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SEPTA's Proposals to Construct Multilevel Parking Garages at Glenside and Jenkintown Stations

Mark D. Sanders <chief.ogontz@gmail.com>

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To: Chief.Ogontz@gmail.com

To the Editor:

Re: SEPTA's Proposals to Construct Multilevel Parking Garages at Glenside and Jenkintown Stations.

I am certain that local elected officials, at all levels of government, have by this point heard from many of their constituents regarding SEPTA's proposals to construct multilevel parking garages here, in Cheltenham Township, at Glenside and Jenkintown Stations. Having carefully followed the discussion of these issues in the local media, I have come to the conclusion that both proposals are inimical to the interests of Cheltenham Township, as well as of the adjoining communities. I hope that these elected officials will come to the same conclusion and that they will refuse to endorse these proposals.

It is important to recognize that on the Regional Rail Division, the construction of virtually every "megastation", transportation center, or multilevel parking garage has precipitated the closure of one or more adjacent stations. Within the past two decades, for example, the construction of Temple University Station has preceded the closures of Nicetown and Tioga Stations; the construction of the Fern Rock Transportation Center has preceded the closures of Tabor and Logan Stations; and the construction of the Norristown and Wissahickon Transportation Centers has preceded the closures of Mogeys and Shawmont Stations.

It is highly likely that the construction of a multilevel parking garage at Glenside Station will lead to the eventual closures of Ardsley and Roslyn Stations, on the R2, and of North Hills and Oreland Stations, on the R5. It is equally likely that the construction of a multilevel parking garage at Jenkintown Station will lead to the eventual closures of Noble and Rydal Stations, on the R3 .

What is even more troubling for me as a resident of Cheltenham Township is the strong likelihood that the construction of a multilevel parking garage at Jenkintown Station will result in the early closure of Elkins Park Station, where parking is limited, and the subsequent closure, as well, of Melrose Park Station, where parking is rather more plentiful.

The historical record is incontrovertible. Whatever assurances SEPTA has offered that no neighborhood stations will be adversely affected are essentially meaningless.

For Cheltenham Township, the construction of these garages will bring a permanent increase in traffic on roads which already are badly congested. For SEPTA, neither one of these boondoggles will yield significant numbers of additional passengers; each will only divert existing passengers from the stations at which they currently board. Here, as elsewhere, passengers who are unable or unwilling to drive to a "megastation" will be permanently lost to the railroad system after the closures of the stations which for them lie within walking distance.

Each of the multilevel parking garages proposed for construction here, in Cheltenham Township, is a Trojan horse. I respectfully urge all of our local elected officials to exert whatever influence they can to scuttle these projects.

Sincerely yours,

Mark D. Sanders
Ogontz, Pennsylvania
