

From: Jill Henry <jill.henry@puco.ohio.gov>  
 Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 10:08 AM  
 To: Puco Docketing  
 Subject: 19-0180 [ ref:\_00Dt0GzXt\_500t0mQT0W:ref ]



## WEB PUBLIC COMMENT

DOCKETING CASE NO: 19-0180  
 CASE ID: 00691037  
 CASE ORIGIN: Web  
 NAME:  
 EMAIL:  
 HOME PHONE:  
 PHONE:  
 ZIP:

COMPANY:  
 USDOT#:  
 CROSSING ID: 1041

COMMENT:  
 May 24, 2021

In regards to the closing of the Franklin Street railroad crossing, you are dividing a community for monetary gain and selling us out, ruining what's left of old Lewis Center's authenticity. I understand communities grow but in order to do so the destruction of its foundation shouldn't be necessary. Not only are you dividing a community, but adding an eye sore and danger. We were pitched a walking trail as an enhancement to us only a few years ago, only for us to now be denied access. Day in and day out, bike riders, joggers, and most importantly children, use that trail and cross this crossing safely. In a sense, our neighborhood has become an extension of it. In closing the crossing, you are not stopping the crossing of children trying to take a bike ride or meet a friend, they will still cross. If not illegally at this crossing, then more dangerously at the Lewis Center road crossing. The Lewis Center crossing is even more congested than ever since the placement of Evans Farms and the roundabout, children should in no way be taking their bikes across it, but you are leaving them no choice. Most recently, I have been a resident of this community for 34 years and on/off for 20 years prior to that. I grew up here, I raised my family here; that was once my child using that crossing to ride her bike to

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the other part of the village and before that it was myself and my siblings. We all did it safely.

Statistically speaking, I'm not sure where and when this crossing became a concern in regards to it's safety. This crossing has always been crossed safely, the most recent event was intentional. It is only one of two events that has taken place per my knowledge, the other occurred before I was born. The only other incident that comes to mind is the teenager that was texting and driving and in turn, drove off the road. This could have taken place anywhere and it is coincidental that it took place here and no harm to the driver was a result of that.

Once again, I would also like to mention that on the railroad website, they offer a viewing location for the public to view passing trains for local enthusiasts which also brings more traffic and parked cars back into the southwestern side of the village. Funneling all of us in through one entrance is not feasible, it's hard enough to use the main entrance for the western side of the village as it is. Getting out onto Lewis Center road with the most recent congestion has been extremely challenging and time consuming; even worse when a lot of us are backed up waiting to turn out. At the entrances/exits of our village we already experience gridlock due to the traffic on Lewis Center road, at different times of the day it is easier to enter/exit from different sides of the tracks. Taking this away from us will further worsen this problem.

I would also like to mention the eyesore that closing this crossing would create. Throughout the years we have made our concern known about the afterthought of aesthetics and cleanliness in regards to the railroad. We were told that they will keep it in line with the aesthetics of properties close by. With the exception of a few, the houses are well maintained in this area. Using the few that are not as a baseline, is not fair to the rest of the community who care about how our village is presented and perceived. Closing this crossing will only add to this problem and be cause for more complaints and problems. In all my years of living here the railroad has never looked this unkept.

Another huge concern is for the ambulances accessibility to Lewis Center Road, they often use this crossing when they cannot quickly get out of the alley closest to them.

I understand where the incentive is coming from and that Evans Farms has promised buyers that the train tracks will be a no blow zone. I also understand that in order for that to happen, one crossing must be closed. That burden should not be put off onto our community because our homes are not valued at a million dollars and our village is not marketable for Orange Township.

We have watched Evans Farms since their arrival upon our community make promises that they have not kept. They've had many financial crises' and each time the original negotiated plans have changed and our township trustees have allowed it. More times than not, it has not been beneficial to the residents that are in close proximity. Our village would like to be able to exist unbothered and separate from the behind the back and convincing dealings of Evans Farms.

Dan Griffin, the president of Evans Farms land development, has led personal attacks and pursued personal agendas on myself and others who

have opposed his infiltration of our village. His manipulation appears to have no boundaries when it comes to the residents of our community in order to achieve what he wants.

We had hoped that the township was above these unethical dealings but realize that money and marketability can be persuasive. I fear that these unethical values have been used to persuade the decision making process of the closing of the Franklin Street crossing.

*We understand that the Franklin crossing is eventually scheduled to close* and when the time comes we will have to live with that. However, we were told that some of the traffic would be filtered out and around our village upon the completion of some of the upcoming projects. It is also my understanding that the money that would be received by Orange Township and Delaware county will in no way benefit our village, this is a disservice to every resident that this closing will be directly effecting.

All in all, the closing of this crossing is creating more problems than it is attempting to solve. In our eyes, there is no problem to solve. The crossing is a fundamental part of our village and has been for generations. This has been initiated only for the purpose of greed for those who are not directly impacted by their decisions. We wish to remain a cohesive and connected village.

Thank you for your time,  
Teresa Wickline  
1354 Church Street  
Lewis Center, OH 43035

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