

36 Leedsville Road
Amenia, NY 12501
17 September 2014

To: Town of Amenia Planning Board
From: Laurie Nussdorfer
Re: Silo Ridge Public Hearing

I have been unable to attend the public hearings on the Silo Ridge development currently underway on Delavergne Hill and am writing to express my concerns about the environmental and visual impact of the project and the oversight process.

Delavergne Hill is the most significant identifying physical feature of the town of Amenia. The Planning Board needs to defend the town's most iconic landscape more vigorously and scrutinize the applicant's requests for exemptions or mitigations to existing town, state, and federal laws more carefully. This hillside is what gave Amenia its name, "beautiful place," and it is our most important community symbol. Each "slight" modification to the laws governing construction on steep slopes or storm water runoff undermines the protections to the environment and scenery that we citizens have put in place. At a minimum the Planning Board should require that the applicant be responsible for compliance to existing laws and not leave it up to individual homeowners.

Thus far the approval process for the Silo Ridge development suggests cursory review by the Planning Board. The absence of detailed records of meetings with the applicant, the reliance on the applicant's own representations for public information, the lack of clarity about the plans, and the lack of transparency in the process are sources of concern. If the Planning Board has not met, or is not meeting, legal requirements for public oversight, the citizens are not served and the town is vulnerable to bad decisions and potential litigation.

In closing, I leave the Planning Board with a broader question: What public benefit did you see in the sacrifice of this beautiful and meaningful landscape to an economically risky venture exclusively intended for residents of a gated community?