



## THE EXPRESS-TIMES

### Sides clash over homes

**3,000 homes planned for Forks Township. Traffic concerns cited.**

Tuesday, August 14, 2007

**By JIMMY P. MILLER**  
**The Express-Times**

FORKS TWP. | A proposed 3,000-home development would add 17,000 vehicles a day to Easton's already clogged streets and would open a conduit for developers to build on Lower Mount Bethel Township's farmland, officials said.

Officials from Easton and Lower Mount Bethel testified before the Forks Township Zoning Hearing Board on Monday on how the proposed Kings Mill development will impact Forks' neighboring municipalities.

Developer KRMD LP wants to build 1,952 apartments, 731 mobile homes and 359 townhouses on 550 acres in a farmland preservation district north of Newlins Road East. KRMD is suing the township, claiming that its zoning ordinance is unconstitutional in not allowing dense development.

Forks has no direct highway access, Easton Chief Planner Becky Bradley said, so most Forks motorists trying to get to Route 22 or Interstate 78 would have to go through Easton via Route 611, North Third Street, Cattell Street, 13th Street or Lafayette Street to get to the highways.

Those roads are at or over safe capacity, Bradley said. Widening the roads is nearly impossible because Lafayette, Cattell and Third streets run through National Historic Districts in which most buildings cannot be torn down. Route 611 cannot be widened because it is already being undermined by the Delaware River on the east and abuts a rock cliff on the west, she said.

Developers' attorney John A. Vanlunee objected to Bradley's testimony, saying that all development causes traffic but the impact of the Kings Mill development was not on trial Monday. Rather the constitutionality of Forks' zoning code was on trial and Easton has no legal standing to participate in that proceeding, Vanlunee said.

Zoning hearing board Solicitor Michael Shay agreed but the board allowed Bradley and two Lower Mount Bethel Township supervisors to testify anyway.

Lower Mount Bethel Township Supervisor Charles Palmeri said his mostly rural township has no public water and sewer service but that developers have wanted the township to acquire those services since the 1970s.

"I can see developers licking their chops to extend that water and sewer into your township," Forks Township Zoning Board member Louis Moyer said. "Have you considered that?"

Palmeri said the township had not considered that in its planning discussions but added that supervisors are aware that "the pressure is on."

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