

# Do We Or Don't We Need A Rt. 23 By-Pass?

**SAMS STOLTZFUS**  
Amish Farmer

MILLCREEK (Lancaster Co.) - Lancaster County farmers in the Millcreek Valley have three main concerns this fall. Will milk and cattle prices stay at profitable levels, will hay and grain prices stay at the low levels, and will the new Rt. 23 cut through their farm.

Folks scan their newspaper this last while and say, many in their native tongue (net vidda un study fon dem nia veg) not again a study of the new road. Yes, another study made, more tax dollars spent to study the county's traffic situation really a population problem. It's hard to sell a by-pass plan to anyone in eastern Lancaster Co. Look at the highway department's well laid plans back in 1967, when Rt. 23 project was started, first the right of way purchased, then grading, bridges built and in the late 1969. The equipment and men took off like a run away horse and what do we have, and still so today. A 16,000-ft long, goat, cattle, horse and mule pasture. Probably lots easier to sell a 3 legged mule or a 5-cylinder tractor than a new Rt. 23 corridor to Earl Township farmers.

Though we grow weary of all these studies and traffic problems, let's be thankful for what was done. Traffic lights installed many roads widened, and a big thank you to the highway department for providing the buggy lanes along Rt. 340, 772

and Rt. 23. More roads will get such lanes next year. Let's all be thankful to our good Lord for a road program that is sensitive to our county's traffic needs, this horse and buggy and bicycle traffic.

Let's think about what a new Rt. 23 will bring. Sure then we all can gallop off to work, no traffic jams and perhaps more safely, and downtown Leola and New Holland may be more peaceful. How much faster would folks get to work, studies vary at the most 15-20 min quicker. Seems we're gonna sacrifice a lot to gain a little speed, of course it will be safer but folks will still drive too fast, and there is the problem.

But our Dutch-man common sense knows otherwise, cut a new road through the country their farms cut up pieces of land isolated, soon sold. Gas stations, McDonald's, banks spring up like weeds in the garden. Soon tax assessments go up, more farms sold. Developments grow faster than pioneer corn. Zoning is changed variances granted and dot geht da alt nachbaschaft (there goes the old neighborhood).

You don't believe it, look at the Rt. 222-corridor. Look how residential and industrial development escalated all the way to the Berks County line. See how Wal-Mart bulldogged into the countryside. Changing zoning and intersections to meet its needs is this what will come in the Weaverland Valley? What kind of

life will there be for our children and grandchildren in eastern Lancaster Co?

We must be thankful for our robust Lancaster County economy. Businesses flourish, unemployment at an all time low. Look at all the shops and factories in the Rt. 23-322 corridor. Suppose 3000 or more if they have an average of 5 shipments and receiving a day that is already 15,000 vehicles. Then there's all the folks going to work, the UPS trucks and of course the tourists. All this is just local traffic.

Let's be serious, we must live with this traffic, farmers, shop men, factory operators and tourist places alike, if we want employment for the next generations. And consider how the county's population doubled since 1946, 221,000 to today's 448,674. Thus more people will create more traffic. Let's utilize our Old Dutch philosophy of use what we got to ease the traffic flow. Make the PA Turnpike an interstate highway so through traffic travels on that, consider the New Holland Railroad, get more freight shipped by rail car. Use the bus lines, form car pools.

Land use is the key word, the land is our birthright, our lifeline, use it to grow food it can produce forever. Put in a road or development then we can get there faster but food production ceases.

We all need to think about how our Lancaster County farmland is

disappearing. Over 70,000 acres done gone since 1965, approx. 2000 acres a year taken out of food production. Let's just take this 213 acres, give or take for the new 23, take 213 X 160 bushels of corn per acre yield, over 1000 tons of corn. Feed that to beef cattle.

It would furnish 250 steer per year, producing 150,000 pounds of beef making 6000,000 1/4 lb Big Macs laid side by side would stretch from New Holland to Philly. Suppose 1/2 would be in corn and 1/2 in hay. 500 tons of corn 1000 tons of hay, this would feed 60 cows for year. Their milk production would be over a million pounds of milk or 50,000 gallons of ice cream.

Let's look at that 1000 tons of corn grind it into corn meal that would feed 2 million hungry folks 1 day.

So what will be the gain if we can get to work 15 min quicker, then there won't be enough Big Macs and milk shakes.

In our modern age we have instant everything, instant faxes, instant cell phone calls. Computers provide instant answers. Will the new road be an instant answer to traffic problems, should a modern day Jonah come and lecture on traffic safety.

Perhaps we don't really need

more new roads, just more patience, and pray more about the road problem. Seems traffic goes too fast. Many 35 mph speed limits aren't observed. Don't seem to be enforced. Folks take big chances passing on yellow lines.

And then one official says "Frankly I don't know where the money is coming from to build this new road." If I recall correctly that was why the goat path was not finished and 'tis a well-known fact big road construction companies have lobbyists in Washington and Harrisburg to assist in passing their highway building projects. This may or may not always work in the best public interest.

The question is do we want the 3 Earls to stay rural and a strong Ag economy or don't we mind. If the countryside is cut up. Seems townships gear up to allow development, put in sewers, water lines allow big stores and nursing home complexes etc. Let's all pray the best decisions are made about the road building project.

Seems the best way to save farm land is to widen and improve existing roads, more traffic lights and again a sincere thanks to DOT for providing buggy lanes along the busy roads, it is greatly appreciated.

## Farmer's Museum Receives Special Recognition

GLENMONT, N.Y. — The Farmers' Museum, located in Cooperstown, N.Y., was recently added to New York Farm Bureau's highly regarded list of devoted supporters of agriculture.

In recognizing this unique learning institution, New York Farm Bureau presented Joseph Caffrey and Craig Haney with "Excellence" pins, which are to be worn with honor and recognizes those who have worked diligently to promote and educate in the name of agriculture.

The Farmers' Museum also received a Certificate of Recognition. This presentation was part of the state organization's annual meeting at the Crowne Plaza in Albany, Dec. 6-9.

"The Farmer's Museum is one of the best agricultural learning centers in the state and I would encourage everyone to stop by their unique setting," said Judi Whittaker, New York Farm Bureau promotion and educa-

tion chair. "The museum not only teaches the public about farming in the past, it really tells a story about how farmers will continue to be a part of our future. Thank you to everyone at the Farmer's Museum for helping spread the word about agriculture and educating and influencing so many lives everyday."

Not only is the museum a source of agricultural education, but as part of New York Farm Bureau's Adopt-A-Classroom Program, it provides hands-on experiences and a personal touch that enhances the knowledge of students.

The Farmers' Museum was founded in 1943 by Stephen C. Clark, Sr., as one of the country's earliest outdoor museums to preserve rural history and to promote contemporary agriculture. The museum is unique in its efforts to present a view of the past, while at the same time looking to the present, and the future, of rural America.

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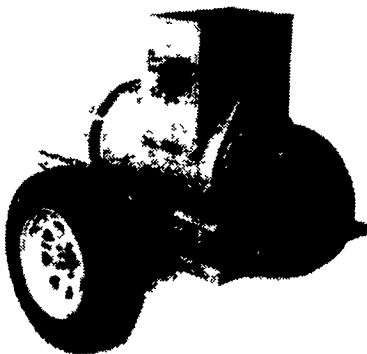
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