

March 14, 2025

Board of Supervisors
West Vincent Township
729 St Matthews Road
Chester Springs, PA 19425

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed approval of a self-storage facility within West Vincent Township. While this letter reflects my personal views as a Planning Commission member, I believe this issue warrants serious concern from a long-term planning and sustainability standpoint.

The current Township Zoning Code does not explicitly permit the construction of self-storage facilities—and that is not by accident. The framers of our code intentionally excluded this use because it is not aligned with the Township's long-term vision for sustainable land use. Self-storage facilities are inherently low-intensity, low-engagement developments that offer limited benefits to the local economy, create minimal employment opportunities, and fail to support the vibrant, connected community that West Vincent Township strives to foster.

More concerning is the long-term viability of such a development. A large-scale storage warehouse, by its nature, presents significant economic and environmental risks over future decades. These facilities are often inflexible structures, difficult to repurpose or redevelop, and once constructed, they tend to remain even after their usefulness has diminished. Vacant or underutilized warehouses become blights on the landscape, with negative impacts on surrounding property values and the overall character of the community. The cost of dealing with obsolete or deteriorating structures typically falls to future generations—something we should be planning proactively to avoid.

Additionally, the introduction of warehouse-style development is better suited to areas specifically designated for that purpose, such as those focused around the Pennsylvania Turnpike entrance further south on Route 100. This type of use has been deliberately concentrated in areas with appropriate infrastructure and regional access. Extending warehouse-style development northward into West Vincent Township represents an encroachment that is inconsistent with our Township's rural and residential identity and risks setting a precedent for further incompatible land uses.

Approving a self-storage facility here would not only disregard the thoughtful planning that underpins our Township Code but also undermine the long-term sustainability, environmental integrity, and economic vitality of our community regardless of the design of the facility. I strongly urge the Board to consider these factors and to reject this proposal in favor of land uses that truly serve the present and future needs of West Vincent Township.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jeff Butler
Planning Commission Member
West Vincent Township