

Testimony to the Montgomery County Board of Education
Re: Agenda Item 4.2.5 Lease Agreement – Brickyard Road Site
Tuesday, March 8, 2011 10:05AM

Speaker: Tory Cowles

My name is Tory Cowles. My husband rents and farms the field on Brickyard Rd. We also live on Horseshoe Ln. and our property line in the back borders the field.

It's sad to think that we would be going from a situation where the soil is being gradually built up and research is being done on organic farming techniques, to a situation where the land will be leveled disrupting top soil and regularly dousing it with fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.

But my greatest concerns have to do with major changes in the quality of our home life. If the private entity which rents the land intends to make a profit and recoup the investment of leveling the field, constructing bathrooms and bleachers, creating parking lots, and managing the fields, then they are going to have to maximize the use of the field.

This means that the land will be fully developed with as many playing fields as possible – pressing up against neighboring property lines. It means that there will be glaring lights at night to prolong play. It means that there will be a tremendous amount of shouting and noise at all times of the day and on into the night. It means that when I am in the backyard gardening or trying to enjoy a barbecue, there will be a constant bombardment of noise and light from over my back property line. It may even mean that when I am IN our house there will be a constant stream of noise, certainly compared to the quiet that we now enjoy.

How much oversight will there be? How well will drainage be supervised? What will happen to our wells if the renter decides to add synthetic turf to maximize playing time. How will traffic be handled on narrow Brickyard Road – especially if tournaments are scheduled. How well will trash be picked up.

When we canvassed the neighborhood, none of the neighbors that we talked to wanted ball fields in place of what we have. When this issue was raised several years ago, the community said they either wanted the farming to continue or they wanted a local park, perhaps with one playing field our kids could go out and play on after school. This proposal is not that. It would mean a tremendous negative impact on our community. Please respect the wishes of our neighborhood and don't force this on us.