

# Crossgates hearings end

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There will be no more hearings on the \$85 million Crossgates shopping mall proposed for an environmentally controversial portion of Guilderland, state Environmental Commissioner Robert Flacke decided Monday night.

All parties to the controversy will have two weeks to comment on air pollution abatement measures, Flacke announced through spokesman John Moore, and Flacke will render a final decision within 60 days from Monday, Moore said.

Albany County Legislature Majority Leader Richard Meyers said after the decision was announced, "I'm pleased he didn't re-open the hearings. I think they overdid it in the past. With the two weeks for comments, what needs to be brought before them can be brought."

The president of the McKownville Improvement Association saw the decision differently. "It's being unfair," Melvin Behn said of Flacke's decision not to hold more hearings. "I question whether that would hold up in court. Contrary to yesterday's statement (by Flacke) that he can't say anything, he has had meetings with Pyramid Crossgates people. He's ignoring the wishes of people as shown by many polls. He's just plainly ignoring the wishes of the people."

Rhonda Childs, a member of Concerned Citizens Against Crossgates, said, "We'll determine our course of action tomorrow. Concerned Citizens will continue to fight this, whether lawsuits, protests in town, on whatever front we can because we do not feel it

necessary or want it in the town of Guilderland. This is just one more hurdle in a long list of hurdles in four years. This is not the end and just the beginning of another chapter."

The controversy centers on the impact of such a large project on the Pine Bush — a pine barren which opponents of major construction there claim would suffer irreversible harm — and the effects the mall and its clientele would have on the McKownville neighborhood in Guilderland.

Several months of hearings under Environmental Conservation auspices concluded last autumn.

At issue was whether the department should issue 11 permits necessary for building the mall.