

Dear Frank,

I would like to thank you, the Town Board, and Delaware Engineering for your hard work on behalf of the Town. When I moved to Sullivan County last Spring, I immediately fell in love with the area, the people, and the potential of the Town and Village of Liberty. After moving 10 times over the last 20 years to fulfill my military duties, I had hoped to find a small town in the mountains similar to where I had grown up where I could put down roots, build my community, and raise my family. The town where I grew up in PA is struggling with a persistent inability to shed its Industrial Age past and embrace new opportunities. For all of the challenges we face in Liberty, one of the reasons I fell in love with this place is the energy and the commitment to rebirth and renewal that so many folks have around here that is missing from so many places in America.

With that in mind, I would like to voice my personal support for the Swan Lake wastewater project. Because the existing plant is at the end of its service life, it will cost at least \$10m to provide a system that will deliver the same capacity for another 35 years. The State is offering 0% financing on the project if the town starts now with the potential for a \$5m grant, which will help reduce the financial impact on existing residents. The expanded capacity will allow for single-family residential development along Route 55 and revitalized commercial development along Stanton Corner Rd. If the town sees even two-thirds of known projects in this area move forward, we will see a REDUCTION in sewer bills as people make use of residential lots that could not be supported with sewer access prior to the project.

It will also attract more investment in both the Town and Village – investors, entrepreneurs, and home buyers all want to see that the communities they look to join are willing to invest in themselves. Moving forward with this project will provide clear evidence that Liberty is engaged in its own revitalization. It will also, for the same reasons, get tax dollars we all send to Albany to be reinvested by the State back into our community.

Some of the people that have voiced opposition to expansion don't want to take any action that has a possibility of increasing taxes. I can understand why there would be some skepticism since we're already so heavily taxed, but taking calculated risks is a hallmark of successful business ventures. Because this project has strong potential to spur follow-on growth AND reduce consumer costs in the long run by simply enabling construction projects already being planned, that is a risk well worth taking.

There are other people that are worried about losing the rural character of Swan Lake and that there will be an adverse impact on the area due to traffic, etc. if large housing projects are allowed to come into Swan Lake-Briscoe. However, this argument asks the Town Board to, as the old saying goes, "cut off our nose to spite our face" by giving up on much needed revitalization and development just for the sake of keeping large residential developments out. If the residents of Swan Lake and the Town in general don't want to see high density residential along our rural roads, there is a separate and worthwhile debate to be held in future zoning and planning board meetings to ensure new development does not ruin Swan Lake's rural character. The terms that make this project a risk worth taking will not exist for much longer. They need to be taken advantage of now.

best wishes,

John Liddle

DISCLAIMER – The above letter provides my personal opinions as a Town and Village resident. Sullivan County Government does not have a position on this project and I do not speak for the County on this issue.