Dear Friends,

At our recent public meeting with the Westtown Township Planning Commission on September 5, we heard your request that we look carefully at the number of nights per year when we propose to use low-impact lights to illuminate two artificial turf athletic fields on our campus along Oak Lane. As you know, our proposal is to use these lights to enable practices by Westtown School’s own athletic teams as well as local youth sports organizations, beginning at 6:00PM, with lights to dim at 9:30PM and go out by 9:45PM. Our original proposal was for 258 nights a year, which represents a full count of days between Monday and Saturday during the school year, excluding the weeks from June 15-August 15 (we will not use the fields on Sunday evenings). You asked us to adjust that number by subtracting holidays and other dates when we are unlikely to host athletic practices in the evenings.

We have done as you asked. Looking carefully at the calendar, we agree that a realistic and reasonable request will be **240 nights**. This amended proposal takes into account ten federal holidays and eight other nights when, given what we know of our own athletic teams and youth sports organizations in the community, we expect evening practices would be unlikely.

In addition, I’d like to take this opportunity to apologize for leaving any of you with the impression that my colleagues and I have “moved the goalposts” regarding this issue. To reiterate what I explained on September 5, I believe what you have experienced was simply our effort to be transparent with you and the Board of Supervisors, even as our own plans were still evolving and our understanding of community needs still growing. Nevertheless, it bears repeating that we never at any time had the intention of avoiding your questions or providing inconsistent answers. I appreciate your patience as our work has progressed to a place of clarity on this issue.

As you know, we are confident that the surrounding community will be minimally impacted by our planned use for these fields, equipped as they will be with the latest technology in low-impact, dark
sky compliant lights as well as state-of-the-art stormwater management and other cutting-edge sustainability features. At the same time, this initiative will bring much-needed benefit to Westtown School, in our continued effort to preserve open vistas and lead the way in sustainability efforts on our 600-acre campus in an era of significant and growing financial challenges to independent schools. In addition, we expect that these facilities will greatly benefit youth sports organizations which are very much in need of local, playable field space during after-school hours. It should be noted that the weather this fall has only heightened the need for lighted turf fields in our area: excessive rain has made most natural grass fields unplayable, and schools and youth sports programs throughout the Delaware Valley have had seasons crippled due to a lack of playing fields.

As I look ahead to our next meeting on October 3, I have been struck by the alignment between Westtown School’s proposed Oak Lane initiatives, including 240 evenings a year when we propose to use our low-impact lights, and the Planning Commission’s own mission statement. According to your website, your mission is influenced by these factors:

- the promotion of the public health, safety, and general well-being of the community, and
- accommodation of the constantly changing needs and demands of the community, and
- the evaluation of the overall economic benefit to the Township when reviewing applications, and
- the maximization citizenry-centric recreational activity opportunities.

The alignment between what is important to Westtown Township, and what Westtown School proposes on this occasion, is remarkable. I look forward to discussing these matters with you again on October 3.

Meanwhile, many thanks for your time, energy, and commitment to the greater good of this community and all its constituents in an evolving world.

Sincerely,

Tori Jueds
Westtown School
Head of School