

*July 21*  
**Presentation to the ACPB, ~~June~~ 16, 2016**

**Donald Reeb,**

**President, McKownville Improvement Association**

*as amended*

Concerning the Loughlin Street request for rezoning which is before you—I hope that this Board will agree that for the following reasons the proposal will have significant negative impacts that extend beyond the municipal boundary between the City of Albany and Town of Guilderland and should receive a negative recommendation by this Board.

1. For those living on Fuller, Warren, Mercer and Providence Streets the increase in traffic resulting from those occupying the 173 apartments will burden these Guilderland residents, make their driving and walking and biking more dangerous.
2. A significant portion of the State University at Albany is in McKownville and Guilderland along with one dorm and a major portion of another dorm and the SEFCU arena and other facilities such as the football stadium. Students and others at the University will be negatively impacted by the proposed over-development of the Loughlin site.
3. The Loughlin Street/Fuller Road intersection is dangerous for pedestrians crossing the intersection and motor vehicles. Fuller Road rises to the north --oncoming traffic from the north cannot be seen until it is very near Loughlin Street. There is no turning lane on Fuller to the north of Loughlin. At great expense, the County recently rebuilt Fuller Road and the roundabouts were added. The cemeteries on both sides of Fuller to the north of Loughlin make it quite difficult and socially unacceptable to rebuild Fuller Road to make it safer.
3. The County owns the storm sewer line beneath Fuller Road. It is at capacity. Paving much of the 5.6 acres to accommodate 173 apartments and other impervious surfaces will exacerbate the storm water problem with the County-owned storm sewer as well as burden nearby residents in Guilderland who currently and historically have suffered from storm water flooding of their basements and garden areas.
4. The Loughlin Street area was once in Guilderland. It was transferred to the City around 1910. The density of the proposed development—about 30.9 units per acre (173/5.6 acres)---is nearly three times what Guilderland would permit---and is out of keeping with the density of both the two homes that are on Fuller but still in the City and the 140 homes along Fuller, Warren, Mercer and Providence that are in Guilderland. This overburdening of the public (McKownville and Guilderland) infrastructure in the area, such as the parks, the sidewalks and so forth will bring about more costs for the Town and community or a lessening in quality of the overused facilities.
5. The nearby cemeteries are historically important and at risk because of the proposed development of 173 apartments on 5.6 acres. The cemeteries rely on recurring revenues. Revenues are in danger of disappearing if a cortege cannot properly access the cemetery, if its costs (and fees) must rise to cover ancillary costs imposed by over-development of nearby properties. Presently the cemeteries are faced with storm water damage to gravesites, cave-ins of older gravesites, toppled headstones, general mischief to gravesites and the cemetery, and increased cost of maintenance generally.

For these reasons, I strongly urge this Board to issue a negative recommendation due to the insurmountable burdens placed on nearby residents, historic cemeteries, and adjacent roadways and storm water infrastructure.

# Albany County Planning Board

July 21, 2016

Filed by Don Reeb for the McKownville Improvement Association

The Albany County Planner, Leslie Lombardo, asked that the testimony focus on those issues that the Albany County Planning Board is permitted to consider. I have tried to do this and hope that the County strongly and unanimously concludes that the rezoning poses major problems. I have gathered my concerns into 8 groups.

**1. incompatibility of various land uses with one another** McKownville has about 900 one and two floor homes---the 6 high rise apartment buildings for Sandidge Way do not belong here. Secondly, the density proposed for these 6 buildings is 3 times greater than Guilderland permits for apartment houses, including even those recently authorized in western Guilderland.

**2. the traffic generation characteristics of the various land uses will be in conflict and the existing roadway—Fuller Road—is inadequate** Fuller Road is overcrowded. Adding cars from 173 apartments will make Fuller Road more crowded. Drivers have very poor sight lines to the north. There is a slight hill between Loughlin and Tercentennial Drive where there is a roundabout. Cars exiting or entering Loughlin cannot see the roundabout that is but a 150 or so feet away. The 140 homes on Fuller, Warren, Mercer and Providence have no roads other than Fuller to exit or enter their homes. Loughlin traffic will create an extra hazard for these 140 households.

**3. impact of the rezoning on existing and proposed County or State uses** The County recently rebuilt Fuller Road and installed sidewalks on both sides while the State and national governments built roundabouts on Fuller, moved Washington Avenue and redesigned it--all to calm Fuller Road traffic. To calm traffic further the speed limit was reduced recently on Fuller. The addition of 173 apartments will undo some of these benefits.

**4. protection of community character as it relates to predominant land uses, population density, and the relation between residential and nonresidential areas** The density of homes in McKownville is about one home per quarter acre--the 173 apartments on 5.6 acres would have a density of nearly 31 per acre.

**5. drainage and watershed** McKownville is in the process of rebuilding its storm water system--with State aid--because of such severe local flooding problems and a very high water table. Many remember the recurring news pictures of the flooded Fuller Road/Western Avenue intersection and impact it has on this well-used highway and the first responders who are called out to calm traffic.

**6. community facilities** School buses will be unable to enter and leave Loughlin Street safely and student pick-up and drop-off on Fuller—an alternative--will cause traffic congestion and be dangerous.

**7. official municipal and County development policies, as may be expressed through comprehensive plans, capital programs or regulatory measures.** The Town's 2003 Corridor Study of McKownville advocated maintaining the residential character of the community. It has invested heavily to make this happen—sidewalks, street banners, a new park, improved water pipe distribution system, revision of the zoning laws. McKownville has but one small—5 unit—apartment house presently—on East Highland-- and the Town has repeatedly denied permission to build additional apartment houses in McKownville.

**8. such other matters as may relate to the public convenience, to governmental efficiency, and to the achieving and maintaining of a satisfactory community environment** Employment sites---for those working at SUNY Poly and SUNY Albany—are convenient as is shopping but there is no nearby City school or library, no nearby church or health facility. Pedestrians will find it dangerous to cross Fuller Road at Loughlin Street. They can walk safely south along Fuller but traffic at the Tri-centennial Way traffic circle makes walking north dangerous. The nearby City owned reservoir and park would be inaccessible to younger walkers. Bikers exiting Loughlin would be in danger, especially if the biker tries to cross Fuller.