

Editorial Page
December 5, 2006

YOUR SAY

Bishop Joseph McFadden

Bishop offers archdiocese view of LC

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office of Catholic Education has one steadfast commitment in this community - to offer families a superior Catholic education that develops their children spiritually, intellectually and socially.

To insure that we continue to deliver on this commitment, we continually evaluate all of our schools to make certain that our students have the facilities, teachers, curricula, tools and environment they need to reach their individual goals.

We have fielded numerous concerns from our Lansdale Catholic families about the long-term viability of the facilities and our ability to accommodate a growing population.

Therefore, we initiated a multi-pronged feasibility study to determine whether we should consider building a new facility for the future of Catholic education in this region.

The Reporter owes its readers a clear explanation of this feasibility study. Let me emphasize that this process has many phases, one of which was our recently completed survey of area parents.

The survey, which *The Reporter* has covered in great detail, is not the only element in this critical decision. It is one of many elements that are being analyzed very carefully by the archdiocese.

One of the most important is whether this is financially feasible. There is still much to consider.

Contrary to what your editorial suggests, the archdiocese has been, and continues to be, willing to listen to all points of view.

In fact, our committee for this feasibility study includes several people who have a dissenting point of view regarding the proposed Hilltown site.

Whether through professionally executed market research or through personal communication in our parish communities, we have certainly heard the opinions of those who oppose the proposed Hilltown site. We understand and respect their position.

Also contrary to your editorial contentions, we have publicly and openly shared our key findings in our survey phase of this feasibility study.

We have proactively communicated with our communities, our parishes and the media about the percentage of parents (32 percent) who would “definitely” or “most likely” send their children to a new school in Hilltown, if built.

Although this percentage seems small, it represents a population that is large enough to sustain a new high school in the region.

Therefore, I have an obligation to area families to continue analyzing the proposed Hilltown site.

The truth remains that we have not made a final decision. And when making a decision this important, we do consider all points of view.

Our commitment to providing the best Catholic education for our children remains strong, vigorous, and optimistic. That will always be the constant – no matter where this feasibility study leads us.

***Bishop Joseph McFadden is the
Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia.***