

April 19, 2006

Dear Mr. Fiorenzo and Mr. Stanley,

In response to the article in The Villadom Times, April 19, 2006 edition titled "Public Hearing on the Ravine Moved to May 10", I found some of the statements interesting.

First, the reference to the statement, "objectors believe the proposal calls for the ravine to be filled in" is an exaggeration. The building proposal and request for variances indicate that the plan does not conform to existing zoning laws. The remediation required for maintaining the steep slopes behind the home rolling into the ravine is only one issue. Building on the "upper slopes" of the ravine requires a variance.

Second, the statement that "...I don't know how rumors get started, but people really get cranked up", is quite a gratuitous statement to set forth to the community of Wyckoff. In fact, organizations such as [www.savetheravine.org](http://www.savetheravine.org) and [www.friendsofwyckoff.org](http://www.friendsofwyckoff.org) have well researched documentation on the facts surrounding the development. Please visit the websites for more information. Recognize that Wyckoff citizens are getting "cranked up".

Third, "The extended Mason family has argued...that only the development of the land in some such pattern will allow them to recover their fair share of the property's market value." If the Wyckoff Planning Board advocates granting variance on non-conforming properties, where will it stop? The fair market value of a property is limited by zoning laws in most communities. No one is opposed to limiting development within the current zoning ordinances in Wyckoff. We are opposed to granting variances in sensitive areas.

In a second article on page 4, Mayor Fiorenzo is quoted as "pledging to oppose high-pressure outside developers and protect the rural resident character of Wyckoff". That appears to imply that in-town, township committee or planning board friendly developers who may reside out-of-town are welcome. Is it a coincidence that the same developer involved in part of the ravine property will apparently be building on Russell Farms after subdivision approval is granted? Obviously they are not a "high-pressure outside developer".

Let's truly protect what remaining open space remains in Wyckoff. Let's do as other towns have done – gain access to county funds and private funds with true interest in preserving open space.

Sincerely,

Diane Sobin