

[by Smita Bharti · 2,240 supporters](#)

[Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors: Deny Toll Brothers development plan](#)

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**Petition update**

## **Ferguson Township Meeting Tonight; Summer Campaign Plans**



**Smita Bharti**

State College, PA

Jun 1, 2015 — APPLICATION TIMELINE - UPDATE

The most "official" notice released by Ferguson Township about the PSU/Toll Brothers application timeline so far is a May 26 email from Township Manager Mark Kunkle saying the deadline has been moved to August 5.

<https://steadystatecollege.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/5-26-15-kunkle-to-dininni-re-new-prd-deadline.pdf>

This does not foreclose the possibility that Ferguson Township supervisors will place the issue on their agenda for a vote before August 5. Under the deadline, sometime between now and August 5, the supervisors must bring the application up for a vote.

If three of them vote "No," their action will stop the project. If a majority fail to vote at all, the PA Municipalities Planning Code gives the project automatic approval, with passive municipal complicity. If three of them vote "Yes," the Board of Supervisors becomes actively complicit in the endangerment of the public water supply.

### **FERGUSON TOWNSHIP MEETING TONIGHT**

Ferguson Supervisors are meeting tonight at 7 p.m. at 3147 Research Drive. The PSU/Toll Brothers project is on the agenda in three ways:

- 1) Discussion of the upcoming joint work session between the Ferguson Supervisors and the State College Borough Water Authority Board
- 2) Discussion of the State College Borough Council Call for Town Hall Meeting;

<https://steadystatecollege.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/5-22-15-state-college-council-to-mascolo.pdf>

3) Discussion of a proposed Open Space Referendum being put forward by Supervisor Steve Miller.

Brief agenda:

<http://www.twp.ferguson.pa.us/index.cfm?fuseaction=content.pageDetails&id=58861&typeID=40310>

Click the link at the bottom for the detailed agenda.

## SUMMER CAMPAIGN PLANS

A group of water campaign activists met last weekend and decided on three main priorities for the summer:

- 1) Continue to keep tabs on the Ferguson Township supervisors' and other public agencies' work on the PSU/Toll Brothers application.
- 2) Prepare the scientific objection report requested by Gary Petersen at the May 21 SCBWA Board meeting, ahead of the to-be-scheduled joint work session.
- 3) Draft and push one or more citizen-generated referendum questions for the Fall 2015 ballot.

There is a LOT of work ahead of us over the summer, and we need all the help we can get. Please contact me if you are willing and able to help with any of those three projects.

## SITES INSIDE THE RGB/SSA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT?

Many, many petition signers commented that their priorities include both strong protection of the public water recharge area outside the regional growth boundary, and redevelopment of run-down properties inside the regional growth boundary.

This position aligns with the point of the regional growth boundary and the regional planning framework overall, which is to protect public water supplies, agricultural land, and sensitive ecosystems from development pressure by corralling development activities within the urban core.

I'd like to prepare a list of the specific sites inside the RGB that community members would like to see redeveloped, and what you'd like to see done at those site. Please send sites & recommendations to [katherine\\_watt@hotmail.com](mailto:katherine_watt@hotmail.com).

The list will be used at public meetings to counter the argument that angry citizens don't want any development at all, to demonstrate that those citizens want development that meets basic standards of common sense, such as: "don't put public drinking water supplies at risk."

If Ferguson Supervisors vote "No" on the PSU/Toll Brothers plan, the sites on the list can be offered to PSU/Toll Brothers as alternative sites for their investment dollars.

## CITIZEN OVERSIGHT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL

I've posted a list of all the local government meetings coming up in June.

<https://steadystatecollege.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/june-2015-centre-region-public-meetings-calendar.pdf>

Issues like the PSU/Toll Brothers threat to the public drinking water supply hit public awareness hard and late-in-the-game because there's very little ongoing, contextualized coverage of the routine government meetings where plans like this hatch and incubate.

If we want to catch the next threat earlier, and stop it earlier, we need to redevelop our public oversight capacities. As the incoming editor at Voices of Central PA, one of my goals is to strengthen community journalism capacity in the Centre Region, by training and supporting citizens to attend local meetings, take good notes on the proceedings, and write strong reports for publication so readers can understand what's happening and why it matters. Please contact me for more information.