

December 3, 2020

We would like to recognize and thank the IDA for working to come up with a PILOT that highlighted the value we all place on education. While certainly not surprised by the actions of the School Board, we are nonetheless disappointed in the outcome and frustrated with the process. Based on a process where we were denied an opportunity to present the elements of the project to the entire Board, we are pleased to have only fallen 2 votes shy of passing and that is truly a testament to the recent work put in by the County Executive. In the end, the School Board just could not understand they were turning down additional revenue, not adding a burden.

We were gravely disappointed with leadership's unwillingness to allow access to critical information that would have better informed fellow Board Members' understanding of the issues. It is important to note that the only body that did not act in support of the project is also the only one where the development team was denied access to the full Board -in fact 7 of the 9 school board members that voted last night never even saw the full Kingstonian project presentation. School Board President, Jim Shaughnessy has been a vocal opponent of this project from the onset and recently has seemingly made it personal. He has publicly spoken out against it on numerous occasions despite the fact he knew he would be charged with impartially reviewing specific aspects of it at a later date. Ultimately, the public will have the opportunity to weigh in on this in May.

Regarding the incendiary comments made by James Michael and directed at ourselves, the IDA agency, the Mayor, and County Executive, nothing could be further from the truth. Anyone that takes the time to watch his comments could not help but be offended by his personal attacks on the integrity of others. ([YouTube Link](#) time 1:17:24) His comments are absolutely false and quite honestly offensive as all parties involved have been open, transparent, and cooperative throughout the entire process. The developers have willingly shared the project's financial information to those elected officials of the various boards who have the responsibility of assuring the community that projects like the Kingstonian will provide opportunity and value to our community. In fact, it was Mr. Michael, who was appointed the project liaison by his Board, that has failed to respond to multiple inquiries since the County's independent review.

Let us reiterate what we have stated throughout this process; we respect and appreciate the service and commitment of all our elected officials, especially during these difficult times. We simply ask to be treated professionally, fairly, and free from personal attacks.

We thank the School Board members that supported the project and truly appreciate the thoughtful comments they made. We also would like to recognize and thank the Mayor and his staff, the County Executive and his staff, the Kingston Common Council, the Ulster County Legislature, KUBA, the UC Chamber, the Bruderhof Communities and the many business owners and area residents that have also steadfastly showed their support.



The Kingston Common Council voted 8-0 in favor, the Ulster County Legislature voted 17-6 in favor and the school district voted 3-6 against. All told elected officials have voted 28-9 in support and the community has weighed in by issuing over 500 emails and letters of support: dwarfing those in opposition. Additionally, we have successfully garnered the support of every other Board and Commission in the decisions rendered to date.

It is clear that personal biases and collaboration with project opponents corrupted the PILOT review process. As such, we will be speaking with the IDA and other community leaders to discuss procedural options for moving forward with the PILOT approval.

The Kingstonian Developers

