

Neil:

I appreciate your prompt response and I have to say, it's really been a pleasure talking with you and others in the Town and the County about this project and the potential problems I foresee as a result of the Board's decision to go forward on it. As I've said in the past, I am very sad to lose the farm and existing open space, but I know the Board is not interested in sentimentalities; they want comments specifically addressed to the DEIS.

My two largest objections have to do with traffic and the means in which the developer plans to dispose of septic waste.

I don't see how the Town can realistically imagine being able to deal with the increased flow of traffic without widening Route 44. The following is a policy recommendation from the Town of Poughkeepsie Master Plan under Section 6.10: Transportation...

"The Town should prevent the further commercialization of Routes 44 and 55, Salt Point Turnpike, Van Wagner Road, Vassar Road, Spackenkill Road and other primarily residential roadways outside of designated centers to maintain efficient traffic flow. "

Plain and simple, if you put this project on both sides of Route 44, you can't avoid slowing down the flow of traffic toward Adams, down Brickyard Hill, and into the center of town. The intersection at Adams already backs up pretty badly coming both ways, especially starting around 3:30 in the afternoon. You could easily have a backup beyond this intersection down Brickyard Hill thanks to the light and intersection at DeGarmo Road. Secondly, if commuters find that Route 44 can't get them into Poughkeepsie, they will bypass it and use shortcut roads like VanWagner, Hornbeck Road, West Road, and Salt Point Turnpike. VanWagner is already a very dangerous road, full of blind corners, intersections and tailgating drivers, and Hornbeck Road runs through a heavily settled residential area with many blind driveways and drivers consistently ignoring the inherent dangers of those hazards.

Regarding establishing a wastewater treatment plant to handle the volume of waste from this project, on principle alone, I object to any idea of using the Wappingers Creek as the metaphorical toilet for this waste, treated or otherwise. Use the existing pumping station on the other side of the hill for goodness sake, and protect the Creek as a valued resource in this important watershed. Don't you find it ironic that the DEC, the agency that will oversee and check the levels of waste dumped into the Creek only once per year, is the same agency that stocks it with Brown and Rainbow Trout throughout the County? The following is a policy recommendation from the Town of Poughkeepsie Master Plan under Section 2.10: Natural Environment and Greenspace...

"The quality of the Wappinger Creek and underlying aquifer must be protected. In order to provide adequate protection, however, an inventory of surface waters and ground waters must be created. The Town has signed the Intermunicipal Agreement for the Wappinger Creek Watershed, and the goals outlined within that agreement should be actively pursued. These goals include mapping stormwater discharge points, protecting and restoring forest buffers, identifying sprawl-inducing code regulations, and minimizing the creation of impervious surfaces."

Under Section 2.14:

“The Town should consider designating additional Critical Environmental Areas (CEA’s). There are currently five CEA’s within the Town: Schatz Federal Bearing, Page Industrial Park, Dutchess Sanitation (FICA), Wappinger Creek and Wappinger Lake. The CEA designation, authorized under SEQR, provides that greater scrutiny be given to all proposed actions subject to environmental review. It is meant to raise awareness of those natural and cultural resources that are most important to the Town due to their benefits or threats. Some examples include public water supplies, aquifers, flood hazard areas, hazardous waste sites, significant plant or animal habitats, unique or exemplary geological formations, scenic areas, landmarks and historic districts, and research areas. The mapped greenspace areas should be considered for additional analysis to determine whether they meet CEA designation criteria.”

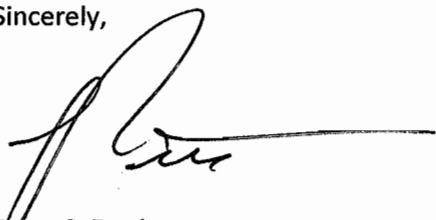
In light of the above, I ask you...are you really that willing to sign off on dumping 30 million gallons of effluent each year into the Wappingers Creek? Using the Creek is one (expedient) answer, but it’s not the correct answer to this problem.

If I still lived across from the Frank Brothers farm, I would understandably not be a happy camper right now. Nevertheless, I won't be immune from its impact since I only moved around the corner to Hornbeck Hill. This will transform a quiet, historic farm and greenspace to a high density living area in a novel, somewhat "self-contained", town center experiment. I say "experiment" because it places it on two sides of one of the busiest State roads in Dutchess County. The hypothetical benefits? Higher density means less urban sprawl. Higher quality rentals in an area that needs them. The "town center" encourages residents in that immediate area to get what they need without getting in a car. Dramatically more tax revenue for the town from the same piece of property. More people means more money to local businesses. The downside? Much more noise during and after a construction build out over five years. Much more traffic to deal with unless commuters reroute their trips (which they'll be forced to do over Hornbeck Road, Van Wagner, West Road, and Salt Point Turnpike). Potentially more crime in the area because of the density. Thirty million gallons of treated sewage effluent dumped into the Wappingers Creek. Potentially more empty retail space thanks to the "Amazon effect".

Will the Town of Poughkeepsie Planning Board and the developer actually take the local residents' concerns into consideration before this project is put on the fast track, or will the public hearings just be an exercise in futility? I have every confidence that our concerns won't be made in vain and that the Board will do the right thing for the local residents and the community at large.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter S. Denison', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter S. Denison  
Ward 3