

April 14th, 2007

Editor

Dear Editor,

Once again farmland (and what could be park or open space) is going under the bulldozer. Many people from the area are familiar with Russell Orchards: the farm store, the garden nursery, AND of course the fresh peaches grown **right here** in Wyckoff. Hence the name Orchard, this time because there really is one, not because some developer thought it smart to name it that.

Currently the Wyckoff Planning Board is hearing this application for the development of six LARGE houses (read patios driveways, pools, tennis courts etc.) where the peach trees now grow.

Since this is a fact-gathering time for the Planning Board so they can make a wise/best decision for the township, **why** has the planning board AGAIN WAIVED the requirement (a requirement already on the books which must therefore have a purpose) that the developer provide details of the size and style of these homes. HOW can they make any decisions with out this information??? HOW will they know they will conform to the existing building regulations

Unfortunately the board has done this before and it has proven to be unwise. It led them to granting many, many variances which in effect let the developer do what he wanted.

It seems here in Wyckoff that the local citizens are kept to the hard letter of our laws but the developer is granted waivers, variances, etc. For developers the exception is the rule.

Should you go to these Planning Board meetings yourself you will hear a lot of posturing on the part of the Planning Board. But the end result is always, quietly the same, waivers, and variances. I don't know why we even have the zoning laws we have because they are not given the chance to protect and enhance the community of Wyckoff, the citizens for whom they were written.

Who will it be on the planning board? WHO will ACTUALLY stick to the letter of the laws we have and tell a developer he/they must work within the existing laws of our town. WHO has the courage to do what is right for everyone and uphold our laws?

Sincerely,

Andrea Mateo