

Don't inch school into McKownville

McKownville is a great place to live. It is a jewel tucked at the intersection of Interstates 90 and 87 in Guilderland.

The University at Albany is our neighbor. We are grateful for the advantages of living nearby. We walk the campus often and attend cultural, arts and sporting events. We even liked seeing the Giants train there.

In turn, UAlbany is blessed to be in our neighborhood. We offer a stable, safe haven for students and many conveniences like dining, shopping, recreation and personal services.

UAlbany wants to purchase land adjacent to its property.

This land contains two homes and offers untouched pine bush with a large sand dune, many kinds of towering trees and plants, and many kinds of birds and other wildlife.

It offers a natural buffer between UAlbany and our homes. And, it offers UAlbany natural beauty in an otherwise stark campus landscape.

Nearly 50 years ago, UAlbany promised to protect McKownville, even if it expanded its campus.

This parcel is only nine acres. It cannot possibly satisfy the future expansion needs of UAlbany, including the College of Nanoscale Science and Technology.

But, this is just the start, we guess. Or maybe not — Washington Avenue Extension already is being moved. Next, UAlbany may want to purchase a whole road of houses and then another, until it replaces all McKownville's taxpayers with undergraduates or parking lots and buildings. We hope that is not true, but it seems like it is.

We urge President George Philip to partner with McKownville taxpayers, and not be a bully.

Everything is done in secrecy. Where is the money coming from — at a time when there are so many cuts? What is the land needed for? And why is the Harriman State Office Campus just sitting there?

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