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## Support for planned Parker care center

DATE POSTED: Thursday, January 12, 2012 5:07 PM EST

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Camilla Townsend, Highland Park

To the editor:

I am writing to the community to express my strong support for Parker at Monroe on Schoolhouse Road. The proposed long-term care residence would be an enormous benefit for the growing senior community in Middlesex County. Both my parents are currently cared for by Parker in Highland Park, and thus from my own personal experience, I anticipate the day when my husband or I may some day require the services that Parker provides. I can't stress enough how important it is to have excellent residential long-term care services close by.

In 2006 I received an offer to come to Rutgers University as a professor of history. I was delighted to accept, but was not sure which town to choose to live in. When we found that Highland Park was about to become the home of the soon-to-be-opened Parker at Stonegate, we chose to buy a home in Highland Park. It has worked out wonderfully. My mother, who was suffering from the early stages of Alzheimer's, was able to live in the lap of luxury at the assisted living facility only about a mile from me. Then, when her condition grew grave, she was able to be quickly and easily transferred to the nursing home — again, still only a stone's throw from my home.

Last winter, my son, who attends Rutgers Preparatory School, joined his choral classmates in performing at the Parker. I had had no part in arranging the event. I simply sat and glowed, thinking how wonderfully the Parker fits into every aspect of our community life.

My sister comes to visit regularly to see my mother, and she and her family always spend money in local hotels and restaurants and gift shops while they are here. She laughs and says perhaps this is yet another way in which Parker contributes meaningfully to the community!

Visiting my parents (my father is there now, too) on the beautiful grounds of Parker has become one of the highlights of my week now, for I see every time I go that they are in good hands. Sometimes I think with a bit of fear and sadness of my own old age. Then I am comforted by the thought that I have been part of making such an organization as Parker "tick," and that either Parker or some other similar place will hopefully be there for me and my peers when our time comes, too.

I truly hope that everyone involved gives this issue their deepest thought.

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