

## Greenburgh Town Board is delaying development plan

To the Editor,

In The Inquirer Aug. 31, Dorrine Livson wrote about the Ridgewood Realty proposal to develop the location of the former Elmwood Country Club.

I stand in full support with her when she states, "Our community strongly believes that a full comprehensive SEQRA review of the project should be conducted by an outside, independent consulting firm to study all the issues concerning this development."

This would be one of the largest new developments in recent history in Greenburgh, and it is imperative that the appropriate review occur.

This is especially true because of the precedent that will be set for similar proposals in the area; already Metropolis Country Club is in talks to potentially develop part of its property.

Where I disagree with Ms. Livson is regarding who is responsible for the delay in action. The delay is because of the Greenburgh Town Board, not Ridgewood.

The town board is insisting on seeing detailed proposals for the as of right 119 Single Family Homes Development before doing the SEQR review or referring the proposal to the planning board. From meeting with the developer and watching work sessions with the town, it is clear Ridgewood has no intention whatsoever of building single family homes on the site.

Why is the town board insisting on seeing plans for something Ridgewood has no intention of building and is not part of their proposal?

The review of alternative site uses and the impact [of the project] is standard as part of the SEQR review and not regularly performed prior to referral to the planning board.

Why is the town board holding up a proposal that would result in a huge increase in assessables — under any plan — at a time when tax relief is desperately needed?

Whether you are against the zoning changes Ridgewood is requesting or for them, it is time to move the proposal forward.

Unfortunately this is part of a consistent pattern of behavior by the town board when it comes to zoning decisions. We are seeing similar delays in the 4 Corners revitalization proposal, a plan that has overwhelming community support. It has been five months since the work session in front of the town board and yet nothing has happened. We've seen with Fortress Bible what happens when the town board oversteps its authority. Similarly, the Ferncliffe complaint makes serious — although admittedly yet to be proven — allegations about town board interference in zoning and planning.

It is past time that the town board recognize its proper role in these proposals and act accordingly.

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