

THE EDELSTEINS FAEGENBURG + BROWN

September 3, 2020

Frank DeMayo Town Supervisor
Brian McPhillips
Vincent McPhillips
Dean Farrand
120 North Main Street
Liberty New York 12754

Re: Swan Lake Sewer Proposal

Dear Sirs;

I am an owner and seasonal resident of Swan Lake. My parents actually met more than 50 years ago at the Presidential Estates hotel. Approximately 13 years ago my family built a new home on the lake. For the past ten years, I have been the President of the Catskill Clean Water Fund, a charity dedicated to combatting an invasive water chestnut plant in the lake and preserving its beauty. We have been granted wide latitude from the lake owner to assist in managing the lake which we have done through the generous dedication of Swan Lake residents. Over the last ten years we have raised in excess of \$100,000 from local residents, all of which has been used to preserve the lake.

As such, I think I am uniquely qualified to comment on the sewer proposal and its potential impact on the area. It is quite evident to me, having had a residence in the area for more than 20 years, having an extensive family history at the lake, and now having spearheaded a unified grassroots effort among residents who have donated their time or money towards preserving it, that approval of this proposal will result in the destruction of the character of the area and precipitate its complete demise. While I understand the sewer system needs to be upgraded, it is apparent that the enhanced proposal which requires increasing residential development, enabling developers to add hundreds of new dwellings, will be catastrophic to the rural character of the area. On the other hand, the lower level proposal would not have the same effect and is imminently obtainable. The same grant and zero interest loan is available.

It is in fact, the natural beauty of the area, the low density (particularly now in the current climate) and of course the lake, which makes the area an attraction at all. Over the many years, the Town, despite numerous requests from my charity, has contributed zero dollars towards the maintenance of the lake. Moreover, our tax rate appears to be amongst the highest per acre in the entire state. This proposal will raise that basis while not providing additional services, and most likely creating a drain on the already limited services that are provided in the form of additional

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service costs. I share the extreme concern of some of my longtime neighbors that this proposal will remove the last remaining value of the area (its relative quiet and beauty) while raising the tax rate and simultaneously reducing already deflated property values. In fact, I have not found one resident who is aware of the proposal who is in favor of it.

As an attorney, I have over the years, contemplated legal action regarding what to me, appears to be an inappropriate tax assessment on my property. This recent proposal, if approved, would clearly warrant closer inspection in terms of the proposed impact it would have on the community and the potential tax increases and reduction in property values. It seems to me that after so many years of giving to this community, I would then be faced with two choices thereafter, leave or litigate.

Please be guided accordingly.

Very truly yours,



Paul J. Edelstein