

## LET FACTS LEAD THE WAY

In Amenia last November, a referendum was held to determine the wisdom of taking an \$800,000 bond to buy the Allen property. While the vote was very close the answer was NO! The results of that vote should not be ignored. The issue now before the Town Board however is quite different. We need to be informed by facts, not speculation and misinformation.

We know that our planning board may receive countless applications from developers. If predictions are correct, many additional households may soon be added to Amenia. Our town already suffers from inadequate facilities with little or no available land to house such facilities. The Allen property, if found to be suitable, would provide us with much needed land.

The Allen property may also be helpful in addressing a problem that this Town Board has inherited and by law must address. The final clean up and capping of the site of the old Amenia landfill must be shared by Amenia and other parties. This project is required by law and will result in a serious tax burden. It is imperative that our Town Board members show diligence by studying all possible solutions to these problems.

Since November's vote new information has been presented to the Town. The mandatory capping of the landfill will require a significant amount of money and material. Therefore the Allen property has again become a matter for serious consideration. During the Town Board's discussions important questions were raised about whether the material on the Allen site was appropriate for that project, as well as whether the amount of material available was significant enough to defray some of Amenia's costs. The truth is that we do not know, but need to find out! Hence a Phase Two Study was initiated. It will be conducted by professionals qualified to make such judgments.

There is speculation amongst some in our town that the material on the site is neither suitable nor in sufficient amounts for the capping project. I am not aware that the people questioning, are engineers, experts, or qualified in any way to make such judgments. It seems that these folks have made up their minds before seeing the conclusions reached by those qualified to study the situation. Why not wait for a report which will tell us if there are cost savings or other benefits?

I suggest that we deal with known facts. It is a disservice to the citizens of Amenia to continue to throw insults at a very hardworking Board or to imply that the will of the people is under attack by a subversive Town Board. To allege that members of our Board could "care less" about the citizenry, or that they are playing, "sleight-of-hand" games with taxpayers money is an unnecessary affront serving no good purpose.

The Phase Two study will give us the answers needed to make an informed decision. It will tell us if the site is suitable and if specific quantities of materials are available. We will then have the information we need to do a projected cost analysis. At that time we can have an informed discussion about the wisdom of such a purchase.

Only if the property measures up to the requirements of the capping project can we determine if such a purchase will be a benefit to the town. If it does not make sense we look for other solutions.

I believe that our Town Board cares about the viability of Amenia and the well being of all of its citizens. I commend them for their thoughtful and careful study of this matter and support them in their efforts to give this matter the full, professional, scrutiny that it deserves.

Donna Durbridge.  
Amenia.