



Village of Walton Hills, Ohio

Kevin Hurst - Mayor/Safety Director/Economic Development Director

February 24, 2014

Representative Terry Blair
Chairman of the House State and Local Government Committee
Ohio House District 42
77 S. High Street – 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative Blair:

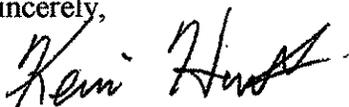
The following issues will be addressed by representatives from Walton Hills Village at the hearing regarding Substitute H.B. 377 to be held February 25, 2014 at 1:00pm.

1. Walton Hills prepared preliminary calculations on the increase of sewage volume as well as the cost for replacing the existing sewer with a larger diameter sewer to accommodate the increased flows. The cost to improve our infrastructure is approximately \$650,000. After studying all of the information, we realized that the diameter of our sewage pipes would be adequate for the increased volume on that particular site. However, this would cause problems to future development and other locations adjacent to the Rocksino.
2. Walton Hills performed a traffic study to review the increase in traffic volume that is directly tied to the motorists utilizing the Rocksino. The majority of the traffic to and from the Rocksino will come directly through and greatly impact the main corridor of Walton Hills.
3. Walton Hills put into place a whole new division of Auxiliary Police, including seven new employees to help with traffic control.
4. Walton Hills studied the traffic flow on Sagamore Road. This road provides vehicular access as a direct route to the Rocksino. We have undertaken the planning, funding and plan development phases of the Sagamore Road Reconstruction Project.
5. Walton Hills performed appraisals for properties located at the Northfield and Alexander Road intersection, driven by the need for installing turning lanes at these intersections to help control traffic flow to the Rocksino.
6. Walton Hills had a traffic study done at the intersection of Independence Drive and Alexander Road. As a result, we provided signal maintenance and upgrades at the traffic signal at this intersection to handle increased traffic generated by the additional vehicles travelling to and from the Rocksino.
7. Walton Hills reviewed various design alternatives and impacts in relation to placing a center lane on State Route 8 for access to the Rocksino.

8. Walton Hills posted informational signage throughout our Village that directs motorists to the Racino location.
9. Walton Hills plans to enhance the Northfield Road corridor by placing sidewalks, installing all utilities underground and eliminating the use of utility poles. This upgrade to our infrastructure would be enhanced through landscaping.
10. Walton Hills has committed to pay \$463,000 for repairs to Sagamore Road. That road intersects Northfield Road directly across from the Racino's main entrance and is controlled by the same traffic control devices.
11. The House of Representatives was correct in their original passage of H.B. 277, wherein Walton Hills would have received \$2 million dollars out of the Casino Operator Settlement Fund.
12. The Northfield Racetrack is in both Walton Hills (35%) and Northfield Village (65%). As such, neither community can claim full ownership of this business. The State has previously recognized this by equally dividing the horse wagering tax between Walton Hills and Northfield Village. (ORC 3769.28) This same logic should be implemented in this legislation.
13. The burdens of the Racetrack/Racino development and operations don't stop at the border between Northfield and Walton Hills. And in this case, that border dissects the racetrack itself and the racetrack/casino property.
14. Walton Hills would agree with the House of Representatives original assertion in H.B. 277 that both Walton Hills and Northfield Village should receive \$2 million dollars out of the Casino Operator Settlement Fund.
15. Each of the seven (7) casino operators for the racetrack casinos in Ohio are required to pay \$50 million dollars into the Casino Operator Settlement Fund. The Northfield Racetrack casino operator represents that the required contribution by each operator is \$50 million dollars. Payment of \$2 million dollars to Walton Hills out of the \$350 million dollars to be collected represents a little over ½ of 1% (i.e. .57%) of the Casino Operator Settlement Fund. The Northfield Racetrack casino operator represents that he has paid the current assessment into the Casino Operator Settlement Fund for the Northfield Park facility.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to address these issues at the hearing.

Sincerely,


Kevin Hurst
Mayor/Safety and Economic Director


Blair Melling
Solicitor


Joseph Gigliotti, P.E.
Assistant Village Engineer

Cc: Members of the House State and Local Government Committee

Village of Walton Hills
7595 Walton Road
Walton Hills, Ohio 44146
Attn: Kevin Hurst, Mayor

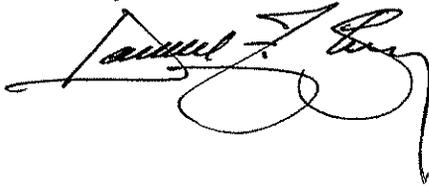
January 17, 2014

RE: Northfield Park; Race Track Data

Mayor Hurst,

As per your request, we have studied the location of the physical racing track at Northfield Park. Our calculations indicate that 35 percent of the actual racing track is located within the corporation limits of The Village of Walton Hills.

Sincerely,

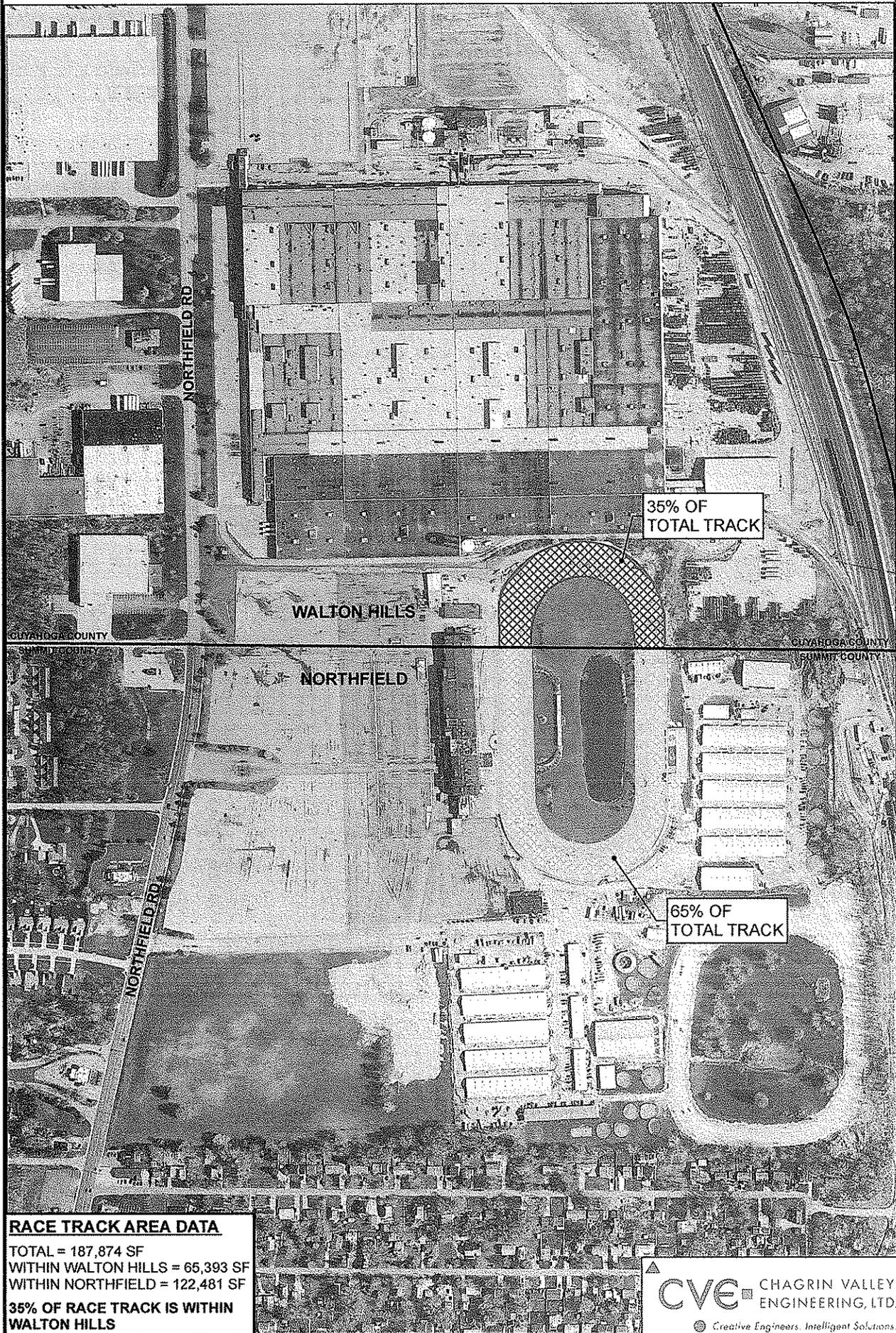


Donald F. Sheehy,
Village Engineer



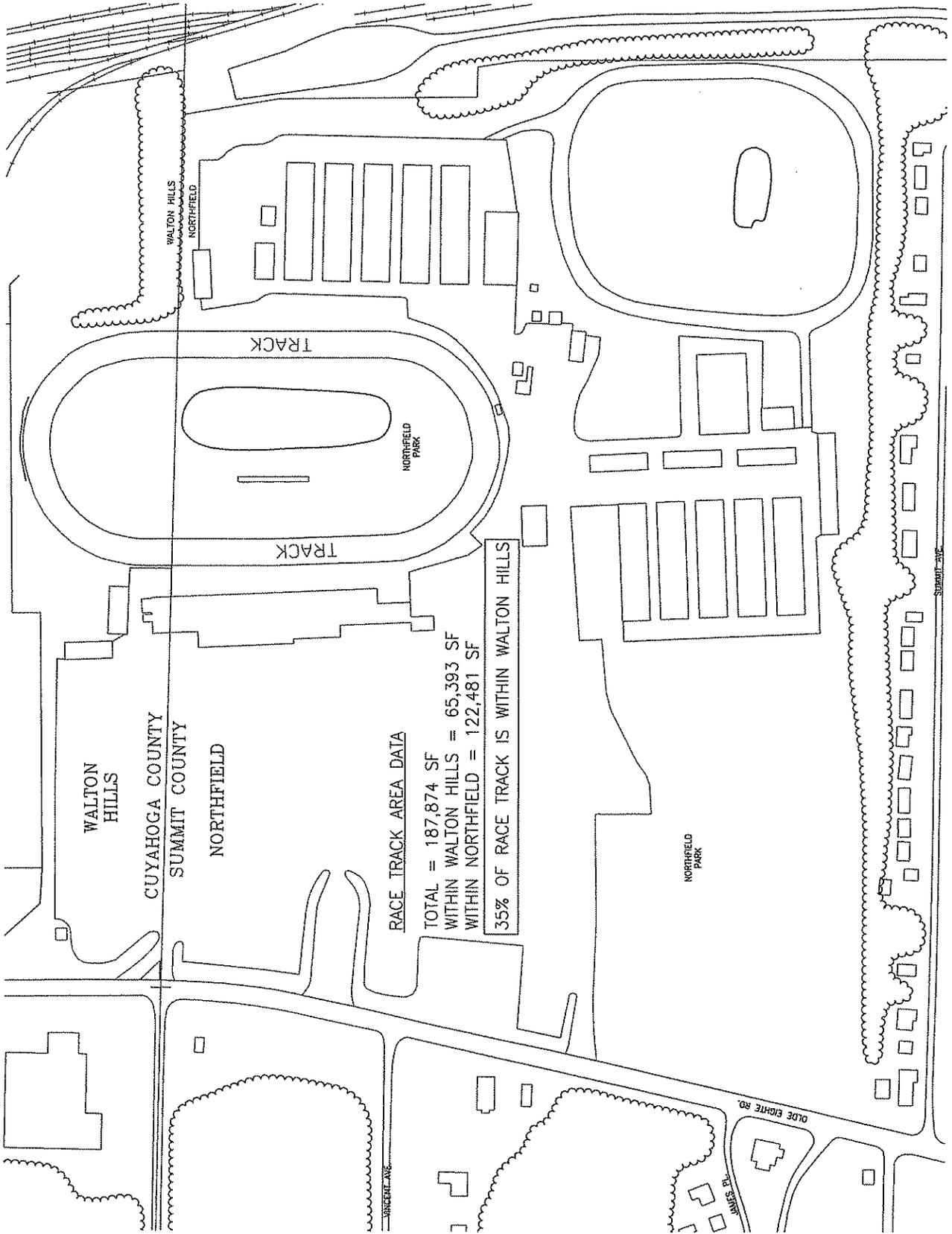
NORTHFIELD PARK - RACE TRACK DATA MAP

0 150 300 FT



RACE TRACK AREA DATA

TOTAL = 187,874 SF
 WITHIN WALTON HILLS = 65,393 SF
 WITHIN NORTHFIELD = 122,481 SF
 35% OF RACE TRACK IS WITHIN
 WALTON HILLS



RACE TRACK AREA DATA

TOTAL = 187,874 SF
WITHIN WALTON HILLS = 65,393 SF
WITHIN NORTHFIELD = 122,481 SF
35% OF RACE TRACK IS WITHIN WALTON HILLS



City of Warrensville Heights

4301 Warrensville Center Road
Warrensville Heights, Ohio 44128
(216) 587-6500

Bradley D. Sellers
Mayor

February 21, 2014
State and Local Government
Sponsor Testimony-Sub HB 377

Chairman Blair, Ranking Member Clyde, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, I am Brad Sellers, the Mayor of the City of Warrensville Heights, Ohio. I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of Substitute House Bill 377.

Substitute House Bill 377 seeks to make an adjustment to the second payment from the Casino Operator Settlement Fund. We are one of two communities that is currently home to the Thistledown Racino property. While our sister community, the Village of North Randall, comprises 77.36% of the property, Warrensville Heights houses 22.64% of the racino. Under the proposed bill, the City of Warrensville Heights would receive a payment of \$226,400 and the Village of North Randall would receive \$773,600 to be used for infrastructure or capital improvements for at least fifty percent of the funding received.

I am very supportive of the bill and also very thankful that this body and State of Ohio Legislature would consider this amendment. Thistledown Racino has become what I always envisioned, a huge economic redevelopment project that has help reenergize an area of this state that had seen a major decline. There are now seven hundred employees and thousands of visitors who make their way to Thistledown everyday to experience this resurgence. There has also been growth in local businesses that support the racino, such as retail and food service operations.

As an economic development professional, I realize that the next task is trying to leverage on the new activity and encourage the same growth in adjacent areas within the cities. The City of Warrensville Heights projected increased travel within our city and increased burden on both our infrastructure and safety forces. After requests were made from both the Village of North Randall and senior management from Thistledown Racino for additional security, we allowed all Warrensville Heights police officers the ability to work in the Village's portion of the racino.

The key to continued economic growth will rely on our abilities to handle the influx of additional daily visitors and have the necessary safety forces support. The City of Warrensville

Heights has realized this need and has made what we feel are the proper planning steps to give us this opportunity. Thus, we are looking at all travel roads that lead to movement of visitors and workers directly to or away from Thistledown Racino.

The following are recent or proposed projects to prepare for increased traffic that is expected as a result of the Racino:

1. Emery Road Concrete Repair – adjacent to the pending County resurfacing project along Emery Road, the City spent \$260,000 in 2013 to repair the concrete road at the bridge over I-271. Emery is a major east-west corridor that can be used to access the Racino and North Randall.
2. Miles (east of Northfield Road) and Richmond Road – in 2013, the City spent \$340,000 for concrete pavement repair. Miles and Emery are major routes that are used to get through Warrensville Heights to North Randall.
3. The signal at the intersection of the YMCA and the rear entrance to the Racino property was installed at a cost of over \$125,000 in 2012 to facilitate traffic entering both facilities.
4. The City has entered into contracts in 2014 amounting to \$150,000 for the replacement of streetlights along Clarkwood Parkway, east of the intersection with Northfield Road.
5. As joint project with ODOT and North Randall, Warrensville Heights is contributing \$250,000 in 2014 to the resurfacing of Miles Road, which enters North Randall through Warrensville Heights as the public travels east from Cleveland to the Racino.
6. In 2012 and 2013, the City requested costs to repair Ellacott Parkway (which runs along the northern Racino property line) and Clarkwood Parkway which intersects Northfield Road at the northeast corner of the Racino property. These projects are badly needed and have an estimated cost of \$2.5 million. Without performing a Pavement Condition Rating Survey, I estimate that the pavement along Ellacott Parkway rates below a 50 on a scale of 100. Clarkwood Parkway may be as high as 60 due to small repair projects in the past.
7. At the I-480 interchange on the south side of Warrensville Heights, the concrete pavement is in terrible condition. The replacement of the concrete in this area is long overdue. Sections of this pavement likely would have a pavement rating less than 60. This interchange is extremely busy and is one of the key access points to Northfield Road from the Highway system. At a minimum the concrete repair of Northfield Road at the I-480 Interchange would cost at least \$850,000. A project coordinated to properly address all pavement issues in the area could exceed \$2.0 million.

As a result of the above, I am strongly asking you to adopt Substitute House Bill 377. The adoption of this bill would further encourage economic growth in Ohio. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of my community and constituents.

I would be happy to entertain any questions that the Committee might have at this time.