

---

**Subject:** FW: KJ SEQRA  
**Attachments:** KJ 6-10-15.docx

**From:** Mayor [mailto:mayor@villageofharriman.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 18, 2015 8:23 AM  
**To:** fwells@timmlerassociates.com  
**Subject:** KJ SEQRA

Attached are my comments to the Kiryas Joel SEQRA on the 507 and 164 acre annexation proposal

Stephen Welle, Mayor  
Village of Harriman  
1 Church St.  
Harriman, NY 10926  
845-783-4421  
[mayor@villageofharriman.org](mailto:mayor@villageofharriman.org)

Response to the Kiryas Joel DGEIS regarding the 507 and 164 acre annexation from the Town of Monroe into the Village of Kiryas Joel.

My name is Steve Welle. I have been a resident of the Village of Harriman for the past 38 years and have served on the Village Board since 1997. I have been the Mayor since 2001. Having lived in the area for 38 years and through my experience on the Village Board I have several major concerns and I am adamantly opposed to the proposed unsustainable 507 and 164 acre annexation from the Town of Monroe into the Village of Kiryas Joel. I am also under the opinion that this public hearing is illegal due to the fact that the Court has not ruled on the sequence of events of the three annexations (the proposed 507 and 164 acre annexation into Kiryas Joel and the proposed 336 acre annexation into South Blooming Grove).

It is my understanding that the purpose of this public hearing is for the involved agencies to hear the concerns regarding the proposed annexation. I have serious doubts as to whether or not the Village Board of Kiryas Joel is interested or capable of adequately reviewing the comments on this project since they held a scoping session on March 3, 2015 during a dangerous snow and ice storm. That meeting was held in spite of the numerous calls (including Orange County Executive Neuhaus) for the meeting to be held at a different time due to the inclement weather.

The Village of Harriman filed to be an involved agency for the 507 and 164 acre annexation due to the Harriman Waste Water Treatment Plant being in the Village of Harriman. There is a great concern that the significantly increased demands for waste water treatment will exasperate the existing problems and over load the plant. The Village Attorney also sent a separate letter to the Village of Kiryas Joel regarding our requests to be an involved agency. The Village of Harriman has never received any response from Kiryas Joel regarding the requests.

New York state General Municipal Law § 239 L,M,and N require that certain land use actions being reviewed under local zoning, site plan, and subdivision regulations be referred to a county planning agency for review and comment on aspects of the proposal that are of countywide or intermunicipal significance. The Village of Kiryas Joel has a history of consistently ignoring these § 239 reviews which are required of ALL municipalities. This shows their complete lack of respect and caring for the surrounding communities and the law.

The April 29, 2015 DGEIS transmitted by Tim Miller associates states that the population of Kiryas Joel will continue to grow regardless of this annexation being approved or not. In all other communities in Orange County, new development is approved based on available resources and infrastructure. The Village of Kiryas Joel has made it very apparent in this DGEIS that they plan on continuing to allow new construction without any regard for the availability of water and sewer resources. Several years ago when there was a moratorium on sewer connections in Orange County Sewer District # 1, Kiryas Joel continued to allow new construction and sewer connections while the other communities in the district

abided by the moratorium. This is another indication in their history of their lack of respect for the law or desire to get along with their neighbors.

The Village of Harriman residents have had to endure years of odor issues with the Harriman Waste Water Treatment Plant. Increased flows created by the explosive growth of Kiryas Joel (or any other community) are going to exacerbate this problem. In addition to the odors, as this plant nears capacity, there is great concern as to what happens when the new construction causes the plant to be over capacity. At times over the past several years this plant has been in violation of various regulations resulting in fines being assessed. This plant is monitored by the NYSDEC and the EPA and whatever fines are assessed are divided over the entire district not just the violators!

There has been a lot of discussion of expanding capacity either through technology or the construction of a new plant or expanded plant elsewhere. Who is going to pay for this? Why should the Village of Harriman ratepayers have to pay for expanded capacity when we don't need it?

The Village of Harriman has experienced elevated chloride levels in wells located along the Ramapo River over the last few years. The salinity of the waters flowing from the KJ Poultry plant has increased. At the same time the wells in the Village of Harriman have suffered. This is an impact which apparently has been ignored by the DGEIS and the scope. These environmental impacts MUST be studied!

If the unrestricted explosive growth in Kiryas Joel continues with their continued disregard for the environment and laws we will all be left with lower property values and higher bills to remediate Kiryas Joels violations.

There are many points in the DGEIS prepared by Tim Miller Associates which are questionable which is not surprising. There have been numerous actions taken by the Village of Kiryas Joel leaders over the last several years that have most of asking "What is happening here"? Unfortunately due to their past actions of noncompliance and disregard for their neighbors, there is no confidence that this is an honest and accurate reflection of the potential impacts which this annexation would have on the area. Given their history, why shouldn't we expect to see multi story apartment units built even though this possibility doesn't appear to be addressed in the DGEIS?

The DGEIS does not reflect the impact on the local volunteer fire departments. Currently the Kiryas Joel Volunteer Fire Department relies on the surrounding volunteer fire departments for mutual aid for most structure fires. If the properties in question were developed with the high density development typical of Kiryas Joel, it is safe to assume that the number of structure fires would also increase putting another unreasonable demand on our volunteers. Why wasn't this addressed?

The DGEIS claims that because the Hasidic women do not drive, the traffic impacts will be minimal. If the population increases at just the conservative rate indicated in the DGEIS, there will be a dramatic increase in traffic due to the increased services required to serve the additional population. There is more to traffic than just personal vehicles! A recent study done for the South East Orange County Traffic

Task Force warned of the potential of violations of the Federal Clean Air Standards with a modest to significant increase in traffic in the affected area.

Although the DGEIS states that the residents of Kiryas Joel do not utilize several programs operated by the County, the majority of Orange County residents do not utilize most of these programs. Actually most of the population outside of Kiryas Joel support their families without expecting the government to subsidize them!

The Village of Kiryas Joel filed a SEQRA several years ago regarding the proposed water pipeline connection to the New York City aqueduct. The findings in this SEQRA document were based on an eighteen inch main. When the installation commenced a twenty-four inch main was installed dramatically increasing the capacity which was NOT addressed by SEQRA. Why should we believe any actions involving this proposed annexation would be handled properly?

It was brought up during the public hearing on June 10, 2015 that no one questioned the potential impacts of the casino project which was attempting to locate in Woodbury. This statement is completely erroneous! The casino developers were in the process of conducting SEQRA for their project. In addition to meeting with Woodbury officials the developer also met several times with the Village of Harriman to determine the areas of concern and what the necessary mitigation(s) would be. If the Village of Kiryas Joel was really interested in conducting an honest and thorough SEQRA, they would have reached out to the surrounding municipalities to determine the real potential impacts and possible mitigation!

It is very possible that the Town of Monroe Board is going to vote against this annexation because they know that this decision will ultimately wind up in a court to be decided. Don't let these Board members deceive you regardless of their vote! They have not had the common courtesy to communicate with the Village of Harriman regarding how this potential annexation would affect the Harriman Waste Water Treatment Plant even though the issues are common knowledge. It appears that the Town Board is not interested in the quality of life of a majority of the properties in the town.

This potential annexation if approved would be extremely detrimental to the Village of Harriman and the surrounding area!

The Village of Kiryas Joel needs to consider the environmental and economic impacts before permitting additional construction of housing units like other communities do!

I am opposed to these potential annexation proposals due to the effects on the environmental concerns and the history of Kiryas Joel not following the laws which are meant for ALL municipalities.