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June 21, 2004

Mayor Peter Elco
Municipal complex
500 Mill Road
Absecon NJ 08201

Re: Absecon's Future
Absecon Land Use Committee

Dear Mayor Elco,

As requested, I have reviewed the minutes of past meetings and offer my thoughts on the subject as a resident, taxpayer, committed citizen and the planning consultant to the Planning Board.

As you know, back in 1999 when we reviewed 1993 Master Plan increased enrollment into our school system and climbing real estate taxes was a concern. The recommendations to rezone existing residential districts to allow for the expansion of Pitney Park, the rezoning of Memorial Park to commercial and the aged restricted overlay zones all have helped to an extent. Historically Absecon has sold land to offset future expenses. These lands eventually became single-family homes and generated school age children. As we all know taxes on the single-family homes cannot offset the cost to educate each child. The sale of city owned land is great in the short run for the sitting City Council. It is the future of Absecon that must be addressed.

We have all heard the saying "they are not making any more land". It's true. It is my feeling that the remaining lands should be banked for our future. The demand for housing in Absecon will increase while the supply will hold. This can only increase the value of each home in Absecon. Absecon is known for its great school system. The region knows about our dedicated civil minded volunteer organizations and is learning about our fabulous expanded recreation park.

The existing city owned open lands should be reserved for future uses yet to be determined. Age restricted housing has received approvals and two others are currently being planned throughout Absecon. The population in Absecon will increase without the sale of city owned lands. I foresee a need for additional open space within the existing residential districts within reasonable walking and / or biking distances from the neighborhoods. The expansion of the bike path system, community pool and recreation center, skate board park, street hockey, outdoor basketball courts, etc. all can be accommodated in the future on lands we set aside now.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RL Reid', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert L. Reid, PP

Cc: Absecon City Council
Terence Dolan, City Administrator