

Why Won't They Listen?

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Our current town officials have over and over again stated the need for "rateables" to reduce your tax burden. Rateables are of course businesses that locate in our town and pay higher commercial rate property taxes. The idea is the more businesses you have, the more taxes you collect thereby lowering taxes for all homeowners. In theory this sounds great and should work well. In reality this is not how the system works. Businesses that wish to locate in our town will rarely pay full taxes on their property. In order to entice them there are federal and state programs that will defer some or all of the taxes for years. Also businesses can negotiate with our town officials to create a PILOT agreement. This is a Payment In Lieu Of Taxes negotiated between the business and our town officials. These payments usually reflect only a fraction of what they should pay. All these programs are used to attract businesses to our town, yet all reduce their tax burden significantly. If we have to live with this system then let's use it to our advantage to attract clean rateables. Why use them to attract undesirable businesses such as car crushing facilities and power plants. Currently our town is considering projects that will take full advantage of these programs. These projects though will reduce rather than enhance our quality of life and our ability to entice clean rateables to our town. Clean rateables are those that do not pollute or cause property values to decline. They include office complexes, small retail establishments and agricultural businesses. The proposed car crushing business, warehouse complex and power plant are not "clean rateables". These projects will pay substantially less in taxes per square foot than some homes. They will decrease property values in the area and cause "clean rateables" to look elsewhere. Why do our elected officials even consider these projects? Why do they not pass zoning laws that prohibit these types of businesses? Why do they ignore the will of the people who elected them? In 2005 the people of our town spoke through a town wide survey ([link](#)). Their response showed a clear indication of the "clean rateables" they wished to see in our town. They include; Farmer's Markets favored by 24%, Restaurants by 16%, Professional Offices by 13%, Grocery Stores by 12% and Bed & Breakfast establishments by 10%. The people also spoke as to what they did not want to see in our town. Waste Facilities registered a 24% disapproval rating, Asphalt Manufacturing a 21% disapproval rating, Mining a 16% disapproval rating and Big Box Stores a 10% disapproval rating. The people of our town were quite clear as what they wanted to see and what they did not want to see. Why won't our elected officials carry out the will of the people who elected them? The people wish to see something along the lines of Harfield lane in Goshen. Here office coexist with a beer distributorship and an auto dealership. As you drive up the road it is an area that allows for a warehouse you don't see as it is tucked behind the corporate headquarters. Medical and business offices coexist in complexes on both side of a tree lined road. This road is designed to allow for mixed use in such a way that "clean rateables" want to locate there. Our town wishes to offer us a car crushing business and a power plant that will pollute our air drive down the value of nearby properties and attract other undesirable rateables. Contact our elected officials, Supervisor Razzano, Council people Cole, Penaluna, Quinn and Krajewski and demand they listen to your view of what businesses our town should attract. Do not let them make our town the dumping ground for "dirty undesirable rateables". Do not let them give in to those who wish to buy our town. Demand they follow the will of the people as expressed on our town survey. Link to the town survey: <http://www.waydems.org/wawayanda-2007-archive/town-survey-results.html>