



SCHIFF NATURAL LANDS TRUST

339 Pleasant Valley Road, Mendham, New Jersey 07945
Telephone 973.543.6004 • www.schiffnaturepreserve.org

April 5, 2023

The Honorable Nick Monaghan, Mayor
Mendham Township Committee
P.O. Box 520
Brookside, NJ 09726

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Subject: Mosle Road Property

Dear Mayor Monaghan:

I am writing to you regarding Mendham Township's plans to upgrade its recreational facilities at the Mosle Road Property. This 112-acre property was acquired jointly by the Mendham Township (Township), the New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA), and the Schiff Natural Lands Trust (Schiff) in 2008 for recreation and conservation purposes. At the time of acquisition, the three parties agreed that Mendham Township would be responsible for overall management of the property and that 24 acres of the property would be designated as an Active Recreation Area (ARA), where existing ballfields could be maintained and improved. As we understand it, the current proposal is to install lighting on two of the current ball fields and the parking lot, all within the ARA.

As a co-owner of the property, we agree that Mendham Township is completely within its rights to make improvements in support of active recreation within the ARA. We do, however, urge the Township to seek to minimize potential impacts of proposed improvements on the water quality and ecology of surrounding areas, including the area of the property outside the ARA, that is designated to remain predominantly in its natural state.

Regarding the proposed field lighting, we recommend that the Township seek and follow professional advice concerning the ways to minimize the potential impacts from light pollution on the ecology of the more natural areas of the property and adjacent properties.

The current proposal does not include improvements to the existing ballfield surfaces. However, with the anticipated greater use of the fields, based on expansion of playing times afforded by the proposed lighting, the fields will be subject to more wear and tear. This will likely require more intense turf management and possibly irrigation. The Maintenance and Management Agreement that the Township, the NJWSA and Schiff entered in 2008 specifies the practices to be followed in managing the recreational fields to protect water quality while maintaining good playing fields. Among them, these practices include Integrated Pest Management to minimize the

use of pesticides, and appropriate schedules for fertilizer application and irrigation. We strongly recommend that the Township carefully follow these practices now and as field use increases based on the proposed lighting.

Thanks to Mendham Township for its management and stewardship of this beautiful property.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marissa S. McDonnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Marissa S. McDonnell, M.D.
Board President