

Saw Kill Watershed Community
30 Campus Road
Annandale-On-Hudson, NY 12504
SawKillWatershedCommunity@gmail.com

Town of Red Hook
7340 South Broadway
Red Hook NY 12571

August 23, 2017

Re: Proposed local law to place a 12-month moratorium on large scale extractive operations in the Town of Red Hook

Supervisor Robert McKeon, members of the Town Board:

I'm offering the following comments regarding this proposed local law as a representative of the Saw Kill Watershed Community leadership team. The Saw Kill Watershed Community is a group that was formed two years ago to promote protection of the Saw Kill and its watershed, which includes the Town of Red Hook. Funded in part by a DEC grant, and powered by local volunteers, our work involves the local community in water quality testing on the Saw Kill with the Bard College water lab; assessing the condition of the Saw Kill and its watershed; and providing water protection information to the Red Hook community.

We support the Town's proposed 12-month moratorium involving certain activities that affect the town's natural resources including spring water; sand, gravel, clay, stone, loam, humus, topsoil; and timber.

This support is based on concerns that include:

1. Our water is a shared resource; all of us benefit from an adequate supply of clean drinking water. In addition, a clean, adequate supply of water sustains healthy ecosystems and enhances recreation, property values, and community quality of life. The network of small streams and wetlands throughout the watershed collectively provide flood protection and water quality improvement.
2. Watersheds cycle, filter, and store water. Watershed health depends on the condition of its parts: streams, wetlands, lakes, groundwater, and land. Land use activities that remove water, substrate (e.g. soil, gravel), or trees can disrupt or change the watershed systems that replenish, store, purify and convey water.
3. A high portion of forest within the watershed can lower drinking water treatment costs and improve groundwater recharge. Forest cover along streams improves water quality, bank stability and habitat; stabilizes floodplains (reducing the impact of flooding and erosion

which in turn affects water quality); and moderates water temperature (e.g. protecting trout habitat).

4. Water withdrawal affects the movement of groundwater and the water available for nearby streams, wells, and wetlands.
5. Protecting our community's natural resources is necessary for sustainable local economy.

Our water is not automatically protected by existing federal and state regulations in a way that most benefits our local community. As local demand for water supply increases, and sources of pollution (including stormwater runoff) increase, local protection is necessary to ensure a high quality supply of water for the community and for future generations.

We commend the Town for being forward-thinking in proposing this "time out" necessary to collect information and carefully evaluate the potential impacts of activities that affect our water, soil, and trees.

Karen Schneller-McDonald
for the Saw Kill Watershed Community Leadership Team
Eli Dueker
Sheila Buff
Carolyn Klocker
Tierney Weymuller
Clara Woolner