

Good Afternoon! I am [REDACTED], a Lockport Township resident since 1982. My husband and I chose to reside in Lockport Township, as opposed to the city of Three Rivers, based on the country-style setting and affordable tax rates in order enable us to provide an appropriate quality of life for our three children. We are now at an age where we feel that we should be allowed to maintain our family-based lifestyle by enjoying backyard picnics and quiet evenings on the deck. If the sports complex is pushed on us in the projected location, we would have to contend with the noise level created by 17 fields, increased traffic surrounding our residential neighborhood, and the 70 ft. regulation flood lights shining into our living room and two bedrooms.

After reading through the Petition for Annexation of Land Area in the Township of Lockport to the City of Three Rivers, several red flags surfaced. For instance, the maps showing the areas to be annexed appear to be different from the maps submitted when their proposal was presented to the public in early 2016. Also, by page 2 of the Resolution to Approve Annexation, the terminology "youth sports complex" suddenly changes to just "sports complex." By eliminating this adjective "youth," it encouraged me to pull out an article run in the Sturgis Journal on January 27, 2016, that stated "there would be a strong emphasis to bring men's, women's and junior tournaments to the complex." That same article also proposed a hotel and a pub/sports bar. That does not sound like components necessary for a "youth" sports complex to me. On page 3 of the Resolution to Approve Annexation, the City of Three Rivers states that this annexation is "in the best interest of the City." I ask that you also consider the best interest of the Lockport Township residents, especially the ones that will be adjacent to this proposed sports complex.

Under their Reason for Request (Part V – Page 3, paragraph 2), it is stated that "The City has been completely transparent".... in pursuing what they refer to as "a legitimate government project." I do not support that statement. Many actions were taken before we, Lockport Township residents, were even aware of their intentions. So much information has been hidden or eliminated. For instance, it is my understanding that the City of Three Rivers purchased 77 acres from Northern Construction Services in February of 2016 for \$755,000. After that purchase, I learned that St. Joseph County Commissioners would be reimbursing the City of Three Rivers for the full price of this land, as the County had pledged \$2.8 million of county taxpayers' money toward this projected sports complex and that the County placed a mortgage on this property. In other words, we (St. Joseph County taxpayers—including Lockport Township residents) paid for the land that is now leading to us feeling threatened, without the taxpayers having a voice in this issue. Furthermore, it is my understanding that there are plans to purchase two more adjacent parcels of land in the same manner with the landowners making a hefty profit and the City being reimbursed by the County. It is also my understanding that one of the parcels of land is owned by the Mayor of Three Rivers and includes another portion of Lockport Township land and, therefore, could lead to the City of Three Rivers once again attempting to annex more land from Lockport Township.

So when this project is said to be “completely transparent” and referred to as a “legitimate government project” in order to justify \$2.8 million from our county taxes to promote personal financial gain to people of power, I cannot just sit by and do nothing.

In conclusion, the Lockport Township residents that would be affected by this decision are basically good, hard-working citizens that support young people and see a need for a Youth Sports Complex. I have had the opportunity to discuss this topic with many of the Lockport residents that live near the proposed site of the Youth Sports Complex and the majority are upset about the threat of losing their quality of life and fear that their voice is not being heard. Again, the feedback from the residents I have talked to do support a Youth Sports Complex, just not in a residential area.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to voice my concerns.



10/12/16