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Peninsula Township is committed to working towards a resolution of the Wineries' complaints but believes the durable resolution the wineries seek requires full transparency. The Township regularly fields questions from concerned residents seeking information about settlement discussions and the position of the parties. It is clear that a transparent process would be in the interest of Township residents, and the Township is glad that transparency is also a genuine concern of the Wineries.

"It is difficult to credit the Wineries' stated concern for transparency when the Township has repeatedly requested that the parties' common interests and Township residents' concerns be addressed through a public process," said Maura Sanders, Peninsula Township Supervisor. "The Wineries have refused."

The Wineries have yet to commit to a transparent process. The Township Board, however, has remained committed to engaging with representatives of the Wineries to understand and appreciate each party's interests and to identify mutually agreeable solutions to this litigation. Despite those efforts, the Township has now been informed that the Wineries are conditioning settlement discussions. This decision represents yet another obstacle the Wineries have placed in the path of productive resolution. The residents of Peninsula Township deserve better.

Ultimately, the resolution of this case affects one group of people the most, Township residents. However, they have been completely left out of the process with the Wineries' settlement terms intentionally hidden from view. The Wineries have challenged the regulations that they and the community participated in drafting and enacting through a lawful state process. The Township has repeatedly invited the Wineries to reengage through public channels—to seek amendments to the zoning regulations and their special use permits, to collaborate on regulations that address their stated needs. Despite these invitations, the Wineries have chosen to keep their desired regulations hidden and the public excluded from discussions. Keeping the community in the dark will not produce the durable, responsible, community-driven outcome the Wineries claim to want.

The Township has identified specific areas where the parties are likely to find agreement. That information has been clearly articulated to the Wineries' representatives. Rather than focus on joint interests, mutual gains, and common ground, the Wineries have withdrawn from meaningful engagement. There is no reason why the parties cannot work together to identify

underlying needs, concerns, and shared objectives affecting both the Wineries and Township residents. The Wineries have rejected the pathway that includes public involvement and public awareness. Their continued insistence on secrecy calls into question whether their professed willingness to listen and consider solutions is anything more than an empty promise.