

Susan Roth, AICP
26 Laura Road
Monroe, NY 10950

6/22/2015

RE: Proposed KJ Annexation application, comment on DGEIS.

Dear Board members:

I appeared at the night of the public hearing and intended to speak. However, there were a great number of people that had signed up before me, and at 9:45 there were approximately 30 speakers ahead of me. Based on the time that it was taking for each speaker it would have been beyond the time where I would have been able to get a ride back home. I understand that the public hearing was closed after an exhaustive night of public comments, and my only opportunity to submit comments is by writing this letter. Considering the complexity and controversy surrounding the proposed annexation, the public hearing should have been continued to allow another night of public comments, and I would have liked an opportunity to comment on this project in person and to listen to the comments that were submitted by other attendees.

The analysis in the DGEIS does not provide enough information to evaluate the impacts of the project in the community. The basis of the analysis, the project description, which is supposed to allow the public an understanding of project, tells us that old housing was built at a density of about 6 units an acre and newer housing built at 19 units per acre. I am not convinced that, without a plan of development, that higher, unsupportable density would result. Estimates are based on current growth rates, however if it is the goal of the development community to maximize profits, what better way than to build denser housing?

There should be a supplement to the EIS demonstrating a potential build out scenario that illustrates how the land could be developed and integrated into the community in such a way that it transitions from higher densities of KJ to nearby rural densities. If this petition was for a zoning change, the development community would have had to demonstrate how it would look, and how impacts related to high density, such as the need for new residents to have access to nearby open space, how development would address the need for transit, new schools (whether or not they are public or private), and traffic. There is no particular plan at this point, even though this petition to change municipalities is a request of private development. I think that this level of detail is important, especially since KJ is part of this community, and shares resources with surrounding towns and Orange County. We ask no less of other developers that come to our community.

Communities should be built with the idea that they would continue to work for all types of family groups, not just the current community. Communities evolve over time, needs become different, and sometimes they move away, and dismissing traffic concerns because women of this community do not drive is presumptuous. This practice insures that if the people who currently live here move or change their minds about women drivers in a few generations, then we will all have problems with parking and traffic.

When I have visited KJ, the quality of pedestrian facilities vary; with some of them poorly designed in terms of safety. For example, I've seen parking areas that use dropped curb sidewalks as the primary means of access to parking across the front of a building, dumpsters that are located near the edge of sidewalks and parking lots that obstruct the view of the walker and could create an accident. Although I admire any community that addresses the need for pedestrian access, sometimes there is a need for more than just a sidewalk to make the experience of walking pleasant and safe. In addition, I think that the need for parking by the KJ Village Planning Board is often underestimated. It is difficult to find parking on private lots, creating potential conflicts.

As stewards of this quality of life in the Town of Monroe, I think it is important for the Town Board of Monroe to take actions to ensure that the quality of life for all residents is maintained, those within and outside the Village of KJ. This proposal, in its current form should be rejected for lack of quality information about the proposal. In other words, ask the development community to demonstrate the build out. I understand that this request would create only a conceptual build out, but a concept could be used as a basis for design planning that could be carried over into the development process and the findings statement. Without a conceptual plan, the build out is uncertain and it does not make any sense for the Monroe Town Board to grant the petition.

The speaker representing the owners alluded to the need to extend streets, create pedestrian and bus stops, new housing and expand other facilities. To defend the idea that they have no idea of how this would work out on the land is simply not believable, nor is the idea that this property is too large for a PUD concept that could be designed to blend into the broader community and provide residents of KJ with quality housing that includes amenities that residents need, including pocket parks, open space, transit opportunities, schools and more.

Sincerely,



Susan Roth, AICP

Resident of the Town of Monroe