

Dear Editor,

Since the first time I drove by a “Save The Ravine” sign over a year ago I have attended the Wyckoff Planning Board meetings to learn why such a unique and historic landmark in our town was at risk. Robert Milanese, developer of Barrister Farms in Wyckoff, wants to encroach again on the Ravine and Deep Voll Brook with yet another development.

In Mr. Milanese’s current application of nine new houses, lots 8.01 and 8.02 are on the left of the proposed road, which will be directly opposite Fox Hollow when entering from Grandview. Houses on these lots will be squeezed in between the new road and ravine itself and future owners of these lots will likely require additional variances to use the property. What puzzles me is the lack of concern by the Wyckoff Planning Board about these two lots. No Planning Board member has barely mentioned or questioned Mr. Milanese about these two lots, whose houses will literally teeter on the edge of the ravine the Planning Board claims to be protecting. The Planning Board cannot, in good conscience, approve Mr. Milanese’s application without eliminating lots 8.01 and 8.02 because of the eminent dangers they create to the slope-scape of the ravine. This isn’t just a question of ruining the view; these two lots pose significant environmental problems.

Mr. Milanese has stated that he is “protecting the ravine” and is “staying away from the ravine.” I disagree. I recall during one of the hearings a Milanese witness stated, “the bottom of the ravine will be saved.” I suspect that is the part Mr. Milanese was referring. Are there really two parts to the ravine... a top and a bottom? I think it either is a ravine or it isn’t.

Lastly, the Deep Voll Ravine was declared in Wyckoff’s Master Plan one of a half-dozen key areas to be “protected and preserved.” Why is our Planning Board not adhering to this and recognizing as our Master Plan does, that the ravine is to be preserved?

Sadly, the message I am getting is our Planning Board may not want to adhere to our Master Plan, but allow Mr. Milanese to develop yet another rare parcel of open space – a gem of open space - in Wyckoff. Despite what the Master Plan states, and despite what residents and environmental groups have expressed, he may get the go-ahead. I hope our Planning Board asks

for details about lots 8.01 and 8.02 and specifically how Mr. Milanese proposes to “stay away from the ravine” and still build on these two lots.

I encourage Wyckoff residents who agree that the Deep Voll Ravine and Deep Voll Brook should be preserved attend the next ravine hearing on Wednesday, July 11 at 7:30 pm in the Wyckoff Town Hall.

Linda Vreeland

Wyckoff