



June 15, 2015

Honorable Mayor Wieder
Village Board, Village of Kiryas Joel
Lead Agency on Annexations
51 Forest Road
Monroe, NY 10950

Dear Mayor Wieder:

I'm writing this letter in support of annexation as Executive Director of Hamaspiik of Rockland County, a non-profit human-services agency that, among many other things, provides vital services to all the citizens of Orange County.

To preface: The New York State DOH's Nursing Home Transition/Diversion (NHTD) program provides critical supports and services to individuals transitioning back to their own homes from nursing homes, or said services in their own homes so as to keep them out of nursing homes.

Since Hamaspiik's founding in 1986, the agency has served people of all ages in the greater Hudson Valley who have developmental delays or disabilities, as well as people who require nursing at home, other home care, long-term care and other services and supports. In Orange County, Hamaspiik of Rockland not only provides NHTD but also delivers the DOH's Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) program and the Care at Home Waiver initiative for medically frail children under 18 who do not have Medicaid.

Hamaspiik's wide variety of services and supports continue to aid dozens of individuals of all religious and ethnic backgrounds throughout Orange County; its scope is hardly limited to the Village of Kiryas Joel.

Hamaspiik is also the only agency in Orange County that provides the greater public with Community Transition Services (CTS) and Environmental Modifications (E-Mods) under the rubric of NHTD and TBI.

In the context of E-Mods, CTS and other programs, Hamaspiik has successfully completed dozens of home modification projects: accessibility ramps, indoor or outdoor lifts, disabled-accessible restrooms (including grab bars, walk-in or roll-in showers and tubs), widened hallways, disabled-accessible doors and doorways and more.

These projects have been installed in the homes of individuals with special needs who reside across Orange County, including: Blooming Grove, Cantrell Valley, Chester, Goshen, Highland Mills, Newburgh, Pine Bush and Tuxedo, in addition to Kiryas Joel.



Given our experience-based authority on the greater public's health needs, it is our position that the annexation is vital for several reasons.

The elderly and frail among us, and those with other special needs, require access to regular clean water and sewer systems, as opposed to well water and septic systems, due to the specific hygienic and personal care needs that are part of their daily care.

These individuals also require sidewalks illuminated with streetlights as opposed to undeveloped roads to allow them to be transported locally from place to place in wheelchairs, to keep them integrated in their community. The developed streets which will result from annexation will also give them close proximity to shopping, schools, libraries and houses of worship. Sidewalks, and fire hydrants, for that matter, are vital for these individuals.

These individuals require both rapid access to emergency medical, fire department and public safety services in the event of health and other crises, and close local proximity to community health centers for their wellbeing.

All of the above may seem provincial, but upon review, we are certain you agree that at the end of the day and at the bottom line, the annexation will save both New York State and Orange County substantial sums of money in terms of preventing far costlier institutionalization of individuals with involved daily care needs. It is simply vital to annex as much land as possible to ensure that all these vulnerable people are provided with much needed care services.

Sincerely yours,

Meyer Wertheimer
Executive Director
Hamaspiik of Rockland County