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Via Electronic Delivery

The Honorable Bob
Cassilly Harford County
Executive 220 S Main St
Bel Air, MD 21014

The Honorable Patrick Vincenti
President, Harford County Council
220 S Main St
Bel Air, MD 21014

RE: 3P Protect Perryman Peninsula Response to the CREG's Community Meeting – Threat to Harford County Economic Development

Dear County Executive Cassilly and Council President Vincenti:

On behalf of the 3P Protect Perryman Peninsula Steering Committee, I am writing to provide 3P's perspective on the recent community meeting held on August 27, 2024, regarding the Mitchell Company/ Chesapeake Real Estate Group (CREG)'s proposed projects in Perryman. As you are aware, 3P is a grassroots organization representing over 5,000 residents of the Perryman Peninsula. Their mission is to preserve the agricultural land, open space, and rural residential character of the community while ensuring that any development aligns with the environmental preservation and community character of Perryman and its surrounding areas.

Summary of the Community Meeting

The community meeting, arranged by Councilman Jacob Bennett, provided a platform for open discussion regarding the Mitchell Company's plans. During the meeting, Chesapeake Real Estate Group (CREG) presented a proposal that included both the development of a horse training facility and the construction of an unlawful 800,000-square-foot freight terminal. It was made clear that CREG's support for the horse training facility is contingent upon the approval of the warehouse project, a condition that we find deeply concerning.

3P's Support for the Horse Training Facility

3P has been a driving force behind the effort to bring the Thoroughbred Training Facility to Perryman. 3P has worked tirelessly to elevate Perryman as a top choice for this facility, engaging a lobbyist who has worked diligently on our behalf and securing the support of numerous politicians who have been working resolutely in the background to make this project a reality. 3P's efforts have been instrumental in bringing this opportunity to the forefront.

We recognize the significant economic and community benefits this facility would bring to Perryman and Harford County. It would not only preserve critical land but also enhance Harford County's standing in

the equine industry, providing a boon to local businesses involved in horse-related support industries such as feed, supplies, veterinary services, and rehabilitation facilities.

However, our support for this project is strictly conditional. We strongly oppose any attempt to bundle this facility with additional industrial development, particularly large-scale warehousing. The construction and operation of warehouses and industrial facilities is incompatible with the rural character of our community and poses significant risks to our local environment, including the aquifer that provides drinking water to a large portion of Harford County.

Extortion Tactics by Chesapeake Real Estate Group Harm Harford County Economy

During the meeting, CREG and their representatives made it abundantly clear that their support for the horse training facility is contingent upon the approval of the warehouse project. This approach can only be described as extortionate, with the developers leveraging the community's desire for the horse training facility to push through an illegal and highly controversial industrial development.

For instance, Matt Larraway explicitly stated:

"If the warehouse project doesn't move forward, the horse training facility likely won't either. It's all tied together; you can't have one without the other."

This statement makes it clear that the approval of the horse training facility is being used as a bargaining chip to force through the warehouse project, despite its non-compliance with existing zoning laws.

Additionally, Parker Mitchell underscored the lack of alternatives, stating:

"There are no other buyers lined up for this land. If we can't make this work with the warehouse, we're out of options, and the land could be used for something far less desirable."

This assertion serves as a veiled threat, implying that if the community does not agree to the warehouse, the land could be sold or developed in a manner that is even more harmful to the area, including the possibility of manufacturing facilities.

These statements collectively demonstrate a clear attempt by CREG to manipulate the approval process by leveraging the horse training facility against the community's wishes, effectively holding the County hostage to their demands.

Concerns Regarding Industrial Development

The introduction of additional industrial projects, such as the proposed warehouse, would severely disrupt the community's character and threaten the environmental integrity of the area. The proposed 800,000-square-foot warehouse is in direct violation of existing zoning laws, which limit the size of such buildings, and would introduce a level of traffic and pollution that is wholly inappropriate for a rural residential area. Moreover, the noise and environmental degradation associated with such developments would undermine the tranquility required for a successful horse training facility. Finally, it is clear that the proposed warehouse is just the first step in developing an additional 2.5 million-square-feet of industrial facilities on the property.

In addition, we are deeply concerned about the specific infrastructure costs associated with this project, particularly the two access roads required to support existing and future industrial developments. These roads, as identified in Harford County's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) requirements, are estimated to cost several hundred million dollars. It is critical to point out that the horse training facility itself does not require such extensive infrastructure. The infrastructure costs that the developer is trying to offset are only necessary because of the additional industrial development they are proposing. Despite much of the development involving the Mitchell Company, there has been little clarity on what the company will contribute to these critical infrastructure projects. The burden of these costs on Harford County is

unjustifiable, especially when considering that these developments offer minimal benefit to the local community while posing substantial risks.

Further, the potential impact on water and environmental issues cannot be overstated. The Perryman Peninsula's aquifer, which currently supplies 30% of Harford County's drinking water, is particularly vulnerable. Industrial runoff from the proposed warehouse project could contaminate this vital resource, exacerbating existing water issues and creating new ones that could have long-lasting consequences for both human and equine health.

Formal Recommendations

We strongly urge the County Executive and County Council to reject Chesapeake Real Estate Group's (CREG) proposal in its entirety. The proposed warehouse project not only violates existing zoning laws but also fails to align with the needs and desires of the Perryman community or the economic interest of Harford County at large. It is evident that CREG and the Mitchell Company's development agreement incorporates an outdated and unrealistic valuation of the property, which no longer reflects the current market realities or the more restrictive development parameters established by the people of Harford County.

Instead of capitulating to these inflated and antiquated demands, we encourage the County to work collaboratively with the State of Maryland to subsidize the infrastructure costs necessary for the Thoroughbred Training Facility. Furthermore, we advocate for the purchase of the remaining land for use as a state park with a historical, heritage, and equestrian theme, preserving the land for public benefit and ensuring that it remains a valuable asset to the community.

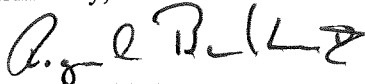
This approach not only honors the wishes of the Perryman community but also recognizes the changing economic landscape and the need for high value development that is sustainable, responsible, and aligned with the current and future needs of Harford County. CREG's unwillingness to adjust to these new realities should not dictate the future of Perryman or compromise the integrity of our community.

We trust that the County Executive and County Council will take the necessary steps to protect the interests of Harford County's residents and ensure that any development within Perryman is both appropriate and beneficial to the community.

Conclusion

3P Protect Perryman Peninsula remains committed to working collaboratively with the County and all relevant stakeholders to ensure that development in Perryman benefits the entire community while preserving our natural resources and rural character. We look forward to continuing this important dialogue and are prepared to take any necessary steps to protect the interests of our community. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Rignal Baldwin V

Baldwin Legal Group LLC

On behalf of 3P Protect Perryman Peninsula Steering Committee

CC:

Mr. Parker Mitchell, The Mitchell Company
Mr. Matt Larraway, Chesapeake Real Estate Group
Mr. Art Makris, Prologis
Mr. Jacob Bennett, Harford County Councilman, District F
Mr. James Reilly, Harford County Councilman District D
Mr. Tony Giangordano, Harford County Councilman District C
Mr. Dion Guthrie, Harford County Councilman District A
Mr. Aaron Penman, Harford County Councilman District B
Ms. Jessica Boyle-Tsottles, Harford County Councilman E
The Honorable Andre Johnson, Maryland Delegate, District 34A
The Honorable Steve Johnson, Maryland Delegate, District 34A
The Honorable Mary Dulaney James, Maryland Senate, District 34
Mr. Henry Holloway, Economic Development Agriculture Advisory
Board Ms. Kristen Kirkwood, Executive Director, Harford Land Trust
Relevant Stakeholders and Community Representatives