

September 6, 2011

John Funk
Chairman, Board of Supervisors
East Vincent Township
262 Ridge Road
Spring City, PA 19475

Dear Mr. Funk:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation supports the request by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia for the East Vincent Township Board of Supervisors to: defer upcoming zoning action for the Pennhurst State School and Hospital campus so that the interest of potential developers could be explored; or to include residential use as a permitted use for the core buildings in the rezoning action.

A financial feasibility study commissioned by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia found that market rate rental housing is the only feasible use that would lead to preservation of the historic buildings. Development of the site's core 11 buildings for residential use would produce 250 units of housing falling within the range of market demand. Income-producing rental housing would make available \$15 million in federal investment tax credits to assist in funding for the project. Since the 11 buildings only comprise 25% of the property, the remainder of the site offers the potential for development of other uses. This development would be in keeping with the mandate of East Vincent Township's Historic Preservation Ordinance to protect the site as a historic resource.

On behalf of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, I wish to reaffirm our concern for the protection of the Pennhurst State School and Hospital campus. The recommendations of the financial feasibility study for the property deserve serious consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter W. Gallas, AICP
Director, Northeast Field Office

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CC:

Mary Flagg, Township Manager, East Vincent Township

Christine McNeil, Board of Supervisors, East Vincent Township

Mark Dunphy, Board of Supervisors, East Vincent Township

Jason Herron, Chairman, Planning Commission, East Vincent Township

Saul Rivkin, Chairman, Historical Commission, East Vincent Township

Richard Chakejian

Chester County Planning Commission

Chester County Historic Preservation Network