

Today's Date: 12.6.10

Action Needed by: 12.10.10

Dear Neighbor,

If you care about your home, the quality of your drinking water and the rural character of our community - you **MUST** pay attention to this communication. Our quality of life and water supply are being threatened by a massive, ill-conceived, high density housing development proposed to be built on the Patrick Farm Property, a **208 acre parcel sitting between routes 202 and 306**, bordering Wesley Hills and Pomona. This land sits on-top of a federally protected aquifer. Water from this aquifer supplies drinking water to Rockland, Orange, Bergen and Passaic Counties.

### Patrick Farm Today



The Patrick Farm as it exists today. A 208 acre property sits above the head-waters of the Mahwah-Ramapo River and on the southern edge of a federally protected sole source aquifer which feeds water to over a million homes, through private wells and United Water distribution.

### Patrick Farm if Built as Proposed



Recent aerial photographs of the Patrick Farm property are superimposed with the proposed development. The solid buildings represent the 410 multi-family units planned to be built in phase one, some of which are projected to include 5 to 6 bedrooms each. The outlined buildings above and below the main complex are the 87 single family homes that are for phase two.



This building is the same size of the proposed buildings on Patrick Farm phase one plan.

This representative building illustrates how easy it will be to provide housing for many more people than the original 2-acre zoning would have allowed.

As proposed, this community could house 5,000+ people on an environmentally sensitive piece of property which if compromised could impact all our lives. This aquifer provides regional drinking water to roughly over a million people. This is the watershed that feeds the streams and estuaries that run behind your homes and feed both private and United Water wells. When the water dries up so do the streams and wells.

Although the Town of Ramapo has heard detailed testimony from its citizens and the Rockland County Department of Planning as to why this project is wrong for where it is proposed, the town has gone so far as to violate the goals of its Comprehensive Plan and radically changed its zoning to accommodate the developer of the project. Because of this, we have decided to form an independent citizen's group called **ROSA** (Ramapo Organized for Sustainability and a Safe Aquifer) to advocate for maintaining our quality of life as it exists now, in an already crowded but sustainable community.

**ROSA** has serious concerns about the safety and sustainability of our water supply and other threats to the environment, traffic safety, and population density within this historic area. We are not anti-development, however we value the natural beauty and character of our community, and the remaining open spaces, and so, we believe that development of our few remaining open spaces must be done carefully and with proper oversight and constraint. Our community will be forever changed by this development, so it is imperative that this change be managed to minimize the serious negative impacts that we foresee.

ROSA has a strategic plan to STOP the proposed Patrick Farm development. Here are the first two steps of our plan.

**Step #1: Organize Group (Accomplished)**

- Members of **ROSA** have organized.
- Key committees have been created and committee chairs were elected.
- Website has been created and is being maintained at [www.rosa4rockland.org](http://www.rosa4rockland.org).
- Documents have been foiled from Town of Ramapo and Rockland County.

**Step #2: Hire Technical Experts (Accomplished)**

- The initial funds raised by **ROSA** were used to hire a licensed planner and a hydrologist to speak before the planning board on November 29th. These experts clearly pointed out vital flaws in the developers proposal and these factual points have been put into the public record.

**Step #3: Organize Factual Presentations Prior to Public Hearing (Accomplished)**

- Through a series of meetings held at the Suffern Free Library, **ROSA** instructed core members on specific speaking points that needed to be made before the Town of Ramapo Planning Board hearing on November 29th. Members of ROSA were present at the hearing and raised the necessary specific issues related to the proposed project.

**Step #4: Research and Identify Legal Representation (Accomplished)**

- We have selected a confident and well versed attorney, who will use the law to mitigate the Patrick Farm development proposal. On December 21st, The Town of Ramapo Planning Board is expected to vote on the initial proposed plans submitted by the developer. **We need to STOP this proposed development NOW!!!! And the hiring of a qualified attorney this week is essential to putting the brakes on this project.**

**Step #5: Fund Raising Effort to Pay for Attorney (Your donations are needed TODAY)**

- We will rely on our hired professionals to make sure that the Town of Ramapo complies with all local, state and federal laws. We are raising funds to cover the legal and professional fees and other necessary expenses to do this. **ROSA** will make sure our objections to inappropriate and possibly illegal development in Ramapo are heard by the Town of Ramapo and its Planning Board, the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Federal Environmental Agency (EPA).

**ROSA** needs your financial support in order to be effective.

We understand times are tough, but don't let your neighborhood and your quality of life be forever changed. **You must act now**. When you get a leak in your roof, you fix it. When a tree falls on your house, you fix it. This call to action is no different than paying for broken pipe. As painful as it is we all need to address this situation to preserve our community and our quality of life.

Contribute any amount TODAY and make your check payable to **ROSA**.

Online: Donate by using a major credit card at: <http://rosa4rockland.org/donate/>

US Mail: Send check to **ROSA** at PO Box 712, Pomona, NY 10970.

Together we can succeed, but the clock is ticking. Our success depends on raising \$5,000 by the end of this week 12/06/10. This is a short term goal in order to an initial retainer for our attorney. Our attorney has much to do before the deadline for written comments ends on December 15th and planning board meets again on December 21st.

Thank you for your support.

Suzanne Mitchell / Director, **ROSA**