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NOT IMPRESSED WITH JIM THORPE BUILDING PROJECT

Carbon County Commissioners Wayne Nothstein, Bill O'Gurek and Thomas J. Gerhard have not acted in good faith regarding their planned building project on Susquehanna Street in Jim Thorpe. Commissioners stated they are taking "all necessary precautions" to protect St. Mark's Church from damage caused by excavation of the church's foundation. Taking "all necessary precautions" obviously means building elsewhere!

Commissioners refused requests for preconstruction testing to determine how excavation will affect St. Mark's. Their refusal is in direct conflict to their claim of taking "all necessary precautions." Commissioners stated they "have nothing to hide" and "are not happy with people finding fault at the last minute when the county has been working on the project for years." In fact, the public was only informed last year!

Commissioners Nothstein, O'Gurek and Gerhard insist this project must proceed because they have already spent almost \$500,000. Voting in lockstep on every issue, the commissioners are simpatico in their belief only THEY know how taxpayer money is best spent and they

are determined to spend \$16 million more! How easily millions of taxpayers' dollars seem to slip through their fingers. Where is it all going? Follow the money.

Commissioners state, "The general public doesn't understand." The general public understands all too well. Thus, the growing outrage! Commissioners dismissed more economical, less-disruptive office spaces and building locations in favor of their bloated project with the crippling price tag: \$16,000,000 to provide 20 employees with new office space and parking amounts to \$800,000 an employee! Taxpayers would be better served providing each of the 20 employees a new \$500,000 house and letting them work from home!

Many county employees agree this plan is not the best option, yet they fear repercussions at work if they dare speak out in opposition. That, in itself, is disturbing! The eyes of generations of Mauch Chunkers are laser focused on Jim Thorpe, St. Mark's Church, and these commissioners. So far, no one is impressed!

ANNE GILES