

June 22, 2015

Tim Miller Associates, Inc.
10 North Street
Cold Spring, NY
Re: KJ Annexation – Public Hearing Comments

Tim Miller Associates, Inc:

I do not believe the annexation petitions are being filed by individual property owners but rather by the hierarchy from within this theocracy, Kiryas Joel (KJ). These leaders, builders and LLC's stand to gain financially once the zoning is changed from the current restrictions of the Town of Monroe zoning to the high density zoning of the Village of KJ. As we all know, annexation is not a means to obtain zoning changes or to obtain more land because you "ran out of room." Annexation is supposed to be for the good of all involved. This annexation does not prove, in any of the research, scoping documents or DGEIS, that this would benefit BOTH communities. This petition to annex land out of the Town of Monroe and into the Village of KJ, is to enrich a few and is a detriment to the rest. Where are all the land owners who filed this petition? Why hasn't every owner of these properties been to and spoken at the (2) Scoping Sessions? Why aren't all of the property owners at any Town of Monroe Board meetings? Why didn't anyone who is in favor of annexation speak at the public comment session that the county opened up to all residents on April 16, 2015? Where are the minutes to the KJ Board meetings? Where are the letters from these property owners in the scoping documents? This has been the main topic of concern within our communities since December of 2013. It's quite odd that these individual property owners would be allowing their municipality to speak to and defend their annexation request.

I'd like to turn now to traffic concerns. Six major state roads (or road segments) listed in your report are located outside the boundaries of KJ and none of them has direct access into KJ although the Quickway follows the village's southern boundary. There is also no entrance or exit into or out of KJ off of the Quickway. Why? Where's the recommendation for this, annexation or not. There are 3 key county roads that pass through or run along the village of KJ and are all two lane roads. County Route 64 is one such road and it carries a large population of Monroe-Woodbury school children to and from the four schools located off it. I have been witness to many close calls on that road. People travel this road at a high rate of speed as the road is mostly straight. It has many blind spots due to the limited site distance from the hills. There are many inexperienced drivers on that stretch as the High School is one turn off this road. Added vehicles will only increase the odds of accidents.

As I look at Figure 3.4-2: Local Transportation Network, this is a map highlighted in orange and blue. The "key" roads are in orange. Is this map from 1991? This visual doesn't show the extent of roads that are traveled by the Village of KJ residents (and the delivery trucks, construction vehicles, emergency vehicles, school buses...) going into

and out of the village daily. Large areas have been omitted. I highlighted the following roads in both orange and green as seen in the attachment to this e-mail, and they are - Route 208 and North Main starting at the intersection by Schunnemunk St. continuing past Franklin. North Main turns into Spring Street running past Smith's Clove Park and out to Freeland/County Route 105.. Carpenter Place, Mill Pond Parkway, Maple and Mapes as major entry/egress "key" roads for the residents and other traffic of the village. Another area is the stretch of Seven Springs Rd. which runs between the section of Forest Rd. you have highlighted and Mountain Rd. you have highlighted. The entire stretch of Forest Rd. and Forest St. that connects from the bridge leading into and out of KJ from the bridge, into where the Glenwood School is and out to N. Main Street. It's amazing how incomplete this traffic report is. Maybe it's because you didn't conduct your own traffic study? I didn't see traffic counters on all the roads I mentioned.

In section 3.4.3 - Existing Traffic – It states "Existing traffic patterns in Kiryas Joel reflect the culture of the residents of this community. Most Kiryas Joel residents do not drive from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. Saturday traffic is lighter than most other communities where retail activity on Saturdays generate considerable amounts of traffic."

Residents from outside of KJ are very impacted by the traffic that the village of KJ creates outside of its borders (the highlighted map proves it). Saturday is a day that the community outside of KJ does shopping, kids sports, errands, as these working residents hold weekday jobs (for the most part). I would say the majority outside of KJ work the 5 weekdays and are off weekends. We see less traffic in our area on Saturday even with the shopping and that includes anyone from the surrounding communities coming to shop. Saturdays on our area roads are quite enjoyable. Saturdays are very reminiscent to what every day used to be like when I moved here 23 years ago, even with the build-up of stores and other residences because it has been organic growth. The traffic that has come as a result of unplanned explosive uncontrolled growth the other 6 days of the week is crushing to our community. The road conditions suffer from the constant traffic, the noise and the pollution is overwhelming. Litter is a huge factor. The Town of Monroe has had to pay upwards of \$5k, and \$7k on two separate occasions within the last year to Marangi Carting to clean up the roads going into this village from the town. Concrete trucks, construction vehicles, delivery trucks, emergency vehicles, taxis, cars, box trucks, tractor trailers all on narrow 25 mile an hour residential streets. Night and day, 6 days a week, non-stop. Add to this the frequent holidays that the village of KJ celebrates. Some of these celebrations, none of which are discussed in this DGEIS regarding traffic, are so large that tens of thousands rush in within a one or two day period to partake in the festivities. Trucks with loud speakers strapped to them are driven around the village of KJ and out along the neighboring streets with music blaring until 2am. It's been a constant struggle to live in "quiet enjoyment" of our homes. This is the right of any home owner. This is why we have noise ordinances. For some reason the village of KJ thinks they are above our laws.

3.4.6.1 - Noise – Existing noise is NOT typical in the study area. A constant barrage of construction vehicles is very noisy. The act of construction itself is noisy, banging,

nauling, tailgates of dump trucks banging against themselves when they dump their load, cement trucks,... The large celebrations, many celebrations – vehicle traffic, horns blowing, loud music from the village that can be heard miles and miles outside of the village of KJ. Residents outside of KJ have had to complain as late as 1am and 2am to their local police stations that the noise from the village is still going on. We work, our children go to school as early as 6:15 am for the High School and the noise ordinance is something that's to be followed not ignored. Citizens have had to organize police presence for the traffic associated with these events. The village of KJ has never spoken with the surrounding communities about these events or their police departments beforehand. It's become so unmanageable, ordinary citizens have had to go to the local police and ask for their departments to mitigate the traffic when we know these events are happening. Over the years we've learned what dates these events fall on and we keep in the loop on the internet just to try and manage the inevitable.

Fair Housing Violations are being committed on a regular basis within the cloistered community of KJ. The very fact that a village is cloistered is a violation. There's been letters from the community leaders and public comment about their holy village. How is there a holy village in the USA? What happened to the separation of church and state? How is a community that is 93% reliant on public assistance building non-stop through an 8+ year housing recession? How are families buying homes with average sales prices between \$300k-\$400k if they are recipients of public assistance? How are they qualifying for mortgage loans? Are any of these newly constructed residences being built as low income housing? What government funds are being used to build housing and is there oversight?

There was so much wrong with the public comments from those in favor of the annexation at the Public Hearing on June 10th, 2015 that those comments alone should spark an investigation into Fair Housing Violations. Other investigations into the village of KJ should be made by the ACLU, National Council of Jewish Women, NOW, UNICEF, HUD, DEC, DOJ, DOS, the Attorney General, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Preet Bharara, and the list goes on...

The attorney for the petitioners, Mr. Barshov, spoke at the Public Hearing on June 10th and stated he was going to layout the affirmative case as to why the annexation is in the overall public interest, saying his speech will be part of the record for the decision makers who are the two boards. He says, "fact #1, Kiryas Joel's population is going to grow. No one in this room can stop it because, people have children. They are going to have a lot of children because for the last 40 years they have been having children." "Where are these people going to go?" "Where are they going to live?" "Would you prefer that they be spread all around Orange County?" When the audience answered, "yes", Mr. Barshov said that made no sense. Really? Why would that not make sense? His argument is that KJ's policy is to grow out into the bordering properties that surround it. In terms of public policy it makes no sense for the members of KJ's community to sprinkle themselves around Orange county per Mr. Barshov. Is this really a reason for annexation? That people within an insular village ran out of room to build? No, it isn't. These bordering properties are in some cases, the homes of residents of the

Town of Monroe and other municipalities that have lived there are raised their children for generations. To expect a community to keep growing and expect to be able to all stay together and additional members to never expect to have to move elsewhere, is ridiculous. This group of people seem to be able to move anywhere and everywhere from their history. They moved from central Europe to Brooklyn, NY. They moved from Brooklyn to Bloomingburg. There are Hasidic enclaves in Rockland county and Lakewood, NJ. Just because a community of people outgrow its village borders doesn't mean others need to give up their homes and communities. This is outrageous. The earth isn't growing, it's going to remain the same size. You can't put 10 lbs. of potatoes in a 5 lb. sack. If this community of people wants to grow and they all want to stay together, the only logical solution is to start a community in a place that is so vast and not built out by others, it will allow for this vision. Buying a development in the 1970's that was 1 mile square (-), seems to be a flawed vision, a flaw that they want others to fix by giving them their land and selling them their houses because they need it/them. How is this "smart growth" as Mr. Barshov states? I've not seen communities grow by branching out into neighboring communities. What is this man talking about? He is grasping at straws. I'm asking that his entire speech be looked into and his "facts" and statements be answered using the laws of annexation and what is allowed under the law. His argument of "Unity of Purpose" would mean that after land gets annexed and they need more, the next bordering lands would just make sense to take over and so on and so on. This is just madness. This is from an attorney? His comments must be addressed. There is no reason why a Hasidic person cannot buy a piece of property outside the village of KJ as some have done. There seems to be an issue in doing so however, after buying. These "home owners" don't want to limit their building to that of the town's codes. As they say, buyer-beware. They knew the zoning when they bought. If they didn't like it, don't buy it. There should be no reason why the village of KJ is home to only Hasidic people. Where is the diversity? Where is Fair Housing being applied? Mr. Barshov seemed to think it was great that the bus company servicing KJ will now be able to grow. Why do I care if a bus company is able to expand its operations as that village grows? We should agree to annex land so that a bus company can grow its business?

And if the insanity of what went on at this public hearing wasn't enough, the Supervisor of the Town of Monroe went on to be quoted by VoslzNeias just prior to the Public Hearing. Here is a link to the article.

[\(http://www.vosizneias.com/205953/2015/06/11/kiryas-joel-ny-kj-annexation-debate-in-the-spotlight-at-public-hearing-video/\)](http://www.vosizneias.com/205953/2015/06/11/kiryas-joel-ny-kj-annexation-debate-in-the-spotlight-at-public-hearing-video/). I pulled this out to highlight the section I am

referring to: Doles noted that while many of those present were of different religions, they shared the commonality of believing in a higher authority. "I can only say that we trust in Him and that He will make sure that we will do right for His children, all of His children," said Doles. Doles affirmed his commitment to the Kiryas Joel and its founder, the Satmar Rebbe, Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum. "I am happy that Rabbi Joel was guided by G-d's hand to come here, because this is where the Lord wanted His children to come and survive and thrive," said Doles. "That is what I understand and whatever I have to do to be able to provide this service to Hashem, that is what I am going to do."

This man is supposed to be impartial. He and his board are supposed to do what's in the best interest of the two municipalities involved. He's supposed to wait until all of the information has been received and sent to the Town of Monroe Board to be carefully reviewed and a decision rendered based on the facts before them. He's already made a decision and declared it to all, publicly. Now what? Does he need to recuse himself from the vote? I would think so.

The village of KJ has been blessed with very accepting neighbors since its inception. No one bothers with them in their village. It really is their own cloistered community. Not only do they have their community, they come out into the surrounding communities on a regular basis to do their shopping, run businesses, own homes and investment properties, walk around the ponds, go to the movies in Chester, use the bowling alley in Chester and beyond. These aren't a people who are discriminated against by anyone outside their community. There are no incidents of violence against them. They have been left alone to do what they wish. Maybe because they have been left alone, a lot of what's been going on in that village has not been known to anyone outside of it? Well, that's now changed. Many people from outside KJ have been educating themselves on what is really going on. It's time everyone start playing by the same rules. It seems this is not what has been happening. It seems like the burden of that village is upon the shoulders of most of the rest of us in the state of NY, especially those of us residing in Orange county. It seems the state of NY has been complicit in allowing this burden to be placed on those outside of KJ. This should also be investigated. There is no way this can be sustained as it stands now and especially not if an annexation of more land into that community were to happen. Others cannot be made to pay for all of the services needed by this particular population of people. We can barely pay for our own families let alone anyone else's.

In closing, this DGEIS was to address the situation honestly and it has not. You can only mitigate if done truthfully and this DGEIS was not.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Ridgeway, Town of Monroe Resident

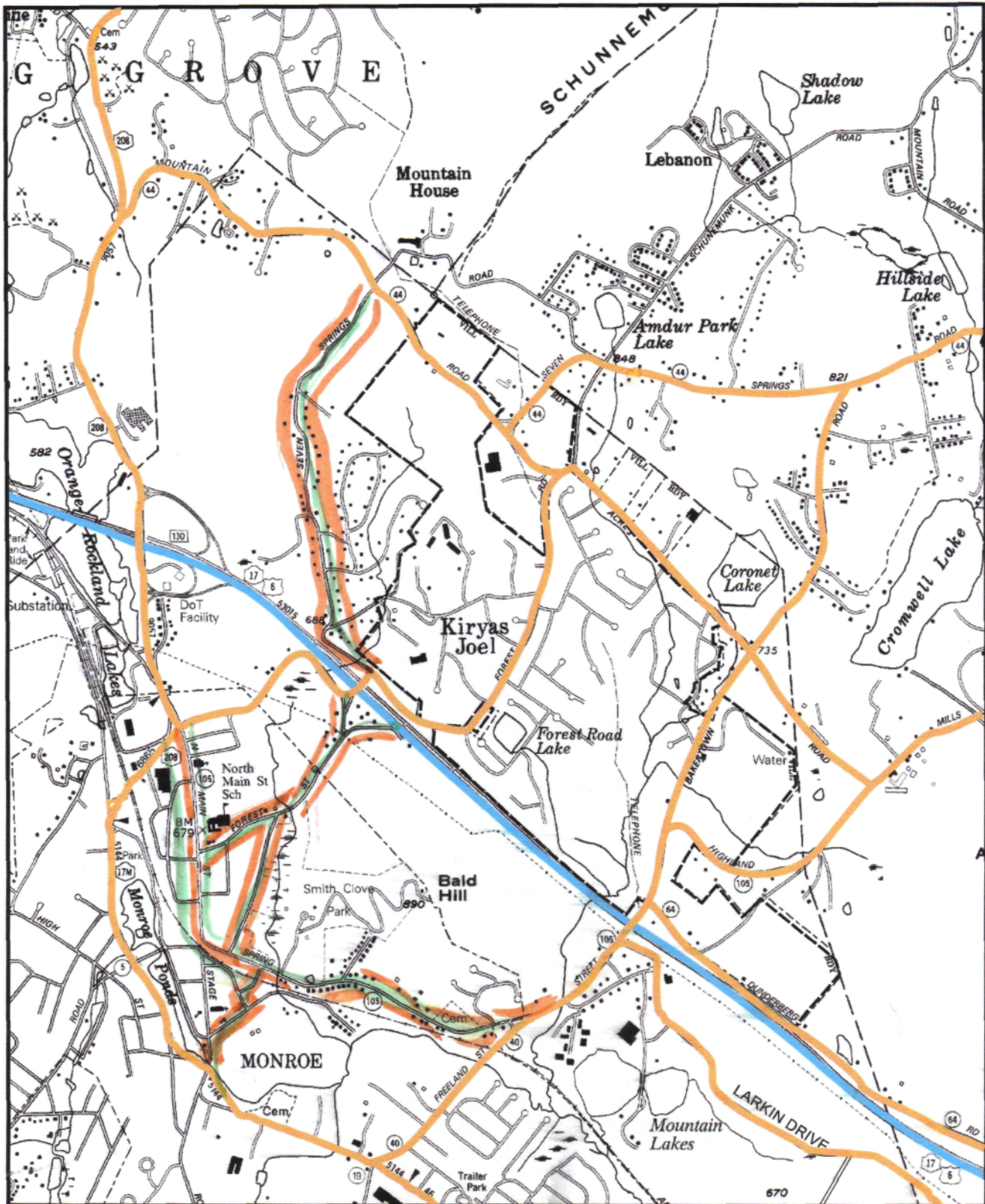


Figure 3.4-2: Local Transportation Network

Kiryas Joel Annexation

Town of Monroe and Village of Kiryas Joel

Orange County, NY

Source: NYS DOT Planimetric Quad, 1991

Scale: 1" = 2,000'



Legend

- Key Roads
- The Quickway