



Support for Development

1 message

Jason Zarillo <jason@livingstonenergyllc.com>
To: kovalchikk@togny.org

Sun, Feb 23, 2020 at 1:19 PM

Hello Mr. Kenneth Kovalchik,

I am writing to you in support of the Costco store and residential project proposed for Rapp Road. I own a local energy efficiency company and protecting the environment was the main reason I started my company years ago, so I am happy that the impact of development is assessed before it can take place. However, with upstate NY struggling to keep and attract residents I think it is equally important to consider the costs of limiting the development of the region to compete with other areas/states. The two projects proposed help the area keep and attract talent and will also help existing construction and supporting businesses and residents with work, jobs created, convenient living options and more variety of stores to shop at without travel.

Having studied at UAlbany and then SUNY Poly, the Crossgates mall and commons were a part of my decision to choose Albany for school. With all of the stores and businesses offered, the easy bus ride (and later car ride) allowed me to spend my (and my parents) money locally as well. Albany's great colleges attract students from all over, and most return to where they came from or go somewhere else after college. The residential project being proposed is exactly the type of living option that might convince some of those students to stay and build their life here in the Capital Region.

I have personally experienced growing up in a city where the residents are disappointed in the local shopping options, and travel elsewhere to spend their money. I have watched the mall in Kingston offer less and less stores, with entire sections now sitting empty. The mall failed to offer what people in the area needed, and travel to malls like Crossgates which has done a much better job understanding and anticipating the public's needs and finding ways to offer them what they want. This is exactly what they are trying to do by bringing Costco to the area. Maybe you are like me and consider a grocery store or pharmacy relatively the same as the next one but I promise you my wife would disagree!

I hope this letter can help you in weighing the pros and cons of this development both as a single project and also as a larger goal of the region attracting keeping residents and competing with other states and cities for talented employees. If the local shopping options are not allowed to develop with the demand I fear people will travel elsewhere to spend their money and eventually move, which is exactly what happened to my entire family who no longer live in Kingston.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely,

Jason

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