

Letters

Church project is way too big

To the editor:

After reading the letter sent from the township manager to Elkins Park residents, I felt a need to respond with my thoughts regarding the plans for this church and the township officials' handling of this matter.

I am not opposed to a church being built on the Ashbourne Road property. I am, however, strongly opposed to the size of this project. In addition, I object to the actions taken by the town-

ship commissioners in November 2004, in signing an agreement with the church in exchange for taxes, and approving an ordinance in December 2004, which appears to have been specifically designed to meet the needs of the church. Both actions were taken without due consideration of the impact on the community.

Township commissioners knew well in advance of the building and zoning committee

meeting held on Aug. 2 that residents' concerns would not be considered or carry any weight in their vote. Why was the church even on the agenda? More than 100 people attended, many of them standing for nearly three hours, only to be told that they would not be heard because the commissioners had agreed back in November 2004 to vote "No Action." The damage done that night cannot be undone and the affect on those present, I assure you, will be lasting.

Further, the letter talks about the "financial perspective" — anticipated tax revenues for the township, and suggests that more agreements of this type might be executed in the future. These statements speak volumes, regarding the township's position and the lack of value placed on public participation in decisions that impact the quality of life of area residents.

The message being relayed to the community is that the township simply doesn't care about the concerns of those of us who live here, pay taxes and want to maintain the beauty and serenity of the area. The message for township officials is that the residents are paying attention — we hear you loud and clear.

Ernestine Prescott
Elkins Park