

Neshaminy Greenway Trail – Phase II Dark Hollow Park Public Input

Background: The County recently completed design and engineering for the Neshaminy Creek Greenway Trail segment between Almshouse Road and Valley Road. The vast majority of this trail will be constructed on County property. Before the design process was completed, the County solicited public input on the trail concept and design. This public input period occurred from October 26, 2022 to November 11, 2022. The following is a summary of the responses received during that public comment period. More information on the project can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/NGTIIDarkHollowTrail>.

Allison Hamilton: I support building the Neshaminy Greenway Trail as a whole and more specifically the currently presented construction and landscaping plans for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail – Dark Hollow Park section. I have lived and walked in Dark Hollow and on Pebble Hill Road for 28 years. In that time I have seen many impacts including more new land development and subsequently more motor vehicle traffic on Pebble Hill Road and in the area. The section of Pebble Hill Road between Sugar Bottom Road and Wiltshire Road is no longer safe for pedestrians. There are people living in this area who used to walk on Pebble Hill Road now driving to Central Park or other local or regional parks for safe walking. The Neshaminy Greenway Trail - Dark Hollow Park will serve as a safe option for pedestrians and people using non-motorized transportation such as bicycles and wheelchairs. This Greenway Trail section will also provide a link to the broad network of trails already completed or planned to create safe routes for commuting, healthy recreation, and connecting people to parks, communities, places of work, commercial districts, public services and public transportation. Growth also takes a toll on open space and parks. Existing parks are heavily used indicating a need for more public parks. By creating access to Dark Hollow with the Neshaminy Greenway Trail a new linear and scenic public park will help to meet that need. I appreciate the environmental studies. With the results of the studies, this section of the Greenway should be implemented in a more environmentally responsible way. I am in favor of the entire Neshaminy Greenway Trail and I am in favor of building the Neshaminy Greenway Trail – Dark Hollow Park as presented in the construction and landscaping plans.

Andrea Stout (CADC Member): Thank you for the hard work you and your colleagues have put into evolving the plan for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail II project since the Citizens Advisory Design Committee (CADC) was convened in 2021, and for the six virtual meetings and one site visit we have made as a group. Thanks to those meetings and additional inputs, there have been important changes made to the plan, as you outlined in your presentation inviting public comment. Nonetheless, the latest plan still falls short in critical particulars. I would summarize them as “location, location, location.” Before I get into my objections, I’d like to reiterate my belief that bike trails are desirable projects worthy of public investment, and that every responsible effort should be made to connect them and expand their reach. Properly sited, such trails are a net-positive for the community and the environment. They encourage commuting by bicycle; can reduce traffic congestion, air and noise pollution; and contribute to the health and well-being of those who use them, including walkers and those who use mobility devices. Bucks County already has a large network of groomed, ADA-compliant trails and will no doubt have more in the future. Bike trails and fragile wetlands don’t mix. But is the Neshaminy Greenway Trail II project “properly sited” as conceived? I don’t believe so. Current plans call for a groomed trail of compressed gravel, 10-ft across not including its shoulders, that is wide, flat and strong enough to accommodate emergency vehicles. For all intents and purposes, a road. And indeed, standard road-building equipment will be used

in its construction, including bulldozers, dump trucks and rollers. The Rail-to-Trails Conservancy, one of America's largest and best known trails-advocacy organizations, has this to say on its website about "Developing Trails in Sensitive Areas": "[A] particularly important place in any habitat is the 'edge'...for example, where a floodplain ends and deciduous forest begins, or where the forest ends and an area of human development begins. Edges are important, dynamic places of transition, and because of this, many species may reside there. A trail should not be built in an edge zone... If there are unique or interesting elements within an edge zone, site the trail away from it, but add lookouts or scenic overlooks." [Emphasis mine.] As a wildlife corridor bordered by Valley Road, a townhouse development and a farm field, the proposed trail site at Dark Hollow Park is the definition of an edge zone. It is also a wetland, of course, which Rails-to-Trails cites first in its list of "particularly delicate habitats." Besides the creek, there are seeps, snags and other features that provide critical breeding habitat, nutrients and shelter for some of the 244 species of "conservation concern" that make their homes in the area, including the northern red-bellied cooter, hickory shad, sweet bay magnolia, peregrine falcon and North America's smallest turtle, the critically endangered bog turtle. Trail users aren't one-size-fits-all. During our meetings, a narrower "nature" trail was repeatedly proposed by a number of CADC members for the Dark Hollow site. Not only would such a trail have a smaller, lower-impact footprint on a fragile area, it would appeal to a constituency often overlooked in trail planning. This group of trail users includes bird watchers, hikers, anglers and those who want a more meditative trail experience. It also includes elderly people, dog walkers, parents with small children and others with reasons to fear an encounter with a speeding bicycle. Then there is the issue of balance. How does the proposed trail fit with the network of trails we already have in Bucks County? As new trails are built from scratch and others are "improved"—often with impermeable surfacing—the number of natural trails shrinks. Is this what the public really wants? A recent survey of Solebury residents is instructive. Asked what they wanted to do with a 13-acre parcel of township land abutting Route 202, residents voted for a passive park. Not for an environmental center or a sculpture garden, two of their other options. It's not altogether surprising. Here in Central Bucks, we have a surfeit of groomed, largely treeless parks and playing fields along with a deficit of users, especially in the hottest months. With little in the way of shade and lots of impermeable surfacing, they're not a good fit with our new climate reality. Intense rain events and flooding are baked into our future. As of 2019, Bucks County had already reached +2°C (+3.6°F) of warming, a commonly accepted tipping point for abrupt climate change—one of only 70 of 3,107 counties in the contiguous U.S. to have reached that milestone. But we don't need federal-agency data to tell us that. We are living it, thanks to a series of supercell storms in recent years that have spawned tornadoes [sic], intense rain events and the flooding that comes with them. The Neshaminy Creek increased its flow hundreds of times the median during 2020's Tropical Storm Isaias, with the streambank at Valley Road losing more than a foot to erosion during the two-year period that included Isaias. Last year, remnants of Hurricane Ida caused \$117M in damage to public infrastructure alone, and more than 43,000 Pennsylvanians qualified for storm-related assistance from FEMA. , Many of the worst-hit communities were the least able to recover from such a blow. More than a year later, many are still trying to recover, as we brace for more Sandys and Irenes, Isaiases and Idas. In the "Environment & Energy" section of its June 2020 Transition Team Final Report, the county devoted a large subsection to the issue of flooding. It called for the restoration of riparian buffers through the planting of "trees and understory shrubs, as well as tall grass on stream edges [to] slow and filter rain water and run off..." The current bike-trail plan would seem at odds with those goals. It requires a vegetated swale to keep toxic run-off from an expanded parking lot away from the creek, and includes trail shoulders groomed to remove trees and other vegetation. True, the trail would snake around the park's largest specimen trees. While that is welcome, it hardly offsets the loss of so many smaller trees and shrubs. Then there is the increased plastic and dog waste that a large bike trail is sure to bring to this "very interesting and unique park," as the Transition Team report calls Dark Hollow. Once it's gone, it's

gone. Some will argue that the Neshaminy Creek corridor today is neither pristine nor “wild.” They will be right. The Dark Hollow Park area has many dead or dying ash trees and plenty of invasives. The creek itself is polluted with microplastics. It is squeezed by human development and over-browsed by deer. For these and other reasons it needs our help, not recreational “enhancements”—however well-intended—that will accelerate its decline. It is squarely in our interest to ensure that it gets that help, as we face the certainty of a worsening climate. But this area, once Lenni Lenape land, has intrinsic value regardless. Whatever its challenges, it remains one of the last, large stretches of undisturbed land in Bucks County. For now. We all live downstream, as the saying goes. And, as people connected to nature, each other and this ancient watercourse, we all have a stake in what happens at Dark Hollow Park. That said, these are my individual comments as a member of the CADC. The designated 16-day comment period was too short for the Buckingham Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC), which I chair, to meet as a group, discuss the plan and advise our Board of Supervisors on its merits. Our next EAC meeting falls on November 16th, five days after the comment period ends. Therefore, while your presentation notes the input of area EACs in this plan, the foregoing comments, of necessity, are mine alone.

Andy Hamilton: At issue here is a trail that has been planned since 1955, which is 67 years ago. Also, Bucks County has an Open Space and Greenway Plan from 2011 that is a next level of planning from a Pennsylvania Greenways, An Action Plan for Creating Connections from 2001. The plans envision an interconnected network of greenways that protect ecologically valuable lands, provide open space and recreational opportunities, protect important habitat areas and migration paths for wildlife, and provide access to the County’s historic and cultural resources. Specifically, the Plan identifies corridors that could potentially host trails for public recreation, wildlife viewing, lessons in history, and alternative transportation, including the Neshaminy Creek from Peace Valley to the Delaware River. This project, the Neshaminy Trail connecting from Rt 611 in Doylestown Township to Rt 263 in Warwick Township will accomplish the goals of the state and county plans. People on foot or on pedicycles/bicycles will be able to view, learn, and experience nature, get exercise and the health benefits as well, while also not having to be on Almshouse Road or Edison Furlong, Pebble Hill and Sugar Bottom roads to get from Rt 611 to Rt 263. During the planning process for this trail the scope of work, for now has been reduced due to some adjoining neighbors’ concerns. They, requested an in depth Environmental Study which was accomplished by consultants that they requested. The environmental studies performed by RKK and Northeastern Forestry Concepts at the request of the Citizens Advisory Design Committee that was formed for the project did not find any endangered species in the study area. Instead of having a reason to not build the trail, the environmental reports addressed the right ways to build the trail to protect existing species, and specimen trees. This advice should and I am sure will be used in the design of the trail. Again the environmental studies for this project did NOT find any reasons that the trail should not be built. The reports identified that boardwalks would be preferred in a section, and that there are 18 trees that are of significance to work around. These were not concerns, rather they are suggestions on how and where to construct the trail. The roads that are accessible to the public to get from one end of the study area to the other have been analyzed by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) for the level of stress (LTS) for people on pedicycles/bicycles. The range of stress is rated from 1, the lowest to 4 with high stress. Note that the DVRPC analysis is for people riding pedicycles. Whether riding a pedicycle or walking the roads below would have the same or very similar stress level for pedestrians. Rt 611 = 4 LTS, Edison Furlong = 4 LTS, Pebble Hill = 1 LTS, Sugarbottom = 4 LTS, Almshouse = 4 LTS, Creek Road = LTS 1 The plans from Pennsylvania, Bucks County along with the planning and implementation of the trail network that has been accomplished to date in the Doylestown region should be allowed to continue to move forward for the benefit of all people in the area. A group of people within one section of a community has tried to stop the trail from being built. The trail is proposed on public lands and will improve the quality of life for

all in Bucks County. The trail will connect people to nature and get people trying to walk or ride a pedicycle from Rt 611 to Rt 263 off of very dangerous roads. This piece of trail is a small portion of the Neshaminy Greenway trail that has already been partially built. When completed the Neshaminy Trail will go from Peace Valley Park to the Delaware River. Imagine when all the other parts of the trail are completed but not this one. People will be heavily using the roads that are considered dangerous. In addition the trail once completed from Newtown to Doylestown will be the route of the September 11th National Memorial Trail. On March 11th 2022 the September 11th National Memorial Trail became Pennsylvania's newest designated "Major Statewide Trail/Greenway". This trail is also legislated into federal law with House Bill HR 2278 which was championed by Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick. It was unanimously voted on in the House of Representatives and the Senate and on October 13th 2021 was signed into law by the President. There are only a few handfuls of trails in the United States of America with specific legislation, such as the Trail of Tears, the Pacific Coast Trail, and the Appalachian Trail to name a few. This trail has significance both to the county, the state and the nation. The Neshaminy Trail, has been envisioned by the county for 67 years. 3 plans from the state and county levels have been completed, 67 years ago, 21 years ago, and 11 years ago. The trail now has federal legislation and state designation from the work of the overlying September 11th National Memorial Trail and it's [sic] Alliance and partnerships. Building the trail will create a spine for non-motorized use in tha [sic] county that communities will strive to connect local trails to. Please prioritize the development of the entire Neshaminy Trail and build this section in its entirety at this time. This trail has 67 years of planning behind it, and there is an effort of approximately 7 people who live adjacent to the public land on which it is to be built to stop the trail. They have rallied others, as I have as well. I am a neighbor in the same neighborhood and I strongly want the trail to be built. There are 646,098 residents of Bucks County. These people will benefit from the trail. I would like to come to the Commissioners meeting on Wednesday November 16th to provide public comment on this matter. It is not only the Neshaminy Greenway but also the future alignment of the September 11th National Memorial Trail, a federally legislated trail. Next week the Herald is to run another piece on the need for the trail. This is being completed by the Doylestown Bike Hike Committee which has successfully built over 30 miles of trails in the township and borough over the last 25 years. Attached is a letter of support to build the trail. Thank you for supporting the trail development in the county, it is important now more than ever as the Covid pandemic has shown many in the past few years. Thank you for your words, but also for guiding the County in a strong and balanced way. Indeed trails are a critical to the people who live here. The County is working hard to build trails, and also to build in concert with our neighboring county and in collaboration with the state. The collaborations are historic and new. Examples include the North Bucks Rail Trail connecting to Lehigh County, the Liberty Bell Trail connecting to Montgomery County, the three studies of the Neshaminy, Lower, middle and upper, the Newtown Rail Trail, the Mill Queen Anne Black Ditch Creek, and the Newtown to Washington Crossing studies are current examples. The county is also very fortunate to have the Route 202 Trail connecting to Montgomery County and the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor connecting to Northampton County. A core tenant of trails is connectivity. One place that is sorely lacking is the link inside and across the county. The Neshaminy Creek is that link within the county that will connect lower and middle Bucks County together. The Neshaminy Trail will be the spine that other trails will connect with to create systems that link communities and people. Imagine being able to walk or ride a bike to places of worship, work, school, places to shop and to cultural centers. That is the Bucks County of the future and the time is indeed now to lay the groundwork for a future vision in the county. The Commonwealth has the following goal. Closing priority gaps in the statewide trail network, one of which is in Morrisville. I had it placed in the top 10 priorities for the state. It is being built now. The overall goal is to have trails within 10 minutes of every Pennsylvanian. Bucks County has a supportive asset in the state. We should support the states efforts to build the spine of the Bucks County network of trails to help realize the goal of the state, a trail within 10 minutes of everyone.

As proof of the state's desire to develop trails there has been strong efforts in the Lehigh Valley to close a major gap in the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. Partnerships I have been involved with have been strongly advocating for the gap to be closed, in other words funding for trails to be built. This Thursday there will be a significant announcement from the state about this. The Delaware and Lehigh Rivers will have a complete trail from Mountain Top PA to Bristol Pa, over 145 miles in length within 4 years. This will increase tourism, heads in beds, etc [sic] in Bucks County, because people will flock to the completed network/spine of trails, just as they do with the Great Allegheny Passage bringing their wallets with them. Sorry for the long email, but as you can see we are at the tipping point for trail development in the region and every step we take now impacts the next 5 years in the development cycle, so think big and strive for completion for a competitive county and a great place to live and work. Thank you.

Ann Callahan: Don't pave over nature! Leave mother nature alone!

Arthur Zapolski: Please, please, DO NOT EXTEND the Hike and Bike path along Neshaminy Creek through Dark Hollow. This area needs to remain natural dirt footpath ONLY. It is one of the only natural flood plain areas along Neshaminy Creek and needs to remain so. Leave this natural environment alone. Reroute to an existing paved, "accessible" area on already zoned "open space". Wise, thoughtful decisions NOW to back away from an excavated path will allow at least one section of this beleaguered waterway a better chance to withstand the ever-increasing flooding and loss of tree canopy that is savaging Neshaminy Creek. I live near Central Park in Doylestown Township. Just last year Neshaminy Creek flooded in Edison-Furlong, filling that sharp bend up like a teacup. The stream bed is scoured out along the quarry, and trees keep peeling away from the banks, some falling on the power lines. The Hike and Bike Trail at the back side of Doylestown Lea closes often after heavy rains. The drainage is particularly poor behind the new section of three professional buildings at the 202/Lower State Road intersection. All along the creek ash and other trees have died and living trees topple, their roots undercut by flood waters. Thought, money, and effort needs to be invested in mitigating these existing dire problems rather than deliberately creating another ruinous situation. DON'T RUIN DARK HOLLOW PARK'S NESHAMINY CREEK WITH A WIDE, COMPACTED HIKE AND BIKE PATH!!!

Barbara Bennett: Attached is my thoughts on what they propose to do to the park. I am quite upset by this and hope the people that live along this creek have been kept informed. I can't believe they want to put paths along the creek especially along Valley Road as it would have to be on the low side or the north side of the creek. I also wonder how any of this will be "policed" as it would offer no way for rangers or police to oversee this area. It is beautiful but it certainly needs to be kept passive. (*The following is the information contained in the attachment*) I am a resident of Warwick township and live along Valley Road steps away from Dark Hollow Park. As an avid birder I visit the park often and enjoy the quiet and beauty of this passive park. It is home to Downy, Hairy, Red-breasted, and Pileated Woodpeckers, as well as Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Chickadees, deer, and Wild Turkey. Overhead Bald Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks and Osprey cruise up and down the Little Neshaminy Creek looking for prey during the summer months and in the winter Black Ducks, Common and Hooded Mergansers enjoy the icy waters. Fishermen enjoy the trout stocked waters as well as kayakers. All of this exists in the tiny thin ribbon of what is called Dark Hollow Park, a string of locations along the water as a [sic] idea for a "link park". But this 30 plus-year-old idea needs to be revisited considering the environment, wildlife and community surrounding it. Just like our cars, phones, and clothes we evaluate and update. Development has squeezed the land for wildlife to find homes and food making this land a treasure. What about the impact on this environment? The creek already gets flooded because of the all the development and less impervious surfaces. I watched huge trees washed away and swallows and kingfishers rebuild their nests in the creek walls because of flooding.

The one parking lot gets flooded out constantly, if upgraded where will the funding come to replace it and maintain it as it gets washed out over and over? Why demand 10-foot paths? Only because it is how you can get the funds to create this path? By abusing ADA funds just to push this project! That is a disgrace! Plus having heavy machinery plowing thru delicate vegetation to create such a path. Today off School Road I took an example of how such damage to the ground will occur and this isn't on wetland or creek beds. Please reconsider how to protect this special park. Don't neglect and destroy it's [sic] beauty like you are doing now with the historical 8-arch bridge that is falling in to ruin in Dark Hollow Park now! Preserve not only history but Bucks County wildlife and environment by keeping it a passive park. What about creating viewing platforms like ones at the Bristol Marsh? They can be ADA accessible providing a spot to fish and view wildlife. Fix the Stone Arch Bridge and make that location a viewing location to fish, hike natural paths and picnic. Ideas for biking, utilize areas under powerlines and add biking paths to existing roads which have already been razed. Please don't destroy the beauty of this park by plowing under what makes it unique. And don't demand it meet certain criteria just so you can get money from ADA!

Barbara Shaeffer: I have read about your plans to install a large, packed-gravel trail in and around Dark Hollow. These plans seem overly ambitious for this natural corridor. The compaction and disruption will affect both trees and wildlife. A smaller, more natural trail would be much more environmentally responsible. At a time of intensifying climate change with more severe storms and risk of flooding, the idea of disrupting the floodplain is the last thing that should be done. This brings to mind the money and effort spent on the Delaware Canal paths that were washed out within a few years due to flooding. Having the Circuit Trail go along the Neshaminy Creek, making a permanent scar, is antithetical to the goal of preserving natural land for future generations. Deepest thanks to you in advance for your concern about our quickly disappearing natural lands—and your willingness to do something about it.

Betsy Arrison: I have read about the Bucks County Planning Commission's plans to install a large, packed-gravel trail in and around Dark Hollow. These plans seem overly ambitious for this natural corridor. The compaction and disruption will affect both trees and wildlife. A smaller, more natural trail would be much more environmentally responsible if the plan "trail" needs to stay along the creek. . Having the Circuit Trail go along the Neshaminy Creek, making a permanent scar, is antithetical to the goal of preserving natural land for future generations. I urge you to reconsider the route of the Circuit Trail and build in an area that will not damage such a beautiful and wild area in Central Bucks.

Beverly Rhinesmith: I am writing to let you know that I have been looking at the plans and meetings surrounding this initiative in Bucks County. To me, from my understanding of the plans, this looks very similar to a road rather than a trail near the creek and it may have an effect on wildlife and trees/plants. I hope that you would consider a less "industrial created" trail that may help people protect and enjoy nature. Maybe experience the joy of the flowing water of a stream in the midst of modern hectic life. A place to the exercise of the body and the mind as we know now how much nature helps us heal and thrive. I respectfully am communicating this to you as a Doylestown citizen.

Deborah Cotner-Davis: I am very concerned about the plans that the Bucks County Planning Committee [sic] and the Bucks County Commissioners have been working on for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail Dark Hollow Park. First of all, in looking at the overview of the project, the data presents the percentage of respondents. I would like to know the number of respondents that responded to both questions, #11 and #13. Without the size of the population being represented in the bar graphs, the data is not significant to me. If the number of respondents is 20, then 64% of 20 is 13 people out of the entire county-not significant. On the other hand, if the number of respondents is 200,000 (approximately 33% of 646,098,

which was the population of Bucks County as of July 1, 2021), then 64% of 200,000 is 128,000 people-significant. How many people received the survey? How many responded? My major concern is the effect that a multi-use trail is going to have on our neighborhood and the Neshaminy Creek, as we know it today. We have natural trails that we can walk, mountain bike, or 4-wheel on now along the Neshaminy. It is truly a natural experience for our neighborhood. Why destroy this with a 10 foot asphalt or cinder trail and with minimum shoulder width of 2 feet on each side of it? Why destroy the existing habitats in this area? There are fields that are currently being farmed that would be affected, as well. Progress, as you may see it, is not necessarily a good thing. Please reconsider the Neshaminy Greenway Trail Dark Hollow Project.

Deborah Glessner: When I moved to Bucks County in 1970, the area boasted large swaths of beautiful open space which supported healthy, active ecosystems. I spent much time in the Dark Hollow region of the Big Neshaminy, riding my horse cross country, and wandering on foot through the woods of privately owned farms. Unfortunately, as the years passed, I saw the rape of the land, giving away to housing complexes, big business, roads, and shopping malls with little regard for the natural environment and ecosystems it supports. We are slowly becoming an ugly asphalt jungle. Man tends to be arrogant, thinking only of convenience to himself, forgetting that we humans are only a small part in the environmental cog. ALL living things are interconnected, and we MUST let go of the conceit that our environment only exists to serve the interest of humanity. Plans for the proposed “The Circuit” trail will require large heavy machinery to open up this fragile creek-side area which outright violates the fundamentals of conservation and preservation. It will negatively impact water quality and runoff, streamside vegetation and erosion control, the flora from large mature trees to the tiniest wildflowers, and wildlife corridors for the tiniest insects to larger mammals and birds. Man’s power to change his environment needs to be wielded with extreme caution if we are to avoid destroying the very ecosystems that support us. It is imperative that the commission take active steps to avoid the degradation of an increasingly rare Bucks County native ecosystem. Please look for sensible alternatives that will preserve and not destroy.

Diane Paul: I have read about your plans to install a large, packed-gravel trail in and around Dark Hollow. These plans seem overly ambitious for this natural corridor. The compaction and disruption will affect both trees and wildlife. A smaller, more natural trail would be much more environmentally responsible. Having the Circuit Trail go along the Neshaminy Creek, making a permanent scar, is antithetical to the goal of preserving natural land for future generations. At a time when we are concerned about reducing our carbon footprint, this plan seems irresponsible when there are more environmentally friendly alternatives. I would appreciate your consideration of a more natural trail. Respondent 13: I would like to express my opposition to the Dark Hollow Park segment of the Neshaminy Greenway Creek Trail. This park is a sensitive natural area, and paving a 10 foot wide asphalt path through this would cause significant damage to the ecosystem. As I understand it, there are alternatives available that would route this through already degraded areas. Alternatives that we should take advantage of. I am fully on board with the idea of a network of bike paths, but not at the cost of more natural area. Let's let the cars give more room to bikes, rather than our dwindling natural areas. I live in Doylestown Township, and am active in the community in preserving our environment for future generations. Future generations that deserve to have natural areas like Dark Hollow Park still available to them, without large slabs of hard impermeable tar dumped everywhere. Please do not scrape and pave even more of our wild areas. Thanks for taking my views on this into consideration. One of the ultimate objectives of encouraging bike riding is to help preserve our natural environment from the damage stemming from other modes of transport. From what I understand, that is what is at stake here. Putting a 10 foot wide asphalt surface all along the bank of a relatively untouched stream and woodland area does not further this objective. I'm glad to know who you

are, as I am very interested in transportation subjects. If you don't already know it, I would strongly suggest you watch a series of youtube videos entitled "Not Just Bikes". It's a very entertaining series of videos from a guy who has lived in many different cities in the world and has some important views about the way we build our physical environment. While he grew up in Canada, he lives in Amsterdam now. Also, I live on Turk Road in Doylestown, right near the intersection with the where the new intersection with South Easton Road heading into town will be built. Have you looked at those plans (PennDOT is building it, I believe)? I am happy that there are going to be two traffic circles there, and I would be interested as to whether there is going to be bike infrastructure included in the plan.

Erich Neal: I would like to express my opposition to the Dark Hollow Park segment of the Neshaminy Greenway Creek Trail. This park is a sensitive natural area, and paving a 10 foot wide asphalt path through this would cause significant damage to the ecosystem. As I understand it, there are alternatives available that would route this through already degraded areas. Alternatives that we should take advantage of. I am fully on board with the idea of a network of bike paths, but not at the cost of more natural area. Let's let the cars give more room to bikes, rather than our dwindling natural areas. I live in Doylestown Township, and am active in the community in preserving our environment for future generations. Future generations that deserve to have natural areas like Dark Hollow Park still available to them, without large slabs of hard impermeable tar dumped everywhere. Please do not scrape and pave even more of our wild areas.

Gail Blum: Please reroute the proposed Dark Hollow trail segment AWAY from the existing path along Neshaminy Creek. I have hiked this beautiful section of Neshaminy Creek numerous times and love it for its solitude and wildness. We don't have many trails like it in overdeveloped Bucks County. While I love the goal of creating a trail system connecting our towns, running a 10' wide trail through this wild area is wrong. Although the proposed gravel trail is more pervious than asphalt, the equipment required to lay it will damage the fragile ecosystem. Heavy equipment compresses roots and soil, disturbs wildlife, and injures trees. A wide gravel trail also removes critical stream buffer, which needs to remain intact to protect surrounding areas from flooding. The path will also bring more people to this special place, disrupting the solitude and bringing more litter. We are responsible to future Bucks County generations to protect the remnants of wild beauty left in our care. Please reroute the proposed trail segment away from this beautiful, irreplaceable bit of nature along Neshaminy Creek.

Gail Claus: Anything that sustains the natural beauty of Bucks County , [sic] and protects trees and water ways, is "the way life should be " as written on Maine licence [sic] plates. Devestating [sic] rampant destruction of our precious enviornment [sic] is so evident every day. Thank you for your care of the important things in life for future generations.

Heidi Shiver: My husband, children and I moved to beautiful Bucks County 30 years ago and have watched the land slowly disappear, with more fragmentation and development everywhere. This fragmentation and habitat loss gravely impacts our local birds and pollinators populations, which are already struggling, with 3 billion birds lost since 1970, including our very common bird species such as finches, sparrows and warblers, which are "habitat generalist" and should be able to live anywhere. They are struggling to find food and spaces to live in with so little habitat left for them. The Dark Hollow area of the Neshaminy is an environmentally sensitive area and floodplain, a special habitat for birds, insects, turtles, fish and other animals. The work planned will decimate this area and will negatively impact water quality, streamside vegetation, as well as the trees and unique wildflowers and overall habitat. Why destroy this area when there are other very viable options? The trail could be more easily placed near the road making it more

cost effective and it will still serve the purpose of increasing human access to the area but with much less impact on habitat and animals. Please reconsider this trail's location and keep intact a very special habitat for now and future generations.

Patti Price: What a pity that every natural area has to be opened to humans with no consideration for leaving space for the critters. The hike-bike trail through the Pine Run Reservoir lands has been invasive and is regularly abused as a massive dog park during daylight, and a fireworks staging area in the dark.

Jan Filios: Attached is my public comment concerning the Bucks County Commissioners plan for a trail at Dark Hollow Park. I live within the Neshaminy Creek Watershed and have actively been following the Citizens Advisory participation and conclusions about the impact this trail plan would have. Please read the attachment which contains my public input to the proposed plan. I appreciate your time and attention to public concerns. *(The following is the information contained in the attachment)* This letter is an urgent appeal concerning the Bucks County Planning Commission's (BCPC) plans for a Neshaminy Greenway Trail (NGT) segment in Dark Hollow Park. I am a degreed horticulturist, a Master Watershed Steward, and a Bird Town leader for my municipality in Bucks County and I support the conclusions of the Citizens Advisory Design Committee that I have included for reference. Despite strong reservations from some CADC members about this plan, the BCPC has moved forward with a design for a 10' wide excavated and compacted gravel trail with 2' shoulders. Below are some of the concerns about the heavy impact this design will have on such an environmentally sensitive area, which were brought to attention during the CADC meetings with Commissioners. - Severe disturbance to, and removal of, both mature and young native trees - Increases in human interference with natural forest regeneration - - Impact on wildlife in what is one of the last wildlife corridors in Central Bucks - Soil compaction: the indelible footprint that a large, heavy-equipment built trail will have for many years to come - Loss of preserved stream buffer, which helps to soak up storm water - Loss of permeability of soil in an area which regularly floods - The impact on springs, seeps and wetlands - Increased trash, dog waste, and pollution of the water - Larger overall project not needed at this locale - Future need for bridges to connect trails, which may obstruct creek flow in storms - Constant maintenance, leading to continued disturbance of nature - Security issues – Expense Reasons proposed for this “unnatural” trail are paradoxically about getting people into nature and providing recreation. Must we destroy nature in order to seek to enjoy it? This particular area already provides passive recreation in the form of walking, fishing and kayaking. There are many other recreational areas nearby with paved trails and other human amenities. Most new parks and trails are built on reclaimed land or right of ways. It seems the main reason for this planned development is for The Circuit Trail to extend along this winding creek where no rail trail or road now exists. In other words the Neshaminy Creek buffer zone is pure natural space, which is different from open space, a catch-phrase meaning land available to develop for human use. The above plan proposes to cut a wide swath through this natural land—never to be reversed. It is easier to destroy nature than to bring back what was here. A paved “trail” has already been built along the creek in New Britain. It joins the 202 bike path and we hope that will be where the paving or compressed gravel ends. We need to keep forest trails green, narrow and, above all, natural. This natural forest and wildlife corridor should be preserved as a TRUE greenway. The Neshaminy Creek is part of the Delaware River Watershed that also runs through Newtown Township where I live and volunteer on the Environmental Advisory Council. Please protect our natural watershed; we all live downstream and cannot keep pace with overdevelopment and its detrimental effects on our streams. Our streams have been increasingly impacted with sediment and flooding. We need more riparian buffer plantings, not gravel or asphalt trails!

Jeanine Mitchell (CADC Member): I won't belabor this: the Planning Commission has heard my voice before. I believe that the design plan for the Dark Hollow Park segment of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail is a mistake. You said it: there's no sugarcoating the destruction that heavy machinery will do to construct this trail. The natural footpath that exists there now respects the fragility of the creekside [sic] environment. I am firmly against this design plan and hope that it can be scrapped in favor of a re-routing of the trail. There is almost no land in Central Bucks County that is undeveloped. Preservation, not development, should be the aim of any long-range planning for county land. This trail is development: it will ruin a fragile, centuries-old piece of the Neshaminy Creek watershed. It is an area for passive, not active, land use. Even so-called "linear parks" like trails can be for quiet, environmentally-friendly natural communion. A trail that invites whizzing bicycles should be built where it is appropriate. I could go on, but there is no need. Thank you for listening again.

Jon Kontz: I live in the original farm house on the cul de sac of Willowbrook Dr, and I would like to express my support for the trail project. The area where the trail is planned is beautiful and increasing access to it will be a tremendous asset to our neighborhood and many others. My family has spent many hours and afternoons enjoying that area and think it would be great to make it more accessible to others. I own Hortulus Farm, a non-profit plant nursery, and landscape design company and would be happy to do anything possible to support the project.

Joseph Lightkep: I understand that you are looking at approving the next step in the Valley Road Segment of the Neshaminy Greenway. This is going to destroy a huge stretch of one of the few beautiful, natural areas left in Bucks County. This whole plan of 33 miles of trail - which is essentially a road minus the cars is overkill. Bucks County is loaded with bike trails, walking trails, horse trails, and parks. All of these areas exist already and are used by residents. Why destroy the beautiful Neshaminy Creek watershed area? You want to bulldoze it, remove trees and foliage, disrupt wildlife, and mess with natural water drainage in the name of hoping people will use it. The truth is, our current trails are not heavily used... why do you think this trail is needed? To complete the precious Circuit? The cost is too high - both environmentally and monetarily. Please vote this project down. Thank you.

Josh Weideman: I have read about your plans to install a large, packed-gravel trail in and around Dark Hollow. These plans seem overly ambitious for this natural corridor. The compaction and disruption will affect both trees and wildlife. A smaller, more natural trail would be much more environmentally responsible. Having the Circuit Trail go along the Neshaminy Creek, making a permanent scar, is antithetical to the goal of preserving natural land for future generations. Deepest thanks to you in advance for your concern about our quickly disappearing natural lands—and your willingness to do something about it.

Jo Gonnella and Allegra D'Adamo: My family can't wait to hike the new trail!!! Many thanks

Jim Walter (CADC Member): Good meeting last night. I think it's a good design.

Kathleen Davis: I write to express my opposition to the currently planned Dark Hollow section of the "Greenway Circuit trail." As designed, this "shared use path" will cause increased flooding, destroy natural habitat, and will not provide what citizens have requested. Your documents show that a majority of citizens prioritized a "shared use path," but the current design is not a "path." It is 10' wide, often with a 2' shoulder on each side. This is not a "path." It is a "road." Not only would such a road NOT be conducive to enjoyment of the natural environment, it would destroy that very environment, particularly in the case

of the fragile ecosystem along the Neshaminy Creek. This destruction would result from many factors. Construction of such a road would require razing trees, which: 1) absorb water that would otherwise wash into the creek; 2) have root systems that stabilize the soil and thus prevent erosion; 3) provide shelter and food for wildlife; and 4) reduce temperature. Construction of this road would also require the compaction of a 10' to 14' swath of land through this fragile habitat, nearly eliminating its potential for absorbing rainwater, and thus increasing the problem of flooding and erosion. Cutting this wide swath would also eliminate its entire understory and plant life, thus destroying the ecological balance of a fragile natural area and "evicting" countless species from their homes. Many creatures of the smaller species would simply be killed outright. The construction process alone, with its heavy trucks, pollution, noise, and collateral destruction, would be the equivalent of a category 5 tornado tearing through the center of a small town. I respectfully request that the construction of this road not proceed as planned. If a 10' swath is what is required for a Greenway Trail, then it should be placed elsewhere. People who wish to walk to the creek can do so by way of a small footpath through the woods. Those are the very people, including fishermen, who do not want to see such devastation as would result from the building of the proposed road.

Leanne Yerkes: I am writing to you as a lifelong resident of Bucks County. My family has lived on the same farm bordering the Neshaminy for over 200 years. I grew up enjoying the county trails, and raised my own children to enjoy playing in the Neshaminy and exploring the numerous trails bordering it as I did. Needless to say, we are devastated at the thought of you bulldozing your way from Upper to Lower Bucks in the name of creating "trails". We already have miles and miles of trails. Trails to walk, explore, bicycle, ride horses...When I want to ride my bike, I head to one of the many bike trails within a few miles. Why destroy the rare remaining natural areas of Bucks County when we already have such an abundance of paths? Create paths by roads or rails - but don't destroy our wooded, serene areas filled with wildlife you won't see once you build this monstrosity. Please stop this now. A better option is to reroute the trail to areas that are beautiful but already established (similar to the parkway, towpath, rails/trails). We don't need to destroy nature to achieve this goal of the Neshaminy Greenway.

Louise Selberg (CADC Member): Mr. Brahler I do realize that the most difficult portion is what was discussed at our meetings. I thought you had heard our concerns and made consideration [sic] to move the trail further from the Creek's edge. You did have experts come in to look at the turtles in question and that considerations were made to protect mating times. We discussed trees we would like to avoid, discussed removing those we should and planting more native trees with protection for their survival. We even discussed different surfaces in more sensitive areas. I'm sorry but I have faith in what the County will do with this/their land. Most of the wooded area has a trail already made by all terrain vehicles. Look at the other parts of the Greenway trail and trust that this will be equally as nice. I would welcome this trail to ride/walk in!

Lynn DeRose: "I have read about your plans to install a large, packed-gravel trail in and around Dark Hollow. These plans seem overly ambitious for this natural corridor. The compaction and disruption will affect both trees and wildlife. A smaller, more natural trail would be much more environmentally responsible. Having the Circuit Trail go along the Neshaminy Creek, making a permanent scar, is antithetical to the goal of preserving natural land for future generations. " ; Maria Corota

I am in total agreement with the above statement. I also wish to say I find the handling of the communications with residents from the very start appalling and deceitfully misleading at times. It seems despite so much opposition to this plan, it has never even been seriously considered to halt it or even

slow the progress towards it's [sic] completion. Commenting was turned off on the Facebook post. Things like that, all along, that have left residents and those concerned about this project feeling quite frustrated and unheard, and that opposition or even questions are deflected and made very difficult to put forth. The feeling is that this has been shoved through and will be still, despite actual serious and practical ramifications. It seems like some parties in power have an agenda that will be done, no matter what. Applications for funds are even made without providing the full sphere of environmental and wildlife concerns. Research and statistics have been blatantly ignored and not given in reports or sent to prospective funding sources or run through entities charged with protecting our environment, our watersheds, waterways and natural areas. It is apparent we are only patronized and put up with until we might tire of the useless voices we have. Such is politics, and be sure, this is politics and private self serving agendas. This natural area has no hope with no voice of it's own. It will rage, and rage over these proposed plans because they are non sensical [sic]. The money should be put to preservation and better planning for runoff. The area that is going to be disturbed is already heavily taxed by flooding, as an attached land owner, I can attest so strongly as flood waters have approached my home several times, swamped the land being presented for this roadway and already been eroded and damaged, which has stifled the creek and caused a great deal of soil and tree, vegetation loss. This area, if it needs anything, it is restoration and a plan to improve the flooding, the clear flow of the creek and removal of fallen trees. The creek is frequented by fishermen and wildlife, and what is proposed will permanently affect that. The parking area is proposed in the very center of farm land that sits on one of the most bucolic roads and scenery left in Bucks County. There is far far too much development taxing the ground water and surface flooding/runoff. Impervious surfaces just add to that problem. Traffic through this sensitive area will bring litter and opportunity for crime on very close private properties. There is a very poor history of these public areas being kept clean and in good condition. This is not a public park; it is a natural area and it will disappear with this large influx of bikes and pedestrians. Will the area be for horses? I have horses, and so do others...and these paths do nothing to add to our sport; but bike trails are over 30+ miles of trails already existing. Cyclists are not the only people who should be considered and tax money spent to cater to. Building bridges over this creek will cause irreparable damage to the creek and it's [sic] banks and the cost is not justified. Environmental concerns should be the areas most funded, as they are in much more trouble than a perceived lack of enough entertainment for humans. We simple [sic] cannot keep running over the woods and tearing down trees and beating soils, and killing wildlife spaces for greedy surplus development. This is a monumental waste of money. It simply is a bad idea and in a bad area to implement. A feeder storm water stream runs through my property and if you could see it raging and overflowing and racing OVER the land far above the culverts built to contain it, you might understand better why I am so concerned about vegetation loss and compacted areas. Those areas and that money spent will be washed out, flooded over, and ruined, leaving money lost and more money required to repair what will again be destroyed. There is simply not enough dry land here to put this bike path and it's so obvious. The plan ignores completely such obvious impediments and pushes past them without regard for other voices. To finish I would also suggest the private properties attached should be considered for safety and privacy barriers. I have valuable and vulnerable livestock that will be at risk and are not meant as entertainment for multitudes of passers-by. With no assurances built in the costs, the plans are clearly egregious towards residents. Thank you for reading. Btw, I am not a NIMBY. I am concerned about the destruction but I have been brought to further concern over the sheer exploitive and devious actions of those planners in this abhorrent misuse of natural land, and the way it has been managed to just push it over the voices of concern. It's disgraceful. I pay very high taxes to live here, and there seems no respect for that. Soon Bucks County will be no different from any other county. We will have to leave it to find natural spaces left unmarred by humans. It might be tax rich, but then in the end everyone will wonder why they ever thought it was a unique and bucolic bit of the country. Except maybe cyclists. As stewards

of this land, and a taxpayer who puts my money into your hands, I think you abuse the power you were entrusted with, and ignore scientific facts and studies. Private interests. That's the only logical conclusion.

Maggie Rash: I am not a biker nor a hiker. My main service to Buckingham Township is Agricultural and Open Space preservation. I realize the need for trail connectivity, however I am very concerned with protection of what is essentially the only natural part of Central Bucks still remaining. After reviewing the plans and the minutes dating back to November 2121, I am not in favor of building this "road." Apparently the 10' wide "trail" is essentially a road strong enough to support EMS vehicles. The compaction that will occur through construction is detrimental to the area and very difficult to remediate and in the process destroy the habitat for the many species of concern that inhabit the area. Another concern for me and my colleagues on the Buckingham Township EAC are the microplastics that now pollute the creek. No matter the effort to provide trash containers, doggie "waste" bags, water bottles etc., will accelerate those pollution concerns. Thank you so much for the time and work that has gone into this plan and especially opening the plan up to public comment. Again, my focus has been on the preservation of open space and protecting those natural areas that make Bucks County the unique, beautiful place that it is. As a township supervisor I truly appreciate the use of grants and I realize that the pressure to adhere to the requirements in order to qualify for those funds. That said, a Shared Use Path, 10ft wide and placed in such close proximity to the Neshaminy Creek, may not be the ideal location to facilitate a plan for such a grant.

Marc Waldinger: This is to strongly recommend a rerouting of the proposed Dark Hollow Park segment of the Neshaminy Greenway Trail and allow the existing trail to remain in its present state. Although the proposed trail surface is crushed stone, several pieces of heavy equipment will be needed to clear the area and construct the trail. This has a number of disadvantages including soil compaction, disruption to the buffer zone, and disturbance to nearby wildlife. Please reroute the proposed trail so that it avoids the existing segment of the trail.

Marie Carota (CADC Member): You already know my sentiments on the overly grand scale of the proposed NGT in Dark Hollow and all along the Neshaminy Creek. I am for bike trails and giving people access to nature. This area however needs special care. The environment and natural land must not be overlooked due to the fact that the only way to get federal funding is to propose a large road built for ADA compliance. It is paradoxical that nature gets compromised in order for people to be in nature. Heavy road building machinery will be a disaster. If one's medical insurers wouldn't cover a serious necessary operation, one would call them and try to work something out. I should think that federal funding could be worked out for a smaller path in order to save the environment. Or perhaps other 'environmentally conscious' funding could be found for a much narrower more suitable path. The Circuit map shows plenty of trails running through this county. This particular trail is a 'desire' not a 'need'. It does not remediate land that was once industrial. It does not follow a previous canal road or railroad. It does not benefit people in compromised urban communities. It does not add to an already plentiful choice of recreational areas. There is recreation of a different kind already happening in Dark Hollow. In fact building this typical human centric type of wide path actually diminishes the recreational choice of going to this quieter natural park. Many of the people who live in this County are saddened to see it get built up. We discussed a smaller nature park in this area and I think that would be palatable for most who like the wildness of the creek. I have spoken to many people who wonder why the County wants to build such a road along the creek. The short comment period, the segmental permitting and the apparent lack of understanding how this monumental plan will increase the vanishing rural substance of the county is not lost on those who think of the environment first. The following quote from The Delaware River Keepers in 1989 shows how

people in the county once thought to keep things pristine. Perhaps times have changed in thirty plus years. People's thinking has changed. People seem to want more than ever to get in and use the vanishing natural areas regardless of the impact that will result. A smaller design will have a smaller impact. If the thinking has changed from when the above was written there is nothing to be done. Someday soon Bucks County will not have the rural beauty it once had. Children will be taught that in order to enjoy nature they have to walk on a road. Those who actually love nature will have to go farther away to find it. As the climate change increases we will miss the loss of the trees and not have time to get them grown back. As we scramble to find clean water the creeks will have been compromised further. As we develop more communities in the watershed storm water will increase (basins can't do it all). It will be a shame when we will have to tell the children, 'Once upon a time the creek was clean and running freely through the forest. There were wild animals and birds'. Elders have told me, 'Once upon a time Philadelphia was rural. Now most of the creeks have been funneled underground'. This is what we do. Nature is having a harder time remediating itself due to habitat loss, invasive plants and over browsing by deer. I guess that hopelessness is why people say let's use it up now for ourselves.

Michael Gross: I look forward to this being done. I have previously helped Warrington and Doylestown get trails connected. We need more trails and passages that do not cross roads at grade level. 'Neshaminy Greenway Trail'. And send a public comment by Nov. 11th to the County to rgbrahler@buckscounty.org It will help encourage people to be more active and therefore healthier. It offers great transportation alternatives. It will reduce car trips. There has been a design submitted for permit of a compressed gravel 10' wide road bed with 2' shoulders (14'!) to be built in Warwick township near Valley Rd along the creek. It includes a large expansion and rebuilding of the Valley Rd parking area (which was under water after Hurricane Ida). They will use road building equipment, triple axle trucks, bulldozers and rollers to build it. Trees will be cut and soil compacted. It is a segment of the whole NGT plan of similar design. The County hopes to build segments and finally connect all of them. I love that this wide ribbon will show off and allow access to natural land and forest. You can see on the Circuit Trail map the plans and progress. You can see that there are big shortages of bike trails in this part of the county. I am glad the county will consider that as they can only get funding for large ADA trails. The Neshaminy Creek winds especially as it gets near the Delaware. It is a wildlife corridor and has wetlands. The creek is maxed out when storms come and there is erosion as whole trees get swept down the creek.

Dr. Michael Zelesko: As a resident of Pebble Hill Road I want to register my concern about your plans for a trail that would contaminate and destroy the beautiful area behind our home. It is the home for so many animals and different types of birds. We try to keep it clean and safer for them and honor their right to live in peace. Bucks County needs to preserve this as much as we need make other areas open for recreation. We love and use many of the trails and parks that have been created and we support providing recreational facilities our community but this plan sounds expensive and useless. Please review your plans. Make Bucks County safe for our wildlife and natural resources. Thank you.

Dorothy Zelesko: As a resident of Pebble Hill Road I want to register my concern about your plans for a trail that would contaminate and destroy the beautiful area behind our home. It is the home for so many animals and different types of birds. We try to keep it clean and safer for them and honor their right to live in peace. Bucks County needs to preserve this as much as we need make other areas open for recreation. We love and use many of the trails and parks that have been created and we support providing recreational facilities our community but this plan sounds expensive and useless. Please review your plans. Make Bucks County safe for our wildlife and natural resources. Thank you.

Nancy Wasch: Please reconsider the current plan for a 14 ft wide packed gravel trails and one or more bridges along the creek ar [sic] Dark Hollow. This plan does not further your stated objectives for environmental benefits: Environmental Benefits such as reducing the need to drive, encouraging the removal/management of invasive plants and improving stormwater management as part of trail development. The plan will most likely open up opportunities for more invasive plants in a fairly undisturbed area and will interfere with the existing natural stormwater management. Please reconsider this plan before irreversible damage is done.

Jeffrey Branham: I would like to add my comments to the plan. Bucks County's forests are extremely fragmented, young, and suffering greatly from ash decline. In a Piedmont post agricultural landscape with this level of historic and ongoing human disturbance, forest fragments are especially vulnerable to precipitous decline due to invasive plant incursion and further fragmentation. One of the key strategies to maintaining forest fragment health is to prevent forest openings from being colonized by invasive shrub and woody vine species. I would like to see careful attention paid to the canopy as construction of the trail is undertaken. The greenway trail is a great opportunity to introduce citizens to our county's special natural resources, but shouldn't be an opportunity to introduce more invasive species and further undermine the ecological health of this landscape. As trees are removed for access and trail corridor, I would like to see them replaced in such a manner as to reduce canopy openings. I would also like to see these trees replaced with ecologically appropriate species; that is straight-species (non-cultivar) later-successional or otherwise fast growing species with dominant canopy characteristics. Oaks, hickories, and sycamore immediately come to mind as species that can provide the long term stability needed to protect this ecosystem.

Lorraine and Bruce McMahon: I am a resident of Bucks County, who is concerned about the environment. We often enjoy walking down the dirt paths in the area designated for the Neshaminy Greenway Trail. The untouched nature is a big part of its beauty. Realistically, if the construction of this path is pursued the area will no longer be "untouched". Clearing of trees will be a necessity, if for no other reason than to accommodate the equipment for laying a 10' pathway. We don't see a need for a 10' pathway that is supposed to be a walking trail. Maintenance would need to be ongoing when the pathway is washed out, which would be a financial burden on the taxpayers. Let people enjoy this area in its natural state.

Sally Conyne: From 1960 until 2012, I lived at the Forks of the Neshaminy on our family farm. I know very well how important and fragile that entire ecosystem is. I studied nature along its banks and brought inner city kids out to camp and enjoy the forests and streams. I saw the devastation and resilience of the floodplain when flooding regularly occurred. I watched Bucks County as more and more fragmentation and development occurred throughout its beautiful, rolling acreage. The suggested trail construction in the Dark Hollow region of the Big Neshaminy is a profoundly bad idea especially given the clear alternatives. It violates many of the fundamentals of today's conservation and preservation efforts. As designed, this plan will negatively impact water quality and runoff, streamside vegetation and erosion control, flora at many levels from large mature trees to ephemeral wildflowers, the atmosphere of a wild place (a rare & valuable commodity in Bucks), wildlife corridors for the tiniest insects and herps [sic] to larger mammals and birds, the opportunity for people of all ages to have intimate connection with wildlife and nature and there are more. Please, please reconsider. Why contribute to the degradation of an increasingly rare Bucks County treasure for the sake of another public good when alternatives exist? Choose what is best for all, now and into the future. Preserve and protect.

Sue Elkind: I am writing to express my deep concern and complete disagreement for the proposed plans to invade this highly fragile area of Neshaminy by creating the Greenway Trail. We need to honor the wild areas of Bucks County, not continue to build and create more traffic in them. Our wildlife needs these places of habitat to not be invaded by our hobbies! Please find ways to regenerate and improve our relationship to our environment, not forever devastate by bringing large equipment into these precious places.

Todd Lukens: Before you think about building any more segments of the Neshaminy Greenway trail, you need to think about where this wide trail is going and the damage it will do. You have this "road" headed through the Neshaminy Creek area where I finally see beaver, mink, and bald eagles. I say finally because I haven't seen mink or beaver in more than ten years and now bald eagles have begun to nest here. You have this "road" going close to Wicen's Shooting Range in Buckingham Township. Wicen's had to change their range's orientation because of stray bullets many years ago. They created a large buffer but the noise of the shooting is nonstop in the fall and steady the rest of the year. Not what trail users want to hear. The ash trees are falling everywhere and the danger they pose is real. I walked my dog tonight and heard crashes three times. This will require you to cut a wider path to protect people who use it which destroys this area even more. And when was the last environmental study? The most recent I can find on the website is 2014. Almost ten years ago. If that's the most recent one, it's time for another one before approving this Don't build this trail - or at least move it away from the Neshaminy Creek area.

Zsuzsa Palotas: Sincerely hope you consider my public comment, even though I think I am a couple of days late (unfortunately work long hours during the week). I am a Doylestown Township resident and landowner with 5 acres of riparian forestland right on Neshaminy Creek, about a half mile upstream from Dark Hollow (39 Doe Run Rd, Warrington). I have the privilege and responsibility to steward a fragile, native ecosystem teeming with local flora and fauna. We have beavers, blue herons, bald eagles, eastern box turtles, red foxes, wood ducks, several species of amphibians, and the list goes on and on. We have spent tens of thousands of \$s, countless hours/manpower, planted thousands of trees, native perennials, and more. Land stewardship is my legacy here. I have been following the discussions around the plans to install a large, packed-gravel train in and around Dark Hollow. This would have been the plan on our side of the Neshaminy... Fortunately you passed on it, opting to go instead by Central Park. This plan is misguided and will do more harm than good. It will seriously impact one of the last remaining wild tract of floodplain areas in an overly developed County. For what? So people can get close to the water? I have watched the creek flood our land, at times flooding 150' inland. I have walked by nesting groundfowl [sic] only to disturb them from afar, no matter how quietly I passed. The point I'm trying to make - it's impossible to not degrade this environment through the proposed development. This will leave a scar on the landscape - and for what? At what point do we start to value the little natural world we have left? Strongly urge you to reconsider these plans and either 1) leave the current natural path in place or 2) consider an alternate route.