

**To:** Mayor James Davy: [jdavy@penningtonboro.org](mailto:jdavy@penningtonboro.org)  
Council President Nadine Stern: [nsstern@penningtonboro.org](mailto:nsstern@penningtonboro.org),  
Pennington Planning Board: [planning@penningtonboro.org](mailto:planning@penningtonboro.org)  
Borough Clerk Betty Sterling: [bsterling@penningtonboro.org](mailto:bsterling@penningtonboro.org)

**Date:** October 1, 2025

**Re:** Community Response Regarding Improvident Inclusion of Senior Center  
Site in Housing Plan – Block 701, Lots 5–8

Dear Members of the Pennington Borough Council and Planning Board,

On behalf of the *Protect Our Corner of Pennington Community Group* and the residents of Reading Street, West Welling Avenue, Hale Street, and surrounding areas, we are submitting this formal community response regarding the proposed redevelopment of the Senior Center site (Block 701, Lots 5–8) as part of Pennington Borough's Fourth Round Housing Element & Fair Share Plan.

This letter has been **delivered both in person and digitally** ahead of the **Monday, October 6, 2025 Borough Council meeting**, and we respectfully request that it be **entered into the public record** and considered as part of all future deliberations related to the Master Plan and housing strategy.

We believe this site was **improvidently placed** in the plan for affordable housing due to a combination of **logistical, infrastructural, educational, and public safety limitations** that make it unsuitable for high-density residential development.

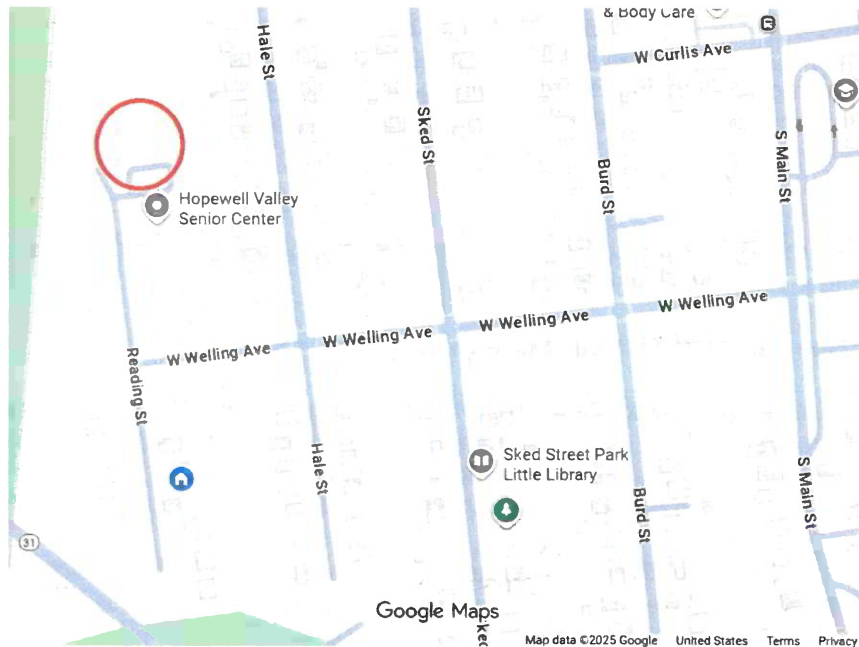
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### Key Reasons This Site Is Not in Public Interest

- **Traffic Volume Impact:**

The proposed possible 31-unit development would likely introduce **60+ vehicles** (assuming 2 per unit) into a neighborhood with already limited road capacity. Reading Street is a narrow, quiet, residential road not designed to absorb this level of daily traffic.

- The increase in vehicle trips would lead to **chronic congestion**, especially during school drop-off/pick-up hours and commuter peaks.
- The narrow width of West Welling, Hale, and Reading Streets **currently support only single direction traffic** anywhere cars are parked,. Residents routinely pull over to allow oncoming cars to pass.
- There are **no alternative routes** to diffuse traffic, meaning all vehicles would funnel through a single corridor.
- Pennington Borough Public Works vehicles, delivery trucks, commercial vehicles, construction vehicles, etc., all currently have significant trouble navigating the narrow streets.
- This volume would also increase wear and tear on local roads, requiring additional maintenance and municipal resources.



- **Safety Risks for Residents and Emergency Services:**

The single point of access via Reading Street presents serious **public safety concerns**.

- **Emergency vehicles** (fire, ambulance, police) may face delays due to congestion and limited turning radius.
- The lack of a second access road is **not just inconvenient—it's dangerous**, especially in scenarios requiring evacuation or rapid response.
- Increased traffic heightens risks for **pedestrians, cyclists, and children**, particularly in a neighborhood with limited sidewalks or traffic calming infrastructure.

- **Prohibitive Constraints on Creating a Second Road:**

The surrounding geography, including existing homes, wooded areas, and the adjacent train line—makes it **physically and financially prohibitive** to construct a second access road. This leaves the site permanently constrained to a single point of entry and exit.

- **Lack of Public Transportation Access:**

The site is **not walkable to NJ Transit bus stops or train stations**, making it car-dependent and unsuitable for residents who rely on public transit, especially those in affordable housing.

- **Impact on Local School System:**

Multiple attendees raised concerns about the **influx of new students** into the school district, which currently **does not provide busing** for many in-borough students.

- The district is already strained, providing only **paid busing** to this neighborhood for grades 7-12, which currently costs families **up to \$1,000 per student or household**.
- This would disproportionately affect families and could lead to **increased taxes** to cover transportation, staffing, and infrastructure needs.

- **Environmental & Community Impact:**

The site includes wooded areas and green space that contribute to the ecological health and character of our neighborhood. Redevelopment would permanently alter this landscape.

- **Stormwater Management:**

The mandates regarding stormwater management would be difficult to meet in this congested site, if overdeveloped. High density construction that reduces pervious ground surface risks further groundwater pollution and flooding of neighboring basement/house structures which are already at risk.

- **Master Plan Adoption Consideration:**

We believe that **by omitting this site from the Master Plan**, the Borough would significantly **increase the likelihood of the plan being adopted with little or no opposition**. Removing this controversial parcel would demonstrate responsiveness to community feedback and strengthen public trust in the planning process.

- **Alternate Use Proposal:**

We invite the Borough to consider **future alternate uses** for the Senior Center site that would better serve the public interest and preserve the character of the neighborhood.

- A compelling example is the **green space near Toll Gate Grammar School**, which honors and memorializes a former council member and serves as a peaceful, community-oriented space.
- The Senior Center site could similarly be repurposed in the future to **honor Pennington's history**, provide **passive recreation**, or serve as a **community gathering space**—uses that would enhance rather than burden the neighborhood.

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## Formal Requests

We respectfully request the following actions:

1. **Remove the Senior Center site from the current housing plan** and re-evaluate its suitability based on objective criteria including access, safety, infrastructure, and educational impact.
2. **Commission formal studies** on traffic impact, emergency response modeling, school district capacity, and environmental effects before any zoning changes or approvals are considered.
3. **Engage the community** through transparent communication, public forums, and advisory input before advancing any redevelopment plans.
4. **Preserve senior services** within Pennington Borough and ensure any relocation maintains accessibility for vulnerable populations.

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## Public Record Request

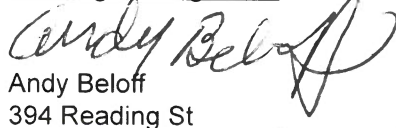
We respectfully request that this letter be **entered into the public record at the October 6, 2025 Borough Council meeting** and considered as part of all future deliberations regarding the Senior Center site.

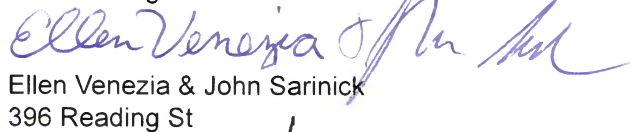
We appreciate your service and commitment to Pennington's future. We urge you to reconsider the inclusion of this site in the housing plan and work collaboratively with residents to identify more appropriate alternatives that serve both the Borough's obligations and the public interest.

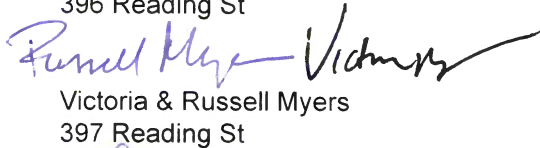
Sincerely,

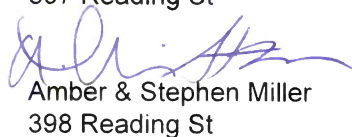
**Protect Our Corner of Pennington Community Group**

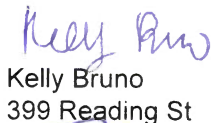
Reading St Neighbors:

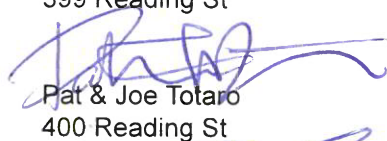
  
Andy Beloff  
394 Reading St

  
Ellen Venezia & John Sarinick  
396 Reading St

  
Victoria & Russell Myers  
397 Reading St

  
Amber & Stephen Miller  
398 Reading St

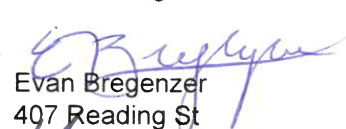
  
Kelly Bruno  
399 Reading St

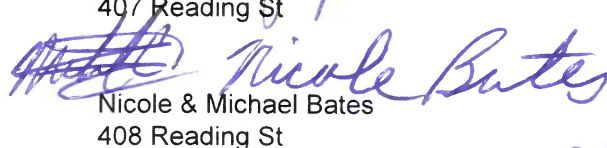
  
Pat & Joe Totaro  
400 Reading St

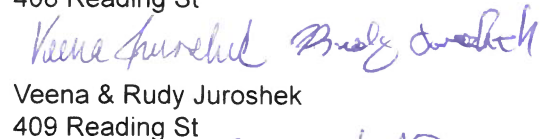
  
Katie & Christian Davis  
402 Reading St

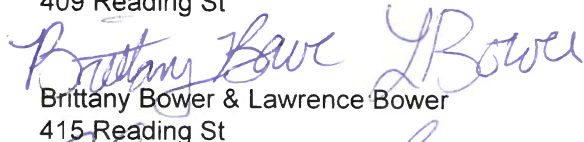
Georgine & Roger Johnson  
404 Reading St

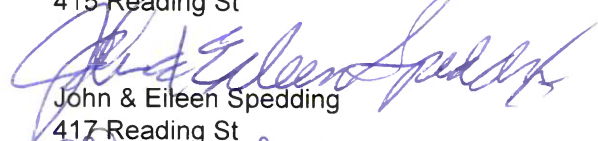
  
Rachel & Michael Palombo  
406 Reading St

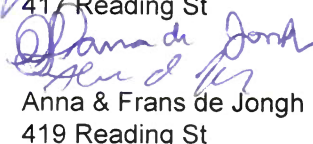
  
Evan Bregenzer  
407 Reading St

  
Nicole & Michael Bates  
408 Reading St

  
Veena & Rudy Juroshek  
409 Reading St

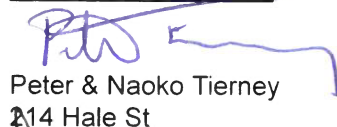
  
Brittany Bower & Lawrence Bower  
415 Reading St

  
John & Eileen Spedding  
417 Reading St

  
Anna & Frans de Jongh  
419 Reading St

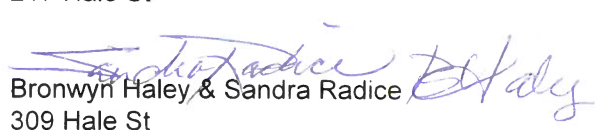


Hale Street Neighbors

  
Peter & Naoko Tierney  
214 Hale St

  
Jonathan Reber  
216 Hale St

  
Hannah Williams & William Ramos  
217 Hale St

  
Bronwyn Haley & Sandra Radice  
309 Hale St

*Suzanne Brooks*  
Suzanne & Chris Brookes  
310 Hale St

*James Creegan*  
James Creegan  
316 Hale St

*Deborah Zerbib*  
Deborah Zerbib  
317 Hale St

*Alicia A Kapheim & Robert J Flynn*  
Alicia A Kapheim & Robert J Flynn  
318 Hale St

*MICHAELA GRAVELLE & JUAN MEXALDO*  
MICHAELA GRAVELLE & JUAN MEXALDO  
408 HALE ST.

Other concerned neighbors:

*Kimberly Tew*  
Kimberly & Benjamin Tew  
404 Burd St

*Larayne and Charles Peters*  
Larayne and Charles Peters  
17 Baldwin St

*Stephanie Peters*  
Stephanie Peters  
11 Academy St

*Alana Gomez-Wagner*  
Alana Gomez-Wagner  
318 Skel St

All signatories above have endorsed their agreement in writing to the points addressed in this letter, whether or not they were available to sign in person.

*Mary and CJ Peters*  
Mary and CJ Peters  
319 Hale St

*Joanne & Joel Cerniele*  
Joanne & Joel Cerniele  
322 Hale St

*Mollie & John O'Connor*  
Mollie & John O'Connor  
324 Hale St

*Robert Levy*  
Robert Levy  
326 Hale St

*Deborah Gunt*  
Deborah Gunt  
326 Hale St

*Annemarie & Brian Hofacker*  
Annemarie & Brian Hofacker  
197 W. Welling Ave

*Thibaud Coroller*  
Thibaud Coroller  
108 Voorhees Ave

*Bing Han*  
Bing Han  
51 E. Curlis St

*Made Brian Nicurick*  
Made Brian Nicurick  
130 W Welling Ave

