

After given the chance to meet with the developer and see concept plans, Save Marple Greenspace was **for** developing the DG land as late as December 2017.

This is a [copy of the plan showed to Save Marple Greenspace](#) in December showing 41 acres being utilized (per Carlino). At this point it was a concept plan that the developer was showing looking for feedback.

After that meeting, Ken Hemphill wrote an article on Save Marple Greenspace in favor of the plan. Unfortunately, after I linked to the article recently on Facebook, it was taken [down](#). At Monday's open house, printed copies were handed out, so I [scanned it to PDF](#) should anyone want to read it (sorry it's not crystal clear). Below are quotes from the article Ken wrote in reference to the Carlino plan as presented in December.

- ★ “Unlike other developers who wanted to cash in on as much as possible on the 213 acres surrounding and including the Don Guanella village, they proposed to build only on the blighted former Don Guanella village site. And they were not just offering to leave 170+ acres of forest intact; they also had an idea to structure a creative financing deal to buy and permanently preserve it”
- ★ “Their idea would have about 375,000 square feet of retail space built on the now blighted DG village footprint with NO houses. The center would be one third the size of the commercial part of Cardinal Crossing and would have a leading grocer, some restaurants, a medical office building, and other retail.”
- ★ “It would generate a fraction of the traffic of Cardinal Crossing and would contribute no new students to MNSD. Yet it would represent a windfall in tax revenue: the school district would receive an estimated \$1,078,302.59 each year in taxes from it. It would also raise \$267,352.68 a year for the township and \$334,429.56 for the county.”

From a December [Philly.com](#) article “If this were to become a county park, it would be like no other park in the [county] system,” added Ken Hemphill, communications coordinator for the group.

Obviously Carlino has adjusted the concept plan since then. The [current plan](#) shows 47.1 acres for the town center plus 5.1 acres of fields. The equates to 166 acres of open space preserved for “passive and active recreation” which includes the 5.1 acres for the fields.

So given that a large portion of the green space would be preserved, with 95% of the development happening on existing blighted developed land, with the beneficial tax revenue, why is SMG now against the plan?

Charles Protesto, President of Save Marple Greenspace, says the group's opposition is because of the square footage that's changed. Please see screenshot below.



**John Calamia** 🙌 Other than the developer adding less than 10 acres of additional developed area what caused the change in Save Marple Green Space's support. I just read the Dec 2017 article from your site and you couldn't say enough good about the project. From what I can tell everything has remained constant in the plan other than the additional acreage. I can't wrap my head around the opposition to this, given the current condition of the property and lack of reasonable alternatives.

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**Charles Protesto** No it's not the acreage it is the square foot of the development itself he has gone up with tall buildings and increase the size of his development significantly from the plan he first showed us I believe it was around 320,000 square feet to a jump of over 400,000 that kind of square footage is significantly going to increase the traffic and that's our big point adding Lanes and adaptive lights will not help an increase in traffic

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But, looking at the SMG article that Ken wrote in December, he said the town center would have “about 375,000 square feet of retail space.” The [Marple Town center site](#) claims “The Town Center at Marple Preserve is 378,000 square feet, plus senior housing and self-storage.” According to Save Marple Greenspace in December 375,000 square feet of retail is not a problem, but 378,000 square feet now is? Senior living and self storage are not known to be traffic congestion issues.

Joe Finio, SMG active supporter, also posted about why Save Marple Greenspace ended their support of their plan, but his explanation was related to when the soccer association got involved which seems unrelated to square footage of the plan or traffic concerns. Please see screenshots on next page. Joe answered my question in a 2nd thread, which is why the screenshot is broken up.

**Joe Finio** Mike Gowdy - Mike, The 'problem' with your post as most posts trying to blow smoke is that you have only a partial story or are deliberately posting only part. First, some of the reason that unmitigated disaster being built at Rt 3 and 476 was the result of a Federal Lawsuit of something that happened in Marple a while ago when many of the present commissioners were not present. Secondly, what you do not know or are deliberately not saying is that Save Marple Greenspace was in agreement, to some extent, with the present developer as recently as this past December. The poster board at Cardinal O'Hara last night quoting Save Marple Greenspace was correct. BUT again, only half the story. It was only AFTER the Carlino people involved another group did they lose the support of Save Marple Greenspace. Lastly, the notion that Save Marple Greenspace is against those Soccer Fields, is again incorrect. What Save Marple Greenspace is against is the amount of land used for the number of fields and the placement of the fields. So please stop the propaganda. One last thing. You are so hot for soccer fields? What do you think that added traffic will do to the lungs of the children playing on those fields?

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**Chrissy Schlater** Joe what is your opinion on the amount of land acceptable for fields? Where should the placement be?

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**Amanda Wuest Cammarota** Joe Finio "It was only AFTER the Carlino people involved another group did they lose the support of Save Marple Greenspace." -- genuinely curious what group you're talking about? the soccer community group? I went on the SMG site to read the article where you supported the original Carlino plan but couldn't find it. Was it removed?

**Amanda Wuest Cammarota** I asked a direct question, Joe Finio - were official boundaries used if SMG is making this claim about Earth being "highly accurate." Your response doesn't answer the question. In another thread I asked you what group got involved made SMG drop support for the plan (after your comment saying so) and got no answer. There's often talk about smoke and mirrors where Carlino is involved, I'm asking fact based questions and looking for more information, not non answers.

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**Joe Finio** Amanda, the other group was The Marple Newtown Soccer Association. I avoided using their name to avoid getting into any more arguments with them. The plan, way back (not December) did not include soccer fields.

After Joe's posts, in another unrelated Facebook thread, Maureen O'Reilly Stewart, Treasurer at Save Marple Greenspace, said it was the expansion of the development that caused the SMG rift with the developer (again I would question what expansion, SMG was for it in December per their article at 375k square feet of retail, now it's 378k). She goes on to say she personally told the developer that "there would have to be fields within the plan to garner support from the community."

**Maureen O'Reilly Stewart** Brooke Hood Hi Brooke, We are not opposed to redevelopment of the old site at Don Guanella, and when Carlino asked what we not oppose, we sent them a diagram with the area delineated. It is the expansion of the development that caused the rift with the developers. We spoke with them and I personally told them from the start that there would have to be fields within the plan to garner support from the community.

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I understand that there can be varying opinions within Save Marple Greenspace, but the it is dizzying trying to keep up with the "us" and "our" defenses the SMG are using when they sometimes are contradictory.

My opinion based on the facts I've tried to lay out that I could find

- If traffic wasn't an issue in the December concept, the new plan doesn't represent much change in retail, so traffic should still be a non issue.
- Some community members want fields, others deem it unnecessary. At some point, given even SMG members disagree on this, maybe we can all just agree to disagree on this and not make it a sticking point

of the whole plan going through or not? For the kids? Yes, even if your kids may be too old to enjoy, kids deserve a nice community to exercise in.

- The community would benefit from the tax dollars without the added burden of more houses and necessary possible expansion of schools new houses bring.
- I understand there are concerns that the developer could change the plan. However, that risk existed back in December as well when SMG was on board. I believe that the developer intends to keep the open space if he can develop what he wants to, but hopefully as things continue the commissioners will be able to further secure that information.

I fear of what will become of the land if this plan (as presented at the open house) doesn't get accepted. Let's encourage our commissioners and the developer to work together to preserve the 160+ acres of forest and stop bickering about playing fields, etc.