

3 letters  
attached

**Letter to City Council re: Public Hearing 10/25/2021**

**October 22, 2021**

Council members,

My name is Bob Leimbach, and I live at 1425 Claus Road, in historic Brownhelm Station. My family has been here since 1847 and I am the fifth generation of Leimbachs to live in this house. I do not want to leave. My concern over this rezoning is personal.

I have been actively involved in preserving the history of this community. I belong to the Brownhelm Historical Association, and helped save the Brownhelm School up on North Ridge Road. We engage with many of our neighbors, and do our best to maintain our property.

Now Brownhelm, and Brownhelm Station in particular, is being threatened by rezoning of much of its farmland from I-1 and B-3 to I-2, or Heavy Industrial use.

I do not oppose progress, if done right. I know Vermilion needs to grow to survive. Losing Ford was a blow to the local economy, and we need new industry to take some of the onus off the backs of property owners. Our schools need support.

But often it seems we would be better off if we were still part of the township.

Brownhelm Township was a prosperous farming community when the Ford Motor Company decided to build its plant on Baumhart Road. Caught in the middle between high-priced lawyers from Lorain on the east and pressure from Vermilion on the west, all fighting for the tax money it would provide, the township permitted the Village of Vermilion to annex 443 acres. It was seen as the best of a bad situation. If the Trustees- of whom my grandfather was one- had allowed Lorain to take over, they felt Brownhelm would just be exploited and then ignored. They thought Vermilion would be a better fit as a smaller entity.

But now that we fall under control of Vermilion, we seem to be ignored anyway. The zoning ordinances, which are outdated in many cases, do little to protect the residents in Ward 5. We recently fought to prevent an old dairy barn- on a small lot, and surrounded by houses- from being used as a wedding venue for hundreds of guests every weekend. If not for timely support from many neighbors I believe the requested variance would have gone through. As residents of Vermilion, we did not feel much support from 'our' city during that ordeal, by the way.

Now we must defend our home again, this time from encroachment on the east. Some unnamed company has proposed building a huge warehouse in the field immediately behind us, and are seeking a zoning change to Heavy Industrial from its current Light Industrial status.

It is inevitable that this land will be developed someday. I think, other than the aesthetics of having a six-story warehouse sprouting out of a field, the proposed project would not be a bad choice. At least they have no smokestacks. However, there will still be associated pollution from this business in the forms of day-and-night truck traffic with its noise and pollution, parking lot lighting 24/7, and certainly at least some other disruptions to our country lifestyle out here.

Whatever the outcome, City Council and the Mayor will not have to live with the annoyances every day and night. We will. Zoning ordinances should protect anyone whose residence happens to abut this property, and Vermilion's do not. There is no requirement for any type of substantial buffering, for either sound or light.

While a giant warehouse may not be as objectionable as many of the hundreds of permitted businesses under I-2 zoning, it is no sure thing that that is what will come to this spot. And, if it does not, how can we be protected from something even more odious? Current ordinances do little to help us. Clean them up *before* the City does lose control of its development.

We feel the best course of action for City Council is to place an expiration date on a zoning change for this property. To do otherwise would cede any control the City has over who moves in, or what they do. Once the zoning has been changed to I-2, it will never revert to Light Industrial. Why would it? To even suggest otherwise is an insult to our intelligence.

Ordinances are supposed to protect the citizens. So protect us!

And protect yourselves, too. To make any deal with a potential client, Vermilion will need to offer something more than an unimproved cornfield located near a highway. Are you going to offer sewer service? Vermilion cannot take care of its residents now. How eager will voters be, to pay for a new multi-million dollar sewer line along Baumhart Road, when their own lines in town are crumbling?

Is Vermilion going to suddenly reap untold riches from a new tax base? Most likely a substantial tax abatement will be needed to attract a new business away from competing sites. It happens every time.

Current trends in major manufacturing are away from many highly paid individuals, and toward automation, with fewer, less well-paid jobs. Can you tax a robot? Smaller businesses, employing a local workforce, could be a better option. How actively is that being pursued?

### **Summary**

There are two things I would like to see from City Council at the October 25th hearing:

- 1) Add an expiration date to the City's offer of a zoning change. If this deal falls through, as they often do, then Vermilion will not be burdened with zoning that, essentially allows nearly any type of business to locate there. And, contrary to what someone has tried to tell me, once it is changed to I-2 it will *never be changed back*. We are not stupid. This zoning change *must* be tied to this particular deal. Or no deal.
- 2) And, if this deal is off the table, make a commitment to reform zoning ordinances. It's too late to change them for this project, but a little work on them upfront would make the pathway clearer next time the situation arises. Zoning is supposed to protect the citizens of a city. So, PROTECT US! Don't be so quick to secure a deal- any deal - that you would damage your community irreparably. Be deliberative. This really is important.

Help us in Ward 5. We live out here by choice. We like the peace and quiet of country living, and don't want it destroyed by an uncaring city government that doesn't have to live with the consequences of their actions. Vermilion does not end at the east bank of the river.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Leimbach  
1425 Claus Road  
Vermilion

**Letter to City Council re: Public Hearing 10/25/2021**

**October 22, 2021**

Council Members,

We are writing as officers of the Brownhelm Historical Association with regard to our Museum, located at 1355 Claus Road. We feel this historic artifact will be seriously impacted by development of the land immediately behind it.

For those people not familiar with this landmark, here is some background.

The museum is the former German Evangelical & Reformed Church, built in 1870. It became the property of the fledgling Brownhelm Historical Association in 1996, when the last three members of the congregation deeded it to them in hopes of saving the building. It is now our Heritage Museum.

Two years ago, the Museum was featured prominently in a major motion picture, "The Marksman", starring Liam Neeson. It was chosen for its rural setting and originality. The building is certainly one of the last, and finest, examples of a simple country church in this area. Liam himself called it "a wee charming church".

It is hard to imagine that a film company would have chosen this site with a six-story warehouse hulking in the background.

We are not opposed to progress, when it is done right. We understand that Vermilion needs growth. Losing the Ford Motor Company plant hurt the local economy, and new industry must be brought in to support our schools and infrastructure.

We are, however, opposed to rezoning which is unrealistic. Times change, and sixty-year-old ordinances sometimes need updating.

Heavy Industrial zoning, as proposed for this project, permits nearly any business to locate here, but does not adequately protect surrounding properties. Other than a specified distance (150 feet), there are no other noise/ lighting/ pollution controls required where an I-2 industrial property abuts residential areas, such as our Museum. No mounding, no trees. Nothing.

We ask City Council to, at the very least, add an Expiration Date to the zoning change proposed for this project. An Expiration Date would give Council time to reevaluate its ordinances to see how they might be modified to protect existing properties, in the event this particular project fails to materialize.

The tenant has not even been named, and we are contemplating a permanent zoning change?

Thank you for considering our viewpoint.

Sincerely,

Marcia DePalma  
President, Brownhelm Historical Association

Jim Giancaterino  
Vice President, Brownhelm Historical Association

## Gwen Fisher

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**From:** Jackie Mate <jaro@centurytel.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 23, 2021 1:51 PM  
**To:** Gwen Fisher  
**Subject:** Public Hearing Oct. 25 Th. Rezone Request.

Gwen Fisher, Municipal Clerk  
5511 Liberty Avenue,  
Vermilion, OH 44089

With reference to the above request, I would prefer to leave the zoning as is Commercial & Light Industrial therefore, objecting strongly to Heavy Industrial for Brownhelm Township.

Sincerely Mrs. Jacqueline Mate.

Sent from Jackie's iPad

CAUTION: This Email is from an EXTERNAL source. Ensure you trust this sender before clicking on any links or attachments.

# Brownhelm Historical Association



Dear Eleanor,

The Brownhelm Historical Association has recently been made aware of a potential change in zoning to the large agricultural field that lies to the east (behind) the Heritage Museum/German Reformed Church on Claus Road (see enclosed Site Map).

The City of Vermilion has received a request from the development company, Sterling Group II, LLC, to rezone the property from 'Commercial' and 'Light Industrial' to 'Heavy Industrial.' The developers are looking for land on which to build an extremely large facility (see enclosed Site Concept Plans) that would potentially reach heights of over six stories. While we appreciate the efforts of the City of Vermilion to bring in new and varied tax revenue, we are extremely concerned about the massive alteration to the landscape of Brownhelm which would come about from this development. We are also concerned that if the rezoning is approved, but this particular project falls through, then it could open the door to all kinds of other development to the property. We hope, at the least, that this rezoning would be approved only for this particular project.

The City of Vermilion is holding **a public hearing at 6 pm on October 25th** to garner input on whether or not to rezone the property. We are hoping to see a large turnout at the hearing. If you are able to attend to share your opinion of this potential rezoning in Brownhelm Township, we would greatly appreciate it! However, we understand that many folks are either unwilling or unable to meet up in public these days, so even if you could send a letter expressing your opinion of the rezoning and its potential effect on our Church property, we would also be very appreciative.

**The public hearing on October 25th will be held at:**

Vermilion Municipal Complex  
687 Decatur Street  
Vermilion, OH 44089

**Physical letters may be sent to:**

Gwen Fisher, Municipal Clerk  
5511 Liberty Avenue  
Vermilion, OH 44089

*No!! I am unable to write a letter but  
want you to know I am very much opposed  
to the change Please let it remain the  
same.  
Eleanor Northheim*

You may also send your letter via email to: **gwenfisher@vermilion.net**

We truly appreciate your time and attention to this matter. We feel this development would quite literally change the face of Brownhelm forever and we hope a more appropriate location can be found for its construction.

Sincerely,  
Your BHA Executive Board

SPACE  
TO  
THRIVE

# BAUMHART RD & ROUTE 2

VERMILION, OHIO  
PROJECT NO. 1964357

TEST FIT CONCEPTS

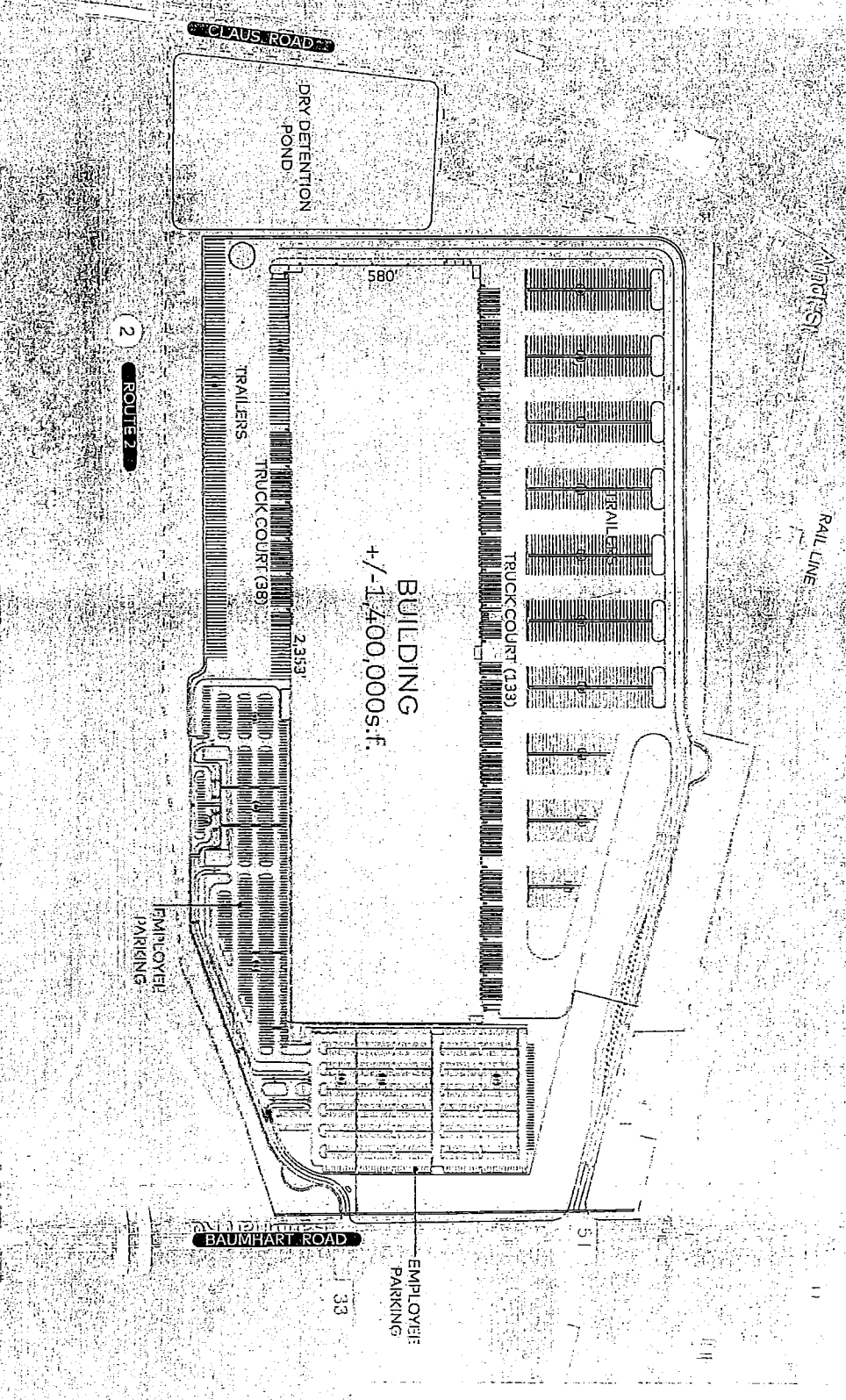
**HI HILLWOOD**  
A PEROT COMPANY®

**Sterling Group**



16 AUGUST 2021

GHAFARI



## SITE INFO

\* SITE AREA = 119.6 acres +/-

EMPLOYEE PARKING = 1,431 spaces

TRAILER PARKING = 716

BLDG. AREA = +/- 1,400,000 s.f.

BUILDING DOCKS = 171  
(OWNER TO PROVIDE FINAL COUNT REQUIRED)

\* AREA SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON FINAL SITE LAYOUT. PROPERTY LINES SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATION BASED ON AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS.

SITE CONCEPT PLAN - 15.00.00 - N.T.S.

N/O N/O N/O

GHAFARI





# Brownhelm Historical Association

Membership Application/Renewal 2022

Name ELEANOR NORTHEIM

Address 175 N. LAKE ST.

City AMHERST State OHIO Zip 44001

Phone ~~440-~~ Cell (optional) 440-412-9951

How would you prefer to receive the Bugle newsletter? Mail ☒ Email ☐

We have an additional monthly Email Newsletter that we send out on occasion with special notices of events, programs, etc. Please provide an email address if interested:

Email

Membership to the Brownhelm Historical Association includes the "Brownhelm Bugle," our monthly newsletter. New members receive a BHA booklet with information on the organization, meeting information, and Brownhelm history.

New Membership Application ☐

Membership Renewal ☒

☐ Single Membership | \$20

☐ Family Membership | \$35

☐ Lifetime Member | \$150

☐ Youth Membership | \$5.00

☐ Please add an additional \$  as a donation to the Brownhelm Historical Association.

These funds should be applied to (please mark one):

☐ Brownhelm School Fund ☐ Heritage Museum Fund ☐ Cemetery Restoration Fund

☐ Firelands Scholarship Fund ☐ Endowment Fund

Please make checks payable to Brownhelm Historical Association.

If mailing, send to: 1950 N. Ridge Road, Vermilion, Ohio 44089. Over----->>



8055 Claus Road  
Amherst, OH 44001

October 14, 2021

Vermilion City Council  
5511 Liberty Avenue  
Vermilion, OH 44089

Vermilion City Council Members:

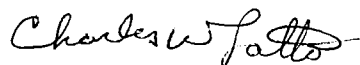
This letter is in regards to the potential change in zoning to the large agricultural field that lies behind the Heritage Museum/German Reformed Church on Claus Road.

It is our understanding that a development company wants to rezone the property from Commercial and Light Industrial to Heavy Industrial. The developers are looking for land on which to build an extremely large facility. While we appreciate the efforts of the City of Vermilion to bring in new tax revenue, we are extremely concerned about the massive alteration to the landscape of Brownhelm which would be a result from this development.

We are not in favor of the rezoning and its potential effect on the church property and on the private residences in the neighborhood that abut or are in close proximity to the proposed new development.

Thank you for taking our concerns into consideration.

Respectfully,



Charles W. Latto



Patricia A. Latto

As a former resident of Brownhelm Twp. for 87 years, I am writing this letter to oppose the efforts to rezone the property east of the Brownhelm Historical Heritage Museum on Claus Road. Brownhelm Twp. is a rural farming community not a place for a large industrial complex. When people who have built a lovely designed home in Brownhelm, <sup>or those who have lived here for years</sup> ~~they~~ get up in the morning, looking out their windows hoping to see fields and trees - not six story buildings. The land is for farming, not industrial complexes.

I do not own a computer or a typewriter; so as you can see I simply apply pen to paper to express my views. If we allow these big projects to take over our land, we will be wondering where our farmers can plant their crops. These same facts hold true for the property on the west side of Baumhart Rd. by Route 2.

I would ask the company, Sterling Group II, LLC to find property elsewhere.  
Dorothy (Walker) Bechtel

VERMILION CITY COUNCIL MEETING, OCTOBER 25, 2021

My name is Dan Kaighin. I live at 1450 Claus Rd, Vermilion.

In regards to the rezoning of the 119 acres along Baumhart Rd and State Route 2, I am requesting that you vote NO to the current request to rezone the area from the present land use, to Heavy Industry land use. The rezoning will allow the proposed business to occupy acreage adjoining an area which is predominantly residential. The rezoning would make our area vulnerable to all the noise, night-lighting, much higher vehicular traffic, and trucks pouring unlimited amounts of diesel exhaust into the air surrounding our homes. A photograph of the kind of exhaust to which I am referring is enclosed.

If a yes vote unfortunately occurs, I am asking that the rezoning be made temporary, allowing the zoning to return to the present land use if the applicant should eventually rescind his request to develop the aforementioned area.

While considering the request of the applicant, please know that diesel exhaust has been found to be an occupational cancer-causing carcinogen according to the federal E.P.A., the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research On Cancer (IARC), the U.S. National Toxicology Program (NTP), and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) of the U.S. CDC. If this pollution is allowed in our community, it would obviously put us residents at a much greater risk for lung cancer than we are already.

It has been said that allowing this rezoning would be wonderful progress for the City of Vermilion. For many of us, however, it is extremely difficult to understand how intruding upon a peaceful residential community this way is "progress." Some of us, on the other hand would call it - REGRESS.

Thank you for listening.



## Race Track AZ - stock photo

Truck emitting black smoke from dual exhaust pipes on highway

### DETAILS

Credit:	Seth Joel
Creative #:	82301949
License type:	Royalty-free
Collection:	Photographer's Choice RF
Location:	Prescott, Arizona, United States
Release info:	No release required

Public Hearing, Vermilion City Council  
October 25, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Vicki Leimbach 1425 Claus Road, Vermilion Ohio. Parcel #s 010002100031, 0100022104042

I've lived in the city of Vermilion for 8 years, coming from a township with very strict zoning rules.

I have a question and some very brief comments.

Are you 100% certain that this rezoning is for this project ONLY, as recommended by the Planning Commission?

Please don't give up your leverage and control of this property by immediately rezoning it Heavy Industrial. Once it is zoned Heavy Industrial, it most likely goes to the highest bidder and the outdated zoning document would be unable to stop an unfriendly, unworthy toxic industry. This vote is not just about my neighborhood but the entire city.

Look to the East. Lorain City is making a huge comeback- The Shipyards, Broadway, The Black River area. Vermilion doesn't need to make a come back. It's already a charming tourist town. Please don't let Heavy Industry ruin that.

Look to the west. Properties along Route 60 coming into town generate taxes. There is no reason properties along Baumhart Road couldn't do the same.

If you give up what little control the City has for this property by immediately rezoning it Heavy Industrial, you've given up the tax revenues that could be generated by Commercial Highway and Light Industrial. I'd rather have 5 small industrial plants with local owners who have honesty and integrity than one large Heavy Industrial Plant, the region and country of origin we do not know and who most likely will demand costly infrastructure.

Please vote No for Heavy Industrial Zoning.

Thank you.

Please see additional information attached.

**Impact on our Neighborhood.** Few would call into question how property values will be affected. Until it was pointed out to me, one item I never considered was replacement value. It's not just that you get less for your home, it's also the issue of finding a comparable home in another neighborhood that's affordable. Another major concern is that 1270.16 has no buffer requirements except for 150 feet. No mention of sound barriers, light filtering or landscaping. Without protections in the zoning document, how are surrounding homes to deal with this? Are we left to negotiate our own deals? What leverage would we have? For that matter, if this passes, what leverage does the city have?

**How old is the 1270.16 Heavy Industrial Document?** I don't know when it was written, only that it was written prior to 1966. So much has happened since then- Neal Armstrong walked on the moon, The Viet Nam War, garage door openers, I-Clouds, Cell Phones, computers, LEDs and on and on. I've heard the excuse that this is generic and it pretty much covers everything. Really?? This document was created before we fully understood the carcinogenic properties of pollutants, the effects of lead poisoning on children's neurological development, the anecdotal evidence linking certain pollutants to autism, the effects of noise and light pollution on mental health. This zoning document is so woefully outdated, it makes me weep. If zoning is meant to protect residents, this one falls very short. At the very least, set up a volunteer task force to pursue improving this document. We here in Ward Five blindly pay taxes but we are critical thinkers and problem solvers. Please don't sell us short. I've lived here 8 years and I can't tell you how many times the life-long residents have rolled their eyes at me and said "you just don't get it." I think I'm finally beginning "to get it". I'm not protected by the City. I'm not protected by the Township. I'm in an area where I pay taxes to an entity that absolutely shows no sign of caring for my welfare. I can honestly say I've never experienced that before. One gentleman aptly stated, "the city doesn't bother me and I don't bother the city." He gets it.

**What's in a Name?** On September 1st, one of the planning commissioners asked the name of this company. The response was "currently they have a very high level of interest from their repeat customers and due to timing, they are coming before Planning for the rezone as they fully make those prospective users, who they have done business within the region and out of the country". In other words- No Name! A name is important. The company's references are important. The company's past practices are important. The evaluation of the city in which the company currently operates is important. How can you possibly zone something Heavy Industrial without knowing the name? I can name a Heavy Industrial Company I wouldn't mind having in my backyard. A name matters. That 119 acre field is a treasure. Please treat it as such. Your question to someone seeking Heavy Industrial zoning should be "are you good enough for us?"

**It's Heartbreaking.** As I stated once before, I came from an area of the state where industry supports the schools and the local communities, keeping property taxes and payroll taxes very low for all. There's no blight. There's no pollution. It can be done. Do I think Vermillion can do that? The City certainly does not appear to be on the right road. It's very sad.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

*Vicki Leimbach 10/25/2021*

Vicki Leimbach  
1425 Claus Road, Vermillion, Ohio

Good Evening City Council Members and City Administration,

My name is Marilyn Brill and I reside at 1745 Cooper Foster Park Road in Vermilion /incorporated part of Brownhelm Township.

Over the past few weeks, my husband and I have talked about the changes around this area of Brownhelm during the past sixty plus years:

- Route 2 was planned and constructed in the 1960's
- The Ford Plant was developed in the late 1950's
- then the Baumhart Road Exit was added /then the Ford plant closed and now that toll booth is one of the least used of all of the turnpike toll gates
- The Village of Vermilion became a city in 1959 as part of Brownhelm Township was annexed to make that happen

Now, I stand here today, with a large aerial map of the nearly 120 acres of priceless farmland that *someone* wants to change. . . This simple map will show what will happen if that rezoning is approved:

- they will add an enormous building
- and a few hundred parking places
- and lots of truck trailer spaces
- a dry detention pond, driveways and loading docks to name a few more changes

**But nowhere on this proposed plan are there any mentions of widening the main 'north and south' roads, where all of those big rigs will be entering and exiting this huge distribution center! And then add all the traffic of those cars that those employees drive back and forth to work!**

**Why do developers paint that real rosy picture about their proposed project and say nothing about how the existing roads will handle that amount of traffic? Another concern is the drainage (on these four parcels in question) it has already been altered and nothing has been done south of Route 2 to correct it! Yes, changes create concerns!**

It doesn't make sense for another change that will create more problems as we, the residents, will witness after the deal is done and the big developers reap their financial rewards!

It is up to you, each of you, to make the right decision tonight - keep the zoning the same - say 'NO' to the height of a huge building on this needed farmland!

Thank you!

*Marilyn Brill*



Heritage Church Museum  
1355 Claus Road  
Vermilion, Ohio 44089

Public Hearing, October 25, 2021, 6:00 p.m.  
Rezoning 119 acres on Baumhart & Route 2 to Heavy Industrial

Dear Council Members:

As active members of the Brownhelm Historical Association, and, in particular of the Heritage Church Museum Restoration Committee, we appreciate the opportunity to express our concerns about the rezoning of property next to us.

It is devastating to contemplate the impact that Heavy Industrial zoning will have on our Museum. This church, built in 1870, is one of the few in the area that has been maintained in its original condition. The building is a historical artifact and has a rural country charm, which, if lost, cannot be replaced.

In 1996, the last three surviving members of the German Evangelical & Reformed Church congregation deeded the church to the newly-formed Brownhelm Historical Association, hoping we could save it.

Over its more than 150 years of existence, this tiny church has had many stewards; the Brownhelm Historical Association is merely the latest. We restored it after a fire in 1999, added acreage in 2008, repainted the exterior in 2010, the interior in 2013, and the steeple in 2020. We replaced the roof in 2015. It is all part of the ongoing love affair and commitment we made in 1996 to Elizabeth Arndt, William Henning and Ruth Normandeau, the church members who entrusted it to us.

We also have concerns about our neighbors in Brownhelm Station. They have supported us and we definitely support them. This is not a transient neighborhood and no change in zoning should be permitted to destroy what these people have cared for over the years.

We find ourselves in a position where we need your help. As preservation of history is a shared concern in Vermilion, we ask that you take our commitment to the preservation of our beloved Historical Church Museum just as seriously, a historical landmark that could never be replaced.

Please vote NO to the rezoning to Heavy Industrial.

Respectively submitted,

Brownhelm Historical Association  
Heritage Church Museum Restoration Committee

Marilyn Brill *Marilyn Brill* 10/24/21

Kathy Ehrlich *Kathy Ehrlich* 10/24/21

Vicki Leimbach *Vicki Leimbach* 10/24/21

Tammy Perry *Tammy Perry* 10/24/21

Grant Thompson *Grant Thompson* 10/24/21

*Jay Ward* 10-25-21





*Built in 1870 by early German settlers of Brownhelm station, this church carried on the German customs & beliefs of their homeland.*

*Later, it became the Brownhelm E & R Church with many of those early German names still listed on the membership records.*

*In 1996 the few remaining members donated the historic building to the Brownhelm Historical group. Today, this Brownhelm Heritage Museum preserves Brownhelm's early history.*

3 letters  
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**October 22, 2021**

Council members,

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I have been actively involved in preserving the history of this community. I belong to the Brownhelm Historical Association, and helped save the Brownhelm School up on North Ridge Road. We engage with many of our neighbors, and do our best to maintain our property.

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I do not oppose progress, if done right. I know Vermilion needs to grow to survive. Losing Ford was a blow to the local economy, and we need new industry to take some of the onus off the backs of property owners. Our schools need support.

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Ordinances are supposed to protect the citizens. So protect us!

And protect yourselves, too. To make any deal with a potential client, Vermilion will need to offer something more than an unimproved cornfield located near a highway. Are you going to offer sewer service? Vermilion cannot take care of its residents now. How eager will voters be, to pay for a new multi-million dollar sewer line along Baumhart Road, when their own lines in town are crumbling?

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- 1) Add an expiration date to the City's offer of a zoning change. If this deal falls through, as they often do, then Vermilion will not be burdened with zoning that, essentially allows nearly any type of business to locate there. And, contrary to what someone has tried to tell me, once it is changed to I-2 it will *never be changed back*. We are not stupid. This zoning change *must* be tied to this particular deal. Or no deal.
- 2) And, if this deal is off the table, make a commitment to reform zoning ordinances. It's too late to change them for this project, but a little work on them upfront would make the pathway clearer next time the situation arises. Zoning is supposed to protect the citizens of a city. So, PROTECT US! Don't be so quick to secure a deal- any deal - that you would damage your community irreparably. Be deliberative. This really is important.

Help us in Ward 5. We live out here by choice. We like the peace and quiet of country living, and don't want it destroyed by an uncaring city government that doesn't have to live with the consequences of their actions. Vermilion does not end at the east bank of the river.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Leimbach  
1425 Claus Road  
Vermilion

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I grew up in Brownhelm. Two doors down from the Brownhelm school. I would have gone to school there, but the school was closed before I was old enough. My older sister went to school there, though. She was part of the very last class to attend Brownhelm school. Her class picture hangs in the building which has been restored by volunteers and is used as community center and houses many pieces of history that tell the story of Brownhelm. Brownhelm was a wonderful place to grow up. It's small community that fiercely holds on to its heritage.

Every October, Brownhelm has an event called "If tombstones could talk." Local historians dress up as the towns founders of the town and stand at their gravestones in the Brownhelm cemetery. They tell the story of how the community was founded.

Every Christmas, the community has Santa Clauses that go to numerous houses to visit children and give them small gifts. This tradition started during the Great Depression, and continues today, nearly 100 years later. It has been featured on numerous news outlets over the years for its demonstration of a small community that cares about its history. I was one of those children that would get a visit every year from a Brownhelm Santa Clause.

It's rare for such a small community to hold on to its past so strongly. Unfortunately, that history has been lost in the past. In the 1950's, Ford Motor was welcomed into the area on Baumhart and rt 6. As part of their development, the founder of our community, Colonel Henry Brown's house, built in the early 1800's, was demolished to make way for a parking lot and railyard. That history is gone forever now, as is the Ford Assembly Plant and the jobs everyone was so excited about at the time. What they left is an industrial blight on the coast.

If allowed, this project will no doubt spark other development of the area. More pristine, productive farmland will be lost to housing developers. Gas stations, convenience stores, and fast-food restaurants will follow. These will put an enormous strain on the small Brownhelm county store which has been in business since 1849. In addition, Baumhart road will be a major corridor between the turnpike and rt 2. Increased traffic will lead to the need for possible winding of the road.

The type of business looking to develop this property will not exist in this state indefinitely. The structures it plans to build have a lifespan, as does the need for that type of structure. Ford Motor assembly is a good example, but not the only one. These structures are very expensive to maintain, and when they are no longer financially viable, the company has no problem walking away from them. Few other companies could take over a building that size and pay for maintenance and repairs. It would be easier to build new on virgin land – exactly what this company is doing. This is a problem that is being created for future generations to have to deal with. Once developed, that land can never be restored to the state it is in today.

Additionally, there is no room for expansion on this plot of land, something most companies would want to do at some point. The largest plot of undeveloped land sits south of Rt 2 and is owned by the LCMP. This land was willed to them by an individual that wanted to ensure it was never developed.

What is the goal of our community? I don't think it is to develop as much as possible and bring in as many people as possible. People like this area because it is not a busy place. It is slow pace. Calm and quiet. Somewhere they can get away from the hustle and bustle of daily life.

The owner of the company wanting to build this likely will likely never set foot on the property. It's a number on their accounting paperwork. They know nothing about our community, its people, or its heritage. Please don't sacrifice our community for a moment of profits.

Tonight, Vermilion is deciding what happens in Brownhelm. The decision will impact the future of this area for generations to come, and it will change Brownhelm forever. I beg you to vote NO on this zoning change.

Gary Dodson Jr

3050 N. Ridge Rd, Brownhlem, OH

440-935-2031

<sup>this is</sup>  
Hello, my name is Sharon Demos and my husband Nick <sup>WE</sup> ~~and~~ live at 2145 Arndt St.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight.

For the record, we are not against economic development as long as it's strengthening our community.

What we are against is more noise pollution, 24 hr commercial lighting in our back yard, and 24 / 7 operations.

We understand this distribution center may be operated 24 / 7, and according to the plans submitted, all semis will be parking and traveling up and down the 900 feet of our property <sup>that's</sup> to the north of this project. They will be within 50 yards or so of our property line, and we will be left dealing with constant braking and back up noise.

<sup>IDLING</sup>

We have lived on Arndt St. for 30 yrs. When we bought our home, the trains were few and far between. According to Vermilion's website, there are 120 trains a day now, and is expected to increase to 200 per day! Then there's the shooting range that's a ½ mile behind our home. At times it sounds as if we are in a war zone! And have you been down Arndt St. lately? The road needs repaired. You can see how all of this will affect our property value.

Nick and I made a visit to the Amazon Distribution Center in Twinsburg Oh recently. We wanted to see how it affected residential properties that bordered the distribution center. What we found, was that there ~~were~~ 20 ft. high fences between the distribution center and the residential community. We also noted, there was no semi parking or traveling of semis any where near the homes.

We feel we are being overlooked as a community and would like you to stand in our shoes.

If this property is rezoned I2, we are asking that

- 1) ~~that~~ 20 ft. solid fencing be put up on any property that butts up against this project
- 2) The semi parking be relocated to the south side of the property
- 3) The rezoning of I2 be contingent on this project only, or have an expiration date applied

Thank you for your time

To Vermilion City Council,

We can enable Sterling Group to develop 119+ acres along Baumhart Road and Route 2 without rezoning to I-2, but by changing the height restriction of I-1 zoning that would allow their anticipated use from 45 to 60 feet. At least until they take possession and present plans, we might leave the parcel abutting Baumhart and extending west 800-900 feet to remain a Business zoning, but be open to reducing or rezoning that area if needed and a firm plan for development was presented. Actually long term, except for any actual use by Sterling Group as the developer, a B-4 Motorist Service or new special Interstate Exchange Services category might be best, but that could await an overall review of the zoning code.

Simply zoning the entire parcel I-2 at present would open the door to a change of use to a heavy manufacturing use contemplated by that zoning. That is unnecessary to the development suggested and could subject large neighboring areas to the risk of heavy industry inconsistent with the overall area. There are several options that can be considered as opposed to blanket I-2 zoning:

1. Retain business zoning about 825 feet west from Baumhart similar to the zoning south of Route 2, and rezone the remainder for "industrial" use of some sort.
2. Change I-1 zoning to 60 feet maximum height or 60 feet if set back more than 150 feet from major roads or for buildings exceeding 100,000 sq. ft. of interior foundation area.
3. Zone the entire property I-1 and change the height restriction to 60 feet.
4. Zone some or all I-2 for heavier manufacturing facilities.

If the developer is amenable, my preferred option is to retain some business zoning, at least 500 feet from Baumhart to 850 feet. The remainder could be rezoned for I-1 with 60 feet height, or create a special I-1A zoning allowing the I-1 uses but 60 feet in height.

**Homer S. Taft**  
P.O. Box 16216  
Rocky River, OH 44116