres near Rt. 230 in Londonderry Township. This plan was made possible because the Supervisors had approved a Zoning Change called TND (for **Traditional Neighborhood Development**), a form of High Density Mixed Residential Commercial Development.

Could it happen in Conewago? It almost did.

In 2008, the Planning Commission and the Supervisors finished work on their Draft Comprehensive Plan, a blueprint for future zoning changes. **Galen Shelly** was at the May 28, 2008 meeting when final changes were being made to the Future Land Use Map.

It included a new **Mixed Used (High Density Residential and Commercial) Zone**, 250 acres of 1/4 acre lots on both sides of 743 south of the elementary school. It would allow *nearly 1000 housing units* to be built there, as well as commercial development with no minimum lot size. *This proposed zoning would have allowed almost as big a development as in Londonderry.*

Joel Buckley vs. Hi-Density In Conewago

Joel Buckley studied the plan. He identified a number of problems, particularly the **250 acre Mixed Use Zone** and the **600 acre Hershey Trust Zone**, which would have allowed development of hundreds of acres of farmland on 743. After hearing from Buckley in June, Chairman Grubb asked the Committee to eliminate the Mixed Use Zone from the East side of 743, reducing it from 250 to about 107 acres. *By this action alone, Buckley helped eliminate zoning that could have allowed another 600 houses in Conewago.*

Through his website, emails, and letters to the editor Mr. Buckley alerted the community. At a Public Meeting on October 15, Mr. Buckley and others criticized the 100 acre **Mixed Use Zone**, the 600 acre **Hershey Trust Zoning**, and warned the plan could **turn 743 into another Rt 39**. Chairman Grubb pledged to make changes. Buckley spent many hours and hundred of dollars to prepare a 30 page analysis of the plan proposing better alternatives.

In Jan 2009, in response to public comments, the Planning Commission recommended changes to the plan. Most important were:

- Eliminating the **Mixed Use Zone** (high density commercial/residential) by the School.
- Reducing the **Eleemysonary** (Hershey Trust) Zone from 600 to just 250 acres.

Every member of the Planning Commission will tell you Joel Buckley's criticisms and suggestions helped them to develop a better Comprehensive Plan.