

TOWNSHIP OF CRANFORD

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



June 30, 2022

Dear Union County Planning Board members,

As you know, several Cranford neighborhoods have experienced repeated flooding through the years. In fact, in the past 20 years, four storms caused devastating flooding and severe home damage. The Township is committed to finding solutions locally to mitigate flooding and as a member of the Rahway River Mayors Council to advocate for a regional flood control project. This is a major issue and priority for Cranford.

We are greatly concerned about development of the former Williams Nursery in Westfield. The site is adjacent to Lenape Park and development will impact a nearby Cranford neighborhood that is downstream and already suffers from repetitive, severe flooding. The cause for concern is real. Once development occurs, there is no turning back.

The Williams Nursery site application states that there is no flood hazard area within the development site. This statement by the developer should be highly scrutinized. The property lies between two bodies of water and has been known to flood.

The application states there are no wetlands in the development area. This is not accurate. A local biologist has verified the presence of wetlands vegetation on the site.

These inaccuracies alone ought to warrant intense scrutiny and additional information from the developer prior to potentially creating a permanent problem.

Williams Nursery used to be a 13-acre property before half of the parcel was sold to Union County in 1961 to create Lenape Park. I am asking the Union County Planning Board to reject the proposal or at the very least, require the developer to do much more on stormwater management and flood mitigation than just replicating how the site currently functions.

Cranford requires developers to adhere to strict stormwater regulations and in some cases, do more in areas that experience flash flooding. We urge the Planning Board to consider the impact to nearby Cranford and hold a developer to the strictest standards.

Very truly yours,

Kathleen Miller Prunty
Mayor

CC: Union County Commission Chair Rebecca Williams
Union County Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski