

The Lake Communities Alliance



P.O. Box 881 - Rock Hill NY 12775



October 22, 2023

LCA COMMUNITY UPDATE

The latest information we have received from our county legislature is that the IDA has a new requirement in effect. If you have a project that will have 25 or more employees, housing to accommodate those employees must be provided. I learned this from watching the Doherty – McPhilips debate.

The Avon project has an application in front of the IDA since 2021. They must now provide housing for projected employees. I have yet to learn the details of the requirement. Such as how much housing, what type of housing and other concerns

Due to the actions of our LCA we have stalled the project, now the Avon Park Warehouse/Distribution Project must conform to this requirement.

The timeline in this process started with our article 78, which was signed by members of the Business Community and Residential area surrounding the proposed project. Although the judge did not rule in our favor. We continued to find other avenues to make sure that we are not inundated with Truck traffic and disruption to our environment by overdevelopment.

In the meantime, the request for an extension to the Emerald Green Rock Hill sewer district was proposed. In order for the project to come to fruition they need access to sewer, or they need to provide their own Wastewater treatment plant. The SEQRA process negative declaration was contingent on town sewer. A wastewater treatment plant would require DEC approvals among other things. An engineer advised us to pursue the right to a public referendum to allow the community to vote on this project's access to our Sewer district which was not set up for large commercial wastewater.

The Town of Thompson Board passed a resolution that the Emerald Green Rock Hill Sewer district would extend the sewer district to include Avon Warehouse/Distribution Center subject to permissive referendum. This occurred at a ToT Board meeting that was attended by me, Len Bernardo and several other LCA members.

It was at this time that we found out that we would not receive any help from our elected officials in how to go about requesting a public referendum.

During the cold, nasty weather that Sullivan County often has in its Winter months, several members and volunteers of the LCA went door to door requesting signatures. The lead couple was Terry and Len Bernardo. The petitions were turned into the ToT Clerk by the appropriate time. We knew we were up against a fight but not sure of how much. Well..... The developer challenged the petitions and process in court. Specifically challenging signature validity. We had our day in court represented by our attorney Steve Mogel. Honorable Judge Shick ruled in our favor and said let the property owners vote. Of course, there is more to the story, but this is the Reader's Digest version.

It is at this point it gets a little confusing. The Developer appealed the Judge's decision, and the ToT appealed it also, which sent it to a higher court which is back logged with cases. This may not be heard for about a year.

So, the reason I am relaying this timeline is because now the IDA has different requirements than it did when the Avon project was first started. Because of the actions of the LCA and its volunteers we are making our voices heard. And maybe, just maybe, we may be successful. But we need to make sure that our county leaders are supporters of the LCA, especially in this current election. We know that Terry Bernardo lives in Rock Hill and is an LCA supporter.

We know that Doherty is a businessman who is sometimes a bit rough but is fighting to keep our taxes down and offer our kids alternative education in trades which is very much needed in our communities. And having IDA applicants provide housing for their large projects. His opponent is a politician in training who wants us to provide affordable housing for everyone. So that college kids can return to our County and be able to afford housing. Where will they work? In a warehouse?

We know that Scott Mace lives in Rock Hill, and he voted against the extension even though it passed. Although it is rumored the ToT Board sees us as a bunch of old people, who do not want change, they are wrong! We (LCA) want change! The LCA and its supporters include a broad and diverse cross-section of the Rock Hill community that want change! We want responsible development, not overdevelopment. We want the town leaders to follow the town zoning laws. If we do not start paying attention to who is responsible for the decisions in our communities, we are going to lose what we treasure most about our communities. And these natural resources do not have a dollar figure and cannot be replaced. I know we need to vote for Terry Bernardo as our next County Legislator People before Politics.

Thank you for your support as always.

THE LCA

<https://rhlca.org>