

2 STATE OF NEW YORK
TOWN OF AMENIA

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4 Minutes of
The Town of Amenia Planning Board
5 May 5, 2015 - 7:07 p.m.
at
6 Town Hall
4988 Route 22
7 Amenia, New York 12501

8 -----X

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10 B E F O R E: JOSEPH FONTAINE, Chairman
ANTHONY ROBUSTELLI
11 PETER CLAIR
NATHAN ROY
12 WILLIAM KROEGER
JOHN STEFANOPOULOS
13 ERICH McENROE
DAVID EVERETT, ESQ.
14 LARISSA DeLANGO, Secretary

15

16 P R E S E N T: PETER J. WISE, ESQ.
17 AMANDA C. De CESARE
PEDRO TORRES
18 JUAN TORRES
MICHAEL DiGNACCO

19

20

21

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2 MR. FONTAINE: Good evening, folks.
3 Everybody settle down. We're going to get started
4 here. Will someone like to make a motion on the
5 meeting for the public hearing?

6 MR. CLAIR: Yes.

7 MR. FONTAINE: Second?

8 MR. KROEGER: Second.

9 MR. FONTAINE: All in favor?

10 (The board voted unanimously in
11 favor.)

12 MR. FONTAINE: At this point, just
13 basic rules for the conduct of the meeting here. I'm
14 going to go through the people who signed up to speak
15 tonight, the public comments. We're going to allow
16 three minutes for each person to make their comments,
17 and we have a total of 21 people that requested to
18 come up and speak. At the end of that process, I'm
19 going to ask that anybody coming in after the start
20 of the program, if you want to speak, we can
21 certainly add them onto the list.

22 We're going to venture right in with our
23 first speaker. It's Tom Werner. Come up to the
24 podium, if you could.

25 Quick side note, the podium is facing the

3

2 crowd so that the TV people can see it and so forth.

3 Usually the protocol would be to have the person

4 facing the planning board because the comments are

5 being made to the planning board and not to the

6 public itself.

7 How are you doing, Tom?

8 TOM WERNER: Thank you. Fine. Good.

9 Just a little on the downside.

10 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Microphone.

11 TOM WERNER: Thank you. Tom Werner. I

12 think everybody knows my name. If you don't, I'll

13 let you know.

14 Anyway, my issue is I question some of the

15 actions of Silo Ridge and I was informed by the

16 secretary of the planning board that they have no

17 restrictions on anything. They can do whatever they

18 please. So if that's the case, this meeting is

19 useless. Thank you.

20 MR. FONTAINE: Next speaker is

21 Dan Johnson.

22 DAN JOHNSON: Good evening. I had no

23 intention of going second, but here I am. I'm here.

24 I represent H.G. Page Lumber and it's my pleasure to

25 be here.

4

2 I'm a town councilman an hour and a half
3 from here. I drove an hour and 40 minutes to get
4 here and I will drive an hour and 40 minutes to get
5 back and I will be glad to do it again in support of
6 this project.

7 I've had the experience over the last two
8 years --

9 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Can you state your
10 name for the press?

11 DAN JOHNSON: Dan Johnson. I have been
12 dealing with the people at Silo Ridge, mostly
13 Mike DiGnacco, for the last couple of years and I
14 find him to be a man of integrity. When they say
15 they're going to buy local, they actually do buy
16 local.

17 I have had occasion to be on their job
18 sites dozens of times and I have never seen anything
19 whatsoever out of order. They order quality
20 material, they demand that, and they want to run a
21 good project.

22 Where I live, we just recently were in
23 competition for one of the casinos and we lost. So
24 in my community and our beautiful valley, our kids

25 will have -- they have nowhere to go, there's no

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2 reason to stay. I think this is a wonderful thing.

3 In the longterm, the flow of money that
4 will end up back in the town and stick here is a very
5 good benefit to the town and I appreciate very much.

6 I have been doing business in this industry
7 for 37 years and I find that the people at Silo Ridge
8 are the real deal, that the plans are well laid out,
9 and that they try to do everything that they can to
10 make sure the least amount of interference is done,
11 and I'll leave it at that.

12 It's a pleasure to do business with them.
13 The 90 employees of Page Lumber appreciate that they
14 are buying from Page Lumber as much as they can.
15 Nothing is taken for granted. We have to earn the
16 business that we get from them, but they are very
17 fair. Thank you very much.

18 MR. FONTAINE: Thank you. Next
19 speaker, Elyse Harney.

20 ELYSE HARNEY: Elyse Harney. I have
21 been on boards in Salisbury and actually ran for
22 selectman council, and I want to thank you guys and
23 ladies for your patience, for your diligence in a
24 very long process. So I'm sure everybody thanks you

25 and appreciates that.

6

2 I have spoken about the White Hart Inn as a
3 source of jobs in the area, but I think more
4 meaningfully would be Harney & Sons Tea. Harney &
5 Sons Tea as of today employs 181 people.

6 Now, most of the those people come in on an
7 entry-level. If they are, you know, if they show the
8 initiative, they are trained over a 10 or more year
9 period. One of our employees is actually in China
10 with my son, Michael. She is the second in command
11 in purchasing tea. That's how good she has gotten.

12 So my feeling is Silo Ridge is a service
13 industry. Service industries do the same thing.
14 They offer opportunity at an entry-level. Then,
15 people have the opportunity for training.

16 I think Amenia has a fabulous opportunity
17 to boost their economy, to help their residents,
18 actually to gain more residents because the other
19 thing that has happened at the tea company, if we do
20 hire people from out of the area, very often they
21 come, they end up starting a family, buying a house,
22 becoming residents.

23 So again, I think Amenia has a tremendous
24 opportunity with Silo Ridge.

2 RON HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 My name is Ron Hicks, deputy commissioner for
4 strategic planning and development for Dutchess
5 County.

6 As you know, the town has referred this
7 project to the county, and the department has
8 reviewed the project, which has been scaled down
9 considerably from the project that the community
10 previously approved, and the department responded to
11 the town with comments and recommended a local
12 decision.

13 Aside from the obvious significant economic
14 benefits of this project, we think it's thoughtful
15 and sensitive in its architecture, its density and
16 its impact on the environment, and most importantly
17 on our community.

18 Additionally, we believe this project will
19 provide hope and opportunity for all residents of
20 Dutchess County, and the county executive has gone on
21 record expressing its strong support of this project,
22 and I'm here this evening on his behalf to, once
23 again, reiterate his support and respectfully request
24 the Board's support of this important project in the

25 best interest of our county and our community. Thank

8

2 you for your time.

3 MR. FONTAINE: Dave MacMillan.

4 DAVID MacMILLAN: I am David MacMillan.

5 I stood before all of you numerous times in support
6 of what this project's all about. I'm from
7 Millerton, New York. I'm in the Webutuck School
8 District.

9 I like the idea of the tax base that we may
10 see from this project. I'm in particular support of
11 the workforce they are going to need to, not only
12 build this project, but to keep it moving forward.

13 I'm also in favor of, because I run a
14 non-profit food drive, that they've expressed
15 interest in working with non-profits, whether it be
16 the local fire departments or local non-profits, such
17 as myself. I take them at their word. They've done
18 tremendous things for me in the past in my
19 organization, so I do take them at their word. I
20 agree with everything that's been said here tonight,
21 that I believe that they're outstanding, they do a
22 tremendous job.

23 My hope is that they hire local, some local
24 contractors to do a portion of the work that can be

25 done by local contractors. I was very pleased to see

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2 somebody here from H.G. Page because that means they
3 are buying local. So to me, that's very important.

4 So I'm not going to go down that road anymore because
5 you've have heard it from me before.

6 I do want to bring to the residents of the
7 Amenia and Wassaic, who are the taxpayers who control
8 this board, I just want you guys to remember one
9 thing, these gentlemen and ladies here are
10 volunteers. They read every single page of documents
11 for every single project that goes on in your town,
12 and I think sometimes we forget how much volunteer
13 time that takes. It's just as much as being a
14 volunteer fireman or a volunteer ambulance person,
15 for somebody who just volunteers in their community,
16 and I think these people should be thanked, not only
17 this board, but all your boards in Amenia and Wassaic
18 because they are volunteers.

19 See, we all forget that. We come down and
20 give them a hard time.

21 What do you mean the trees are going to be
22 14 feet high?

23 They're the ones that volunteer to take
24 this project on, and they do it diligently, and they

25 read every single page of documents that, not only

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2 that Silo Ridge gives them, but every project that
3 goes on in your town or my town. So that's just my
4 thought.

5 You're the taxpayer in Amenia, if they say
6 it's a go, they have done their homework, and it's
7 not going to hurt any of us. So in my mind, like I
8 said before, I've been in staunch favor of this
9 particular project.

10 MR. FONTAINE: I have to cut you off.

11 DAVID MacMILLAN: Okay. Thank you.

12 MR. FONTAINE: I appreciate the praise.

13 DAVID MacMILLAN: No problem.

14 MR. FONTAINE: Okay. Leo Blackman.

15 LEO BLACKMAN: I'm Leo Blackman of 74
16 Old Route 22.

17 I want to thank the members of the planning
18 board who've spent countless unpaid hours reviewing
19 this complex proposal. As former chair of the zoning
20 board, I know exactly how much fun that can be.

21 I'm an architect. I can't speak to the
22 specific legal or environmental issues Silo Ridge
23 brings, so I'll stick to the visual impacts, which is
24 what I know. Thank you.

25 I have lived here 12 years and I have come

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2 to love the specific character of the buildings and
3 landscape in Amenia. While Discovery Company offers
4 a quality product, they have not paid much attention
5 to what makes Amenia unique. Their clubhouse and
6 multi-family homes are massive. Each much bigger and
7 taller than any barn or commercial building now
8 standing in town. And the architectural precedent
9 shown in their brochures, while lovely, are from all
10 over America, just not from Dutchess County.

11 So there are design problems on both scale
12 and style that I would hope the planning board
13 noticed already. Much of the site plan is carefully
14 considered, but as development moves away from the
15 village community and climbs higher up the steep
16 slopes, our zoning code gets tossed out the window.

17 The first waiver requested for minimum size
18 and maximum slope of lots involves around 80 parcels.
19 That means more than a third of homes need exemptions
20 just to get built. If you allow those, how will the
21 planning board and the zoning board ever get future
22 applicants to follow the code?

23 I've reviewed the topographic sections
24 proposed for the estate homes, and they involve major

25 regrading with multiple 8-foot high retaining walls

12

2 and loss of vegetation. When the applicant hung
3 tarps this fall between leafed-out trees to indicate
4 visibility for a mere three of the 26 houses, these
5 appeared very prominent from the same part of over
6 22. In winter, after those trees have been cleared,
7 you'll see two lines of houses rather than green
8 mountain.

9 I'm surprised the application has gotten
10 this far without proper markups to show folks the
11 changes in store for that slope and for DeLaVergne.
12 In most places they usually use sticks and netting to
13 indicate the bulk of buildings, and I don't think
14 that's happened here at all.

15 This project promises Amenia economic
16 development, which is terrific. We need jobs and
17 taxes, but we can have that without losing the views
18 that define Amenia.

19 The planning board is responsible for
20 negotiating on our behalf. We are already asking
21 more from this developer than some extra restaurant
22 customers, the lovely drapes in this room, and a view
23 of the outside of their gatehouse.

24 The planning board could and should demand

25 fewer estate homes and vineyard cottages, which

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2 clutter the viewshed. They should require airtight
3 bonding of the development company. And if not -- if
4 we're not going to get a town sewer out of this, then
5 at least an adequate payment to build affordable
6 housing. The number that was selected by my
7 calculation of number of units can't possibly build
8 affordable housing on the numbers promised.

9 So thank you.

10 MR. FONTAINE: Dafna Mizrani.

11 DAFNA MIZRANI: Hi. Good evening. I'm
12 here to speak in favor of Silo Ridge.

13 As a resident and business owner, it's
14 clear to me that there's a need for change in this
15 community. I believe Silo Ridge could be that
16 positive change that we've all been looking for.

17 Today, there is a lack of incentive in our
18 town. Businesses are failing left and right and
19 giving future generations zero interest in Amenia.

20 One of the main reasons why my partners and
21 I decided to invest in Amenia is its vision -- the
22 vision that Silo Ridge shared with us of how we can
23 make this place much more self-sustained, a place in
24 a strong community that cares about each other, grows

25 together, and will be home to many more future

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2 generations. It is an honor to have such ambitious
3 people working tirelessly to make this town a much
4 better place, to give our residents jobs, provide us
5 with more services, and create a stronger community
6 that today we lack.

7 MR. FONTAINE: Tony Cutoli.

8 TONY CUTOLI: Hi. I'm Tony Cutoli and
9 I'm from Dover, but I speak as a member of the Amenia
10 Fish and Game.

11 As most everybody knows, we've been around
12 here since 1946, '47. When the gravel bank was
13 reclaimed into a golf course, we had to modify some
14 of the things we did there. We did away with the
15 trap and skeet range. Now we are being pressured
16 into making major modifications.

17 One of the big things that we noticed last
18 year was that several of the members, as they were
19 using the handgun range, they noticed there were
20 construction vehicles and utility vehicles driving
21 directly behind the target area 20 feet away.

22 Thankfully, we've got very competent people and no
23 one got hurt. But why would a construction outfit
24 have a construction road going on right behind one of

25 our targets? Don't they care about their own people?

15

2 And then on our own, nobody asked us, just for
3 safety's sake, we shut that range down. We moved it
4 to a different area. Fine.

5 Now, as we start looking, there are 10
6 house sites that are within the 500-foot range that
7 will totally shut us down because you cannot
8 discharge a firearm within 500 feet of a dwelling.
9 Why? Why was that allowed? And for no other reason,
10 even if they do need that 500-foot range, who in
11 their right mind is going to buy a house right next
12 door to a shooting range? If they do, what's going
13 to happen? We are going to end up in court, along
14 with the town.

15 So, I'd ask that something be done to
16 modify what they are doing. We don't want to be bad
17 neighbors. I'm all for this project. I think it
18 will be great, not just for the Amenia, but the
19 entire 22-44 corridor, but we have been here a long
20 time. We're a little club. We don't have the money
21 to fight. We are asking for help from the town to
22 help prevent problems. We want to stay here.

23 We open up our club to Boy Scouts, 4-H,
24 local law enforcement, and many other activities that

25 we don't even charge for. And if we go out, where

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2 are these people going to go?

3 So please, help us do something to make
4 things workable. We are not against the whole
5 project, not in any way, shape or form. We realize
6 things are going to change, but we are willing to
7 change. But what we are seeing will shut us down,
8 and we will be no more. Thank you.

9 MR. FONTAINE: Mark Doyle.

10 MARK DOYLE: Hello. I'm Mark Doyle. I
11 live on South Amenia Road in South Amenia.

12 I have spent a good deal of time on the
13 comprehensive plan the last two years and currently
14 spend a good deal of my time volunteering on two
15 economic development organizations or boards, so I
16 really am about economic development. I really
17 believe in it and have put a lot of energy and effort
18 into it.

19 But one thing I really stand for is the
20 numbers and the accountability that is required by
21 the taxpayers, by our state government, by our
22 comptroller and so on to get the numbers right. If
23 you make promises as, you know, as an IDA or as an
24 economic development organization, then at some point

25 there has to be some reality to those numbers.

17

2 Now, I'm talking about the promises in
3 regard to tax surpluses. We have all received
4 postcards in the mail speaking of really big numbers
5 of surpluses in the taxes. So how can that be? How
6 can a town actually end up with more money than it
7 ever asked for? Where does it go? It's impossible.

8 So inherently, we all know that, and
9 certainly people on the town boards, particularly
10 those that are involved with forming the town budget,
11 know that you cannot receive more money than you ask
12 for. That is what a levy is for, and the levy is
13 based on the total town taxable value, and how
14 much -- no, sorry. The mill rate, the amount that is
15 taxed, is based on comparing the total town taxable
16 value to the amount that needs to be raised.

17 The mistake that has been made here is that
18 the fiscal impact statement has taken the old mill
19 rate, the old tax rates, that is used the old town
20 tax base, which is just over half a billion dollars,
21 and applied that to Silo Ridge's new, more or less,
22 half a billion dollar increase. So clearly the
23 mistake is that the increased tax base from Silo
24 Ridge should've been added to the town tax base to

25 create a hole, at which point the levy would have

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2 been a far smaller percentage of the entire total.

3 This would make sense.

4 There's another part to it. There's an
5 assumption. There's an assumption that costs would
6 only go up 15 percent per year, and that is a basis
7 of understanding on this. So when you combine a
8 doubling of the tax base, or a little more than that,
9 and only an increase of 15 percent, purely you're
10 going to get a surplus.

11 What my point is, is that the millions of
12 dollars that you see are not going to occur, and it
13 is incumbent on somebody to tell the public what in
14 fact it will be. There will be savings. There's no
15 doubt about that, but let's not get carried away.

16 The other thing I have always stood out
17 there and said, made comments on the environmental
18 issues, I'm very anxious that you follow very closely
19 what the Dutchess Land Conservancy has to offer and
20 go with their recommendations in regard to the
21 conservation. Thank you.

22 MR. FONTAINE: Paul Bertando? Paul, or
23 maybe Bretando. That can happen.

24 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I'm sorry. I

25 apologize. I didn't know I was --

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2 COURT REPORTER: Can you speak into the
3 mic? Sir, can you more speak into the mic?

4 TONI ALEXANDER: Hi. I'm
5 Toni Alexander. I'm actually here today on behalf of
6 Elaine LeBella, who couldn't be here. She is with
7 the Housatonic Valley Association, so I will be
8 reading her comments. She has three.

9 The Housatonic -- Dear, Chairman Fontaine
10 and the planning board members. The Housatonic
11 Valley Association reviewed the application and has
12 several overall concerns.

13 First, the applicant must be required to
14 comply with town code and redesign the project,
15 rather than request waivers from local and state
16 regulations. The Town of Amenia has enacted common
17 sense road and building ordinances that protect
18 property owners, follow the town's comprehensive
19 plan, and provide an approval process that is
20 predictable, fair and efficient.

21 The applicant is seeking multiple waivers
22 to exempt the project from many ordinances, including
23 the minimum required buildable area, the maximum
24 slope of buildable area, construction of roads and

25 treatment of buffer zones and code design. In

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2 particular, the planning board must require the
3 applicant to move the estate houses and the linear
4 cottages that would be sided on slopes greater than
5 what is permitted under the town code section
6 105-21A.

7 Two; the planning board should require the
8 applicant to hire an independent post-construction
9 inspector to ensure that buffers are respected,
10 stormwater management functions properly, and other
11 environmental requirements in the zoning are
12 enforced.

13 Three; we expect the planning board and the
14 applicant to follow the Dutchess Land Conservancy's
15 recommendation to protect 80 percent of the property
16 by a conservation easement. We recommend the town
17 and the applicant for -- excuse me. We commend the
18 town and the applicant for their shared commitment to
19 conserving a significant portion of the property in
20 its natural state. In order to ensure that the
21 protections remain in place in perpetuity, granting a
22 conservation easement to the local accredited land
23 trust is of paramount importance.

24 The Dutchess Land Conservancy, accredited

2 Land Trust Alliance, has the capacity and the local
3 presence needed to observe and monitor the property
4 and can respond quickly to any situation that might
5 degrade the conservation values of the property.

6 In conclusion, we ask the planning board to
7 carefully consider all relevant facts and evidence in
8 making its decision on this application and minimize
9 the environmental impact of the proposed project,
10 including the effects on the wetlands and the water
11 capacities, to facilitate drainage, prevent flooding,
12 supply, and protect surface and groundwaters and
13 support fish and wildlife.

14 Thank you for this opportunity to provide
15 our comments. Thank you.

16 MR. FONTAINE: Vincent Biase.

17 VINCENT BIASE: Mr. Chairman, my
18 comments are directed toward the extensive request
19 for waivers and variances.

20 This Silo Ridge project and its endorsement
21 is not to be based on a popularity project. The
22 Standard State Zoning Enabling Act allows special use
23 permits and variances only when on a finding that is
24 compatible with surrounding area and developments

25 which are already permitted under the general

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2 provision of the Amenia comprehensive plan.

3 Thus, allowing that the special use permits
4 and variances requested in the plan and by the
5 planning board, it is upending and disregarding the
6 town's master plan and setting a precedent that any
7 future development can expect their variances and
8 special use to be easily granted. So you are setting
9 a new norm for Amenia.

10 Granting of special use permits and
11 variances is equivalent to spot zoning. Such
12 requests are to be granted in case of hardships. Are
13 the requests by Silo Ridge Ventures truly hardships
14 or a matter of imposing their will on the established
15 zoning codes?

16 Yes. They have reviewed their project
17 several times and revised them, but these revision
18 plans still do not assure compliance. You are known
19 by your deeds. Does it mean and does it seem
20 compatible with Amenia's plan to have the building of
21 berms and the installation of trees on Route 44? Is
22 this the first of their making a closed community?

23 Remember, I will quote from your executive
24 summary. The exact order and time frame for each

25 component of the project will depend on the market,

23

2 the real estate market. Does the tax revenue and
3 projected economic activities expect to be reliant on
4 the market conditions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 MR. FONTAINE: Brad Mitchell.

6 BRAD MITCHELL: Hi. My name is Brad
7 Mitchell. I live in Red Hook and I'm a small
8 business owner in Pine Plains. It's been tough the
9 last five to ten years owning a small business, and I
10 would reiterate many of the comments have already
11 been made about the need for change in the business
12 climate in this area.

13 I think this project, from what I've seen,
14 is well thought out, well planned, materials are
15 topnotch, and they're looking to make the buildings,
16 the homes, look beautiful. I think it would be a
17 shame if this was not to go forward, and I just
18 wanted to lend my strong support. Thank you very
19 much.

20 MR. FONTAINE: Don Cummings.

21 DON CUMMINGS: Good evening. Don
22 Cummings, Wassaic. Thank you for the opportunity to
23 speak.

24 You know, here we are again. Six, eight

25 months we had a meeting prior to this. It's like put

24

2 another quarter in the jukebox. Come on, it's the
3 same stuff again.

4 After the last meeting, Silo Ridge met with
5 the planning board members, they downsized again and
6 here we are again. The same people are still
7 complaining about this and that. My thing is, give
8 it a chance. Pass this thing, move it to the next
9 step, and work together.

10 One other thing -- sorry. I would like to
11 see the planning board end this meeting tonight.
12 This is the last public hearing. Make this happen.
13 Let's get it rolling.

14 MR. FONTAINE: Ralph Samuel, I think it
15 is?

16 RALPH SAVOY: Ralph Savoy, S-A-V-O-Y?

17 MR. FONTAINE: That could be. Sorry
18 about that. I didn't see you back there. Otherwise,
19 I would have known it's Savoy.

20 RALPH SAVOY: I'm Ralph Savoy. I'm
21 also from Community Fish and Game and we've been
22 dealing with Pedro for a couple of years now. I
23 think he's an honest guy. I mean, we have been
24 talking back and forth.

25 But one of the only things I did notice is

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2 because we do let the 4-H use our range for their use
3 to hunt -- for their targets. And with the 50-yard
4 range, where it's at, where we're going to let them
5 shoot a couple nights a week, I think it is, I just
6 noticed two of the houses, I think it's LL10 and LL9,
7 that might be in the overfly range or might be a
8 little too close for us to be able to shoot. It will
9 probably make us non-conforming. I don't know how
10 that works. But other than that, I think they should
11 go for it.

12 MR. FONTAINE: Sharon Kroeger.

13 SHARON KROEGER: My name is
14 Sharon Kroeger. I have a small business in Wassaic
15 hamlet and am the former chair of the Ten Mile River
16 Watershed Commission.

17 First I want to place in the record the
18 May 2nd planning editorial from the Millbrook
19 Independent. This editorial makes the point that it
20 is essential for planning boards to address the
21 regional context, as well as the local concerns,
22 especially where a watershed, such as Amenia's, has
23 been highlighted within the county-wide comprehensive
24 plan. It seems that counsel to the planning board

25 has been giving contrary advice.

26

2 Second, I want to return to the point I
3 made at the earlier hearing requesting that the
4 planning board, those of you look into the scope of
5 chemicals that will be authorized on the golf course.
6 Thus far, the public is unaware of such discussion by
7 this board.

8 The concern is that deadly chemicals, such
9 as glyphosate, which was used in Monsanto's agent
10 orange, not be authorized for the steep slopes of
11 DeLaVergne Hill.

12 Less than half a mile down the watershed
13 you have many homes with drinking water wells in the
14 historic hamlet of Wassaic. That drinking water is
15 pristine, and part of this planning board's
16 responsibility is to keep it that way.

17 Studies of glyphosate in groundwater should
18 be part of this review of this issue, and I shall
19 attach a summary of one of these where groundwater
20 became contaminated so you all have it. Thank you.

21 MR. FONTAINE: Is there anybody that
22 arrived after the start of the public hearing that
23 will like to speak?

24 Brad, please come up and state your name

25 for the reporter.

27

2 BRAD REBILLARD: Brad Rebillard, 464
3 Old Route 22, Amenia, New York. I have spoken
4 before. I would like to place on the record Happy
5 Cinco de Mayo. Independence, that's my thing.

6 Number one; thank you for all the new
7 comments. I think we have heard a lot of comments
8 over and over and over again. Ten years, is that
9 right, about right? Okay.

10 I think time has changed. I have children,
11 I think they deserve a chance in this town as I did,
12 so let me go on to point two. I don't want to
13 elaborate.

14 Fiduciary duty, this town board has the
15 fiduciary duty to the Town of Amenia and its
16 constituents. If this town cannot run, if the tax
17 base shuts down, we cannot fund projects for those
18 who are in need. If this town allows too many
19 agricultural assessments, forestry, reduction in
20 taxes, how can we pay for the things that this town
21 needs? I will move on to point three, the tax base.

22 This town cannot set a precedent in this
23 meeting, and if they turn down the prospect of
24 perpetuating a positive tax base, they will shut down

25 this town. That's math. It has nothing to do with

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2 opinion. Funding projects, tax exemptions, keeping
3 the town afloat -- as I mentioned, keeping the town
4 open, as I mentioned, having the funding for the
5 projects for those in need, as I mentioned, the
6 stabilization of costs for our community.

7 And this whole concept of a closed
8 community, what is the first thing that a buyer of a
9 large property in our community does? They put up
10 "No Trespassing" signs. What's this closed community
11 thing all about? What's the difference? I don't
12 understand the concept. I'll move on, and hopefully
13 I'm not going over my time. Tell me.

14 MR. FONTAINE: You have 15 seconds.

15 BRAD REBILLARD: Fifteen seconds. It's
16 not about me. It's about my children. I've had my
17 time. I'm 55 years old. I have lived in this town
18 my whole life. My mother lived in this town. Let's
19 give them a chance. Why are we going to stick to
20 staunch -- I don't want to go there. We have had 10
21 years of paid consultants at a high rate and they've
22 done a fantastic job. Let's end this meeting
23 tonight. Thank you.

24 MR. FONTAINE: Next speaker.

2 Chris St. Ong. I have a small business in Dover
3 Plains.

4 I had the privilege of working with Silo
5 Ridge last year. They seem like a really nice
6 company. They treated me well. They gave me plenty
7 of work last year. They seem to keep a lot of local
8 businesses going.

9 I think if you don't approve this project,
10 what you're going to end up having is what you have
11 in Wingdale, a dead horse; what you have in Dover,
12 another dead horse. There's no grocery store.
13 There's nothing.

14 You're turning down a company that's
15 willing to invest in another dead town. I mean it.
16 There's nothing really here. Give them a chance to
17 get something going and help the community. I think
18 it's a fair reason to give them a chance. I really
19 do.

20 You look at Wingdale, it's done. There's
21 nothing there. The only town that's even close to
22 having something is Pawling. Pine Plains, I worked
23 there every day for four and a half years. It's a
24 dying town, too. They are trying to invest in your

25 town. You should be honored, you should give them

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2 the permits for whatever it takes to get them going.

3 The little problems that you have with the
4 gun clubs and the variances and whatever they need,
5 you should work out with them, of course trying to
6 help the community in the right way, but try to work
7 it out. They have the need and you have the need.

8 That's how it works.

9 Otherwise, you're just going to have
10 another dead town in New York. That's what's
11 happening all over. If you don't approve it, you
12 will just be like the other towns, and even worse
13 because you shot them down, and that's all I have to
14 say. Thank you very much.

15 MR. FONTAINE: Is there anybody else
16 that will like to speak at this point? Okay.

17 REUBEN FORD: My name is Reuben Ford.
18 I'd like to thank you guys for giving me this
19 opportunity to speak on behalf of Silo Ridge.

20 As a young guy coming to this town, I'm not
21 originally from this area, I have learned a lot
22 coming here, and honestly, in my opinion, I think
23 this town really needs this growth.

24 I come from a small town in New Jersey

25 that's very similar to this one. And I've noticed

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2 that in that town they always shoot down good
3 projects, things that will stimulate the economy,
4 give back to the people.

5 I know myself, personally, I go to
6 Ritchie's Deli every day. Imagine if we have 100
7 people, if not more, working there. That's just that
8 much more money going back into the community.

9 And something else I have noticed too, my
10 town, where I'm from, they always shoot down projects
11 like this and that gives the kids nothing to do
12 during the summer. I'm not saying it's only a summer
13 thing, but this course is not just offering jobs;
14 it's offering careers.

15 People come here, they want to settle down,
16 real estate market goes up. It's just a domino
17 effect all in good hope.

18 That was my biggest point I wanted to make.
19 Hopefully you guys understand. Thank you.

20 AMANDA LOGAN: Hi.

21 MR. FONTAINE: Your name, please.

22 AMANDA LOGAN: Hi. Amanda Logan. I
23 work with high school students every day. This is
24 like, woah.

25 So I moved here in September. I originally

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2 am from Highland. My husband is from Rockland. We
3 moved to Connecticut. I currently work in Hartford
4 and I drive an hour and a half to work every single
5 day. I chose to do that because I fell in love with
6 Amenia.

7 I grew up coming out here to visit my
8 family. My grandmother lives out here, all my
9 cousins, all my aunts, all my uncles. I love it out
10 here. I thought it would be hard to move out here
11 because it is a smaller town. I'm not used to that.

12 Since I've been here, I've absolutely loved
13 it. I'm planning to set up a family here. I have no
14 children right now, but I'm planning it. I'm
15 planning to live here for the next 30 to 40 years,
16 raise my kids here, send them to Webutuck Central
17 School District, have them live here, work here as
18 teenagers, and I'm planning this. I think Silo Ridge
19 would allow this to happen.

20 If this doesn't happen, I'm scared that my
21 dream of living out here will be over because there
22 is no financial incentive for me to stay or to even
23 survive out here.

24 I bought a house. My husband and I waited

25 a very long time to make the decision. We fell in

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2 love with Amenia, and I'm just expressing to you the
3 need that this project will solidify my future here.
4 I'm scared if this does not happen, the younger
5 generation will leave this area.

6 The younger generation will not want to --
7 I'm 27. I bought a house. I volunteered to buy a
8 house here. I could have gone to other areas. I
9 loved Amenia, and I don't want other people to be
10 driven out and not want to come simply because there
11 is no financial incentive, and they do look at it as
12 a dying town. I don't see it as a dying town, unless
13 this does not go through. If this goes through, I
14 really think it's smart for Amenia.

15 We have -- my family has a 127-year-old
16 business over in Poughkeepsie. It's going to help
17 that company as well. It's hard right now. It's
18 very, very difficult to live in the Hudson Valley
19 during this time because of finances. People are
20 leaving. New York is hard to live in. However, if
21 companies like this maintain, it will help this town
22 survive itself.

23 I just wanted to express my support for
24 this.

2 MICHAEL DeLANGO: Michael DeLango, 24
3 Yellow City Road, Amenia, New York.

4 Most of you know I've been a business owner
5 in this town for 22 years now. All of you pretty
6 much know where I stand on this project. I think
7 it's a good project. I think it will be good for the
8 town.

9 But my point I want to make tonight is for
10 the project, against the project. It's a process
11 that has been gone through. The process has to move
12 forward. There has to be a decision made on this
13 project, and that's what I'm here to say tonight.

14 So if you're for the project, against the
15 project, the decision has to be made and I would try
16 to get the board to make a decision as soon as
17 possible because there's a lot of people in Amenia
18 relying on this. Thank you.

19 MR. FONTAINE: Miss?

20 TONIA SHOUMATOFF: Hi. I'm
21 Tonia Shoumatoff and I'm speaking as a citizen of
22 Wassaic. So I'm talking off my hat for the Millbrook
23 Independent and I'm taking my hat off for the HVA.

24 I just want to say that I would be a lot

25 more excited about this project if it showed some

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2 semblance of being energy efficient and having -- in
3 a period when it's kind of passé to have McMansions
4 that use a huge amount of oil and energy and have a
5 huge carbon footprint, I think -- and when we have
6 Alan Schofield, who built a completely carbon-neutral
7 house, that was -- it cost \$1.3 million to build. I
8 don't understand why these very wealthy people can't
9 have houses that are more energy efficient, and I
10 just want to put that out. I think it's very
11 important in this day and age, especially since a lot
12 of people are not going to be living there full time.

13 So I would be happier if I heard that
14 people were more caring for the energy aspect of the
15 environment.

16 The other thing is I feel that you guys
17 have been way too lenient with this applicant
18 regarding the sewer. You could have easily asked for
19 the \$1.3 million that we need by August to get sewer
20 for Amenia. That is not a whole lot of money for
21 this developer to contribute, and they would do it if
22 you insisted on it.

23 I also think you should be very strict
24 about the bonding. We've heard from the Dutchess

2 responsible to dismantle the entire waste water if
3 the infrastructure is built and they don't sell
4 enough houses.

5 Guess what, this is big gamble, this
6 development. We don't know that people are going to
7 spend \$10 million on these houses, 1.5 to 10 million.
8 If they don't, the town is responsible, our taxpayer
9 money, to dismantle it. So you better ask enough
10 money for bonding or else we're going to be in
11 trouble, and that is a serious possibility. There
12 are many very wealthy gated communities that have
13 gone belly-up.

14 I think you have to be a little stricter, a
15 little less wet behind the ears when you ask for the
16 dollars and cents to cover us as taxpayers and I'm a
17 taxpayer. Thank you.

18 MR. FONTAINE: Anybody else? Is it
19 just me at this point?

20 HENRY COMPREGO: Hello. My name is
21 Harry Comprego.

22 I have been looking at some properties here
23 in town, and some of the things that concern me were
24 the Silo Ridge project. And I think if it goes

25 through, it's going to help with taxes and the

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2 property value after the purchase. I think just
3 looking at the thought that went into it I think it
4 will bring value and some needed jobs. So I'd like
5 to see the project go through and I hope it comes to
6 pass. I'd like to spend more time and purchase some
7 property here. Thanks.

8 MR. FONTAINE: Anybody else would like
9 to speak? No?

10 At this point, I will like to ask the board
11 if there's any discussion from the board. I'd like
12 to make a determination.

13 MR. ROBUSTELLI: I'd like to make a
14 motion.

15 MR. FONTAINE: Motion to close the
16 public hearing.

17 MR. CLAIR: I'll second.

18 MR. FONTAINE: We have a motion to
19 close the public hearing. All in favor?

20 MR. CLAIR: Aye.

21 MR. ROBUSTELLI: Aye.

22 MR. McENROE: Aye.

23 MR. FONTAINE: Aye.

24 MR. McENROE: Aye.

25 MR. FONTAINE: Any opposed?

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2 MR. ROY: I'd like to see just a little
3 bit more time, to allow Silo a little bit more time
4 to respond to the public comments, to work through a
5 lot of the comments from their consultants. I think
6 it's really important, as people have said before, to
7 get this right, and just a little bit more time. It
8 can't hurt. You know, everything is going quite
9 well. But we just have to make sure that the T's are
10 crossed and our I's are dotted, and I think we could
11 use a little bit more time.

12 MR. FONTAINE: We had a motion made and
13 the motion was passed.

14 MR. KROEGER: I want to abstain.

15 MR. FONTAINE: You're going to abstain?

16 MR. KROEGER: Yes.

17 MS. DeLANGO: Would you like me to do
18 roll call?

19 MR. FONTAINE: Yes. You can do a roll
20 call, please.

21 MS. DeLANGO: Erich McEnroe?

22 MR. McENROE: Yes.

23 MS. DeLANGO: Nate Roy?

24 MR. ROY: No.

25 MS. DeLANGO: John Stefanopoulos?

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2 MR. STEFANOPOULOS: Yes.

3 MS. DeLANGO: Bill Kroeger?

4 MR. KROEGER: Abstain.

5 MS. DeLANGO: Joseph Fontaine?

6 MR. FONTAINE: Yes.

7 MS. DeLANGO: Peter Clair?

8 MR. CLAIR: Yes.

9 MS. DeLANGO: Tony Robustelli?

10 MR. ROBUSTELLI: Yes.

11 MS. DeLANGO: Motion passed.

12 MR. FONTAINE: At this point, we are
13 all set. Thank you for the matter, Dave. Thank you,
14 folks. That's it.

15 (Time noted: 8:04 p.m.)

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2 CERTIFICATE

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4 STATE OF NEW YORK)
: SS.:
5 COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER)

6

7 I, RICHARD HERRERIA, a Notary Public for
8 and within the State of New York, do hereby
9 certify:

10 That I reported the proceeding in the
11 within-entitled matter and that the within
12 transcript is a true and accurate record to the
13 best of my knowledge and ability.

14 I further certify that I am not related to
15 any of the parties to this action by blood or by
16 marriage and that I am in no way interested in the
17 outcome of this matter.

18 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
19 hand this 5th day of May, 2015.

20

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RICHARD HERRERIA

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