



Dear friends,

The Lower Merion School Board announced at its meeting on Monday night that it had reached an agreement to purchase the former Clothier estate at 1860 Montgomery Avenue for use as the site of a new middle school.

We welcome the School District's efforts to find an alternative to Stoneleigh for the school and this could be a positive step. **Unfortunately, though, the plan does not yet represent a victory for Stoneleigh or the end of our fight to save the entire property from eminent domain.**

The agreement to purchase 1860 Montgomery Avenue is contingent on several things, including that the District be able to find a location for a sports complex elsewhere in the Township.

In his comments at the meeting, **Superintendent Copeland made it clear that they are still considering a 6.9-acre portion of Stoneleigh as a site for a sports complex.** As we have stated on numerous occasions, this area of Stoneleigh is an essential and integral part of the property. **The planned sports complex would cause irreparable harm to the historic landscape and forever alter the serenity and ecology of the property.**

The School District should sever the link between the agreement to purchase 1860 Montgomery Avenue and its desire for a new sports complex so that the search for an alternative site for that complex can continue. It will take time to finalize the deal for the 1860 property, design the school, and then secure the approvals and permits needed to build it. That should give the School District room to work collaboratively with the community to identify the right place for new fields.

And Stoneleigh—all of Stoneleigh—needs to be taken off the table. The School District should not be gambling with the future of Stoneleigh—a historic site, a public garden, a charitable gift—in order to accomplish its aims.

The School District's agreement to purchase 1860 Montgomery Avenue is also contingent upon that property remaining designated as a Class 2 resource by Lower Merion Township. We are confident that, working together, the Township and School District can find a way to both meet the District's needs and honor the property's history.

In other news, **State House Bill 2468 was accepted unanimously through Local Government Committee yesterday.** It now will move on to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for a vote.

The Bill will add provisions to Pennsylvania's Eminent Domain law requiring a higher level of court approval before land protected with a conservation easement can be taken via eminent domain.

Please [email your local Representative](#) and ask him or her to support House Bill 2468.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to saving Stoneleigh—every blade of grass, every flower, and every tree—so that it can be a place of joy and learning for everyone in the community and beyond.

We are incredibly grateful for the outpouring of support and the thousands of people who have lent their voices in opposition to the School District's plans. I will continue to keep you posted on updates in our collective fight to save Stoneleigh.

Thank you!

Sincerely,



Molly K. Morrison
President



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