

# IMAGINE AMENIA

NEWSLETTER

www.imagineamenia.org

OCTOBER 2007

## WHY CALL IT ImagineAmenia?

**Imagination** is the ability to see and think of things that are not immediately present to your senses.

**Imagination** is an active, rather than a passive ability.

**Imagination** makes it possible to plan.

**Imagination** allows you to think how things can be better than they are.

**Imagination** lets you predict what something done today will lead to tomorrow.

Without **Imagination** there can be no sense of horror.



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## Think hard before you vote this election day.

We will vote on November 6 for Town Supervisor, two Town Council seats, Town Clerk, and Town Justice. As voters, we have the opportunity and responsibility to elect Town Board members who will continue to move Amenia forward, while protecting what we have.

The passage of the Comprehensive Plan Update and new Zoning Laws in July provided everyone in the town, including developers, with a document that can guide all of us in how Amenia can grow and prosper.

At the recent workshop with the Hamlet Planner, residents divided up into groups, discussed their “plans” for the Hamlet, and put ideas on large maps using colored markers and Styrofoam cut outs to identify environmental areas, walkways, roads, and buildings. Most residents concentrated on walkways, additional parking areas, sidewalks, small businesses, and senior and affordable housing. Some residents feel Amenia needs more business now. But where will these businesses go? Along a secondary road to be built on a scenic hillside? Perhaps that is a good idea. Perhaps not. No one person can say, “This is best for Amenia’s future growth.” It’s not just about “the big box store.” We need to work together on the issues of affordable housing, senior housing and services.

Does more business mean lower taxes? Any large business that locates in Amenia, whether it be a resort community or a retail giant on what used to be farmland, has to prove to the town that its presence here will be a **net gain**, not a net cost, to our town. Some candidates for town office think any “development” is good; others take a harder look.

The point is this: in this election, you will not be voting for “Business Here, No Business There”. You will be voting for the candidates who will review the Hamlet Planner’s suggestions, for the candidates who will direct his work. **In short, you will be voting for his bosses.** We need a Town Board that respects the process: a team that understands what we want, a team that is capable of digging into hundreds of pages of documents, negotiating with developers and lawyers. The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee laid the foundation, our Supervisor and Town Board should work together to put the plan into effect.

**ImagineAmenia is proud to recommend three candidates, one for Supervisor and two for Town Board.** JANET REAGON and VICKI DOYLE have worked very hard for Amenia. They both have a record they can be proud of. Aside from the committees they are on, the many town and county meetings they attend, both Janet and Vicki have participated in town-wide clean-up days, planting days, and the Wassaic Park clean-up. Community oriented, visible, and available. A team effort, working together. BOB RIEMER will support them and has additional plans of his own, based on his years of experience as a teacher and businessman.

It takes commitment to sit on a Town Board — commitment to fellow board members and to the voters. It takes so much more than putting up a negative yard sign, or agreeing with 95% of the Comprehensive Plan but still voting No.

**Please vote for candidates who know what is at stake, candidates who are willing to move forward and participate with a positive effort, candidates who are involved in town affairs, candidates who have the ability to get things done. Vote for the candidates who have a plan and broad vision for all of Amenia.** – SUE GREGORY, President, ImagineAmenia Board of Directors

# Is the future of the Taconic DDSO an important issue in Amenia's Fall Elections?

Town government in Amenia currently faces three important challenges. They are:

1. **Electing a town board majority able to breathe life into our excellent new comprehensive plan has to be JOB ONE.** We need a majority who sympathize with and understand the Plan if it is to work.

2. **Electing a town board majority knowledgeable enough to work with the newly appointed hamlet planner to find a solution good for the long-range interests of the town must be the SECOND MAJOR PRIORITY.** He will study and report back on how to add more business to Route 22 north of the town light without destroying all future prospects of rejuvenating business activity in the town center.

3. **A wastewater system for downtown is JOB THREE.** For years now our town has needed a wastewater system that will accommodate the density of housing and business necessary to keep our town center alive. If this is not accomplished soon, **the result will be the kind of endless overlapping strip-malls we see to our south and along Route 9 in Poughkeepsie.**

**BUT WAIT A MINUTE. WE HAVE THREE CRUCIAL CHALLENGES FACING AMENIA, AND THE DDSO IS NOT MENTIONED IN ANY OF THEM!**

How can that be? Why do we see lawn signs, posters in windows, buttons, and leaflets on the seats at Town Board meetings urging us to "Save Taconic and Amenia Together"? What's the explanation for these two very different lists of priorities?

**THE EXPLANATION IS THAT THE FUTURE OF TACONIC DDSO IS AN ARTIFICIAL ISSUE.**

**There are two hard facts that will not go away.**

**FACT ONE:** Anything the Town Board does will have no effect on the future of Taconic DDSO, which is administered from Albany by state officials with their own priorities and agendas. Ask the residents of Marcy, New York, who saw their state hospital turn into a prison. Or ask anyone connected with Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center in Wingdale. It was a hospital, shrank in size, had part of its campus turned into a prison, and then went out of business altogether – all without input from the employees who worked there or the host town.

**FACT TWO:** When folks connected with Taconic DDSO complained to CPIC that language in the Plan was unsympathetic to their interests, the Comprehensive Plan committee changed that language to make it supportive of the DDSO and its employees in their present roles.

In writing its initial draft, the Comprehensive Plan Committee assumed – along with many others – that the DDSO was

**YOU BET IT IS!  
BUT NOT IN THE  
WAY YOU MAY  
HAVE THOUGHT.**

being phased out. The population was dropping. The state had sold off part of the campus and a similar institution in Wingdale had already closed.

When DDSO employees pointed out that it was a mistake to assume the facility would close, the CPIC responded by changing the plan **BECAUSE IT WAS NOT FAIR TO PROPOSE A LAW THAT THREATENS DECENT JOBS.**

But it is also not fair for DDSO supporters to demand that the town blindly support the expansion and growth of their facility, regardless of what uses will be made of the facility.

Nor is it fair to constantly monopolize town meetings belaboring this one point, when there are so many other important things to think about.

**IF THESE TWO HARD FACTS ARE TRUE, THEN THE FUTURE OF THE TACONIC DDSO IS NOT REALLY AT STAKE IN THE '07 AMENIA TOWN ELECTIONS. SO WHY ARE WE STILL HEARING SO MUCH ABOUT "SAVING TACONIC AND AMENIA TOGETHER" ???**

Because there are folks out there — folks with other political goals — who want to make the most of an honest misunderstanding that has already been corrected. They want controversy. And they want to keep controversy alive until election day, to turn out voters who have been told they can save their jobs by voting against those who support the Comprehensive Plan.

**SINGLE ISSUE VOTERS DO NOT PROMOTE COMMUNITY. THEY DO NOT ENCOURAGE CIVIL DISCOURSE.**

**THEY ENCOURAGE CIVIL WAR.**

**ANYONE WHO TRULY WANTS TO "SAVE AMENIA" SHOULD VOTE THIS NOVEMBER for the candidates who will work hard to make our new Comprehensive Plan work, who will facilitate the revival of our central business district, and who will bring to completion a wastewater system.**

**THAT MEANS:**

**VOTE JANET REAGON  
FOR TOWN SUPERVISOR**

**VOTE VICKI DOYLE AND  
ROBERT RIEMER FOR  
TOWN BOARD**

# WHERE DO THEY STAND?

ImagineAmenia recently extended an invitation to all Town Board Candidates to participate in this newsletter by completing a questionnaire. Here is what they said...

## THE COVER LETTER

Sent certified mail to: Janet Reagon, Wayne Euvrard, Norman Cayea, Bob Riemer, Vicki Doyle, Joel Pelkey and Glenn Caldarelli

4 October 2007

Dear [Candidate Name],

The next Newsletter from ImagineAmenia is planned to go out in late October.

On behalf of the ImagineAmenia Board, we invite your responses to the questions on the attached sheet. An identical request is going out to the other six candidates for Town Board office.

We plan to publish your responses, unedited, along with a photograph (head shot, please) so that we may give the voting public in Amenia a sense of how you view some of the critical issues facing the town.

Unfortunately, neither of our two local newspapers do much of a job of reporting your views and plans for the town, and we will not be having a candidates' debate, so your responses can fill a large potential gap in many voters' knowledge of where you stand on these particular issues.

Please let us have your responses, along with a recent photograph, by Friday, October 12, so that we can meet our printer's deadlines.

Yours sincerely,

The Board of Directors, ImagineAmenia  
Enc.: Questionnaire

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Where would you prefer to see commercial development take place in Amenia?

Please rank each item from 1 to 5 (1 = most preferred)

- \_\_\_ On DDSO land in Wassaic
- \_\_\_ On Route 22 North of the light
- \_\_\_ In Amenia hamlet
- \_\_\_ On Route 22 South of the light
- \_\_\_ Other (please identify)

2. The Comprehensive Plan for Amenia has been adopted by the Town Board. What is your stance toward it? Please circle one, and explain your choice in up to 100 words.

Entirely in support    Mostly in support    Neutral  
Mostly opposed    Entirely opposed

3. We often hear that Amenia must increase its tax base. How should this be achieved? Please rank the following items from 1 to 6 (1 = most preferred), or place a zero against item(s) we should absolutely avoid.

- \_\_\_ Attract and build office parks
- \_\_\_ Attract and build more residential units
- \_\_\_ Encourage resort development
- \_\_\_ Attract and build industrial parks
- \_\_\_ Attract a big box store
- \_\_\_ Other (please identify)

4. A Wastewater system in the central hamlet will mean that householders and businesses there will see increased out-of-pocket costs. Despite this, do you believe a Wastewater system is absolutely necessary for the future of Amenia?

YES    NO    (Please circle one)

Please explain, using up to 100 words

If you have any further comments to make regarding this questionnaire, its contents, or other issues, please append them using another sheet of paper, as necessary.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. PLEASE LET US HAVE YOUR ANSWERS BY FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12. MAIL TO IMAGINEAMENIA, PO BOX 169, AMENIA, NY 12501, OR DROP OFF AT ROONEY DESIGN, FRESHTOWN PLAZA.

## RESPONSES FROM CANDIDATES FOR TOWN SUPERVISOR



### Wayne Euvrard

While he did sign for the Questionnaire envelope from the post office, NO RESPONSE was received from Mr. Euvrard, candidate for Town Supervisor.



### Janet Reagon

**1. Where would you prefer to see commercial development take place in Amenia? In order of preference:**

1. In Amenia hamlet (as envisioned by Comprehensive Plan, a Traditional Neighborhood Development) (of course dependent upon getting a sewer system).
2. In the hamlet of Wassaic.
3. If the wetland and habitat can be protected, the area between Freshtown Plaza and Route 343 might work. I would like to see the Plaza and Route 343 connected at the very least by a boardwalk.
4. On Route 22 south of the light, which I think would naturally happen if we get a sewer district that includes it.
5. There can be no development on DDSO land. Were the State to sell off more surplus property, a Transit Oriented Development in the area around the Ten Mile River Railroad Station might be a possibility.
6. I would not favor development on Route 22 north of the light on the west side of the highway, unless traffic and environmental issues can be solved.

**2. The Comprehensive Plan for Amenia has been adopted by the Town Board. What is your stance toward it?**

I was and continue to be ENTIRELY IN SUPPORT of the new Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Law. We are facing increasing development pressures, and the new Zoning Law gives us the tools to control growth. It is very important to be as protective as possible of the environment, which is the reason many people choose to live here. Developers must consult the Hudsonia Report first, and work with the Planning Board and environmental experts from the beginning to make sure that our unique habitats can survive. It also contains affordable housing and open space requirements that I support.

**3. We often hear that Amenia must increase its tax base. How should this be achieved? In order of preference:**

1. Encourage resort development. (Until the 1950's, Amenia had a resort community around Lake Amenia. We are seeing more people buying houses, first as weekend getaways, and then more permanent residences. This trend is very likely to continue, as Amenia is only a two-hour train ride from Manhattan.)
2. Attract and build office parks, or preferably, allow mixed uses in the hamlets so that offices, residences and shops can be located within walking distance of each other.
3. Attract and build more residential units, especially affordable ones for senior citizens, young families, fire and rescue personnel, and municipal or school workers. As the population increases, businesses will come as well since the people serve as a ready market and a source of workers.

Re: Big Box Stores: I do not support a big box store, because the experience of many towns is that once one comes in, all the small stores for a 25-mile radius close.

Re: Industrial Parks: It would depend on what industry was planned for an industrial park, and I would have to be convinced that it would serve the needs of the community. Some industries might be beneficial while others would not be. For Amenia right now, I believe that preserving agriculture is key to economic growth. If we can find a way for farmers to stay in business, the community as a whole will prosper. As William Jennings Bryan said in his Cross of Gold Speech in 1892, "Destroy your cities but leave our farms, and the cities will grow up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms, and the grass will grow in every corner of your city." Once prime agricultural land has been lost to development it can never be reclaimed.

Please note that the town itself can only control zoning, not what an individual developer might want to do, which is dependent upon market forces. The town can create a climate that supports development but it is not going to build anything itself.

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# WHERE DO THEY STAND? (continued)

**JANET REAGON** (cont)

4. *A Wastewater system in the central hamlet will mean that householders and businesses there will see increased out-of-pocket costs. Despite this, do you believe a Wastewater system is absolutely necessary for the future of Amenia?*

YES. A Wastewater system in the central hamlet of Amenia is the key to smart growth, and I support it. However, the ongoing operation and maintenance of the system has to be affordable to the home and business owners. With the offer from Silo Ridge to build their sewage treatment facility with enough capacity to accommodate the hamlet, we have our best chance in years to finally get a wastewater system, which has been talked about for at least 40 years. If elected, I plan to look for state and federal grants and low-cost loans to offset the cost; and I intend to work with Silo Ridge, other developers, and private foundations to achieve this goal.

## RESPONSES FROM CANDIDATES FOR TOWN BOARD

### Glenn Caldarelli

Mr. Caldarelli, candidate for Town Board, did NOT RESPOND to the Questionnaire.

### Norman Cayea

While he did sign for the Questionnaire envelope from the post office, NO RESPONSE was received from Mr. Cayea, candidate for Town Board.

### Victoria (Vicki) Doyle

1. *Where would you prefer to see commercial development take place in Amenia? In order of preference:*

1. In Amenia hamlet
2. On Route 22 north of the light
3. Other: Wassaic hamlet: Restored Mill, Luther's Auction barn and the Pavilion (across from Calsi's).
4. On Route 22 south of the light

5. On [former] DDSO land in Wassaic.

2. *The Comprehensive Plan for Amenia has been adopted by the Town Board. What is your stance toward it?*

Entirely in support. After five years of work, Amenia has a forward-looking Plan, and has replaced its antiquated Zoning laws with business-friendly, cutting-edge laws that are already serving as models for other surrounding towns. The Plan and new laws provide (1) greater flexibility for small-scale businesses to grow and flourish, particularly in the hamlets of Amenia and Wassaic; (2) increased affordable housing; (3) greater environmental and open space protection; and (4) mechanisms for capable leaders to ensure big developers do not walk away with all the profits, leaving the towns to pay for the increased costs of public services.

3. *We often hear that Amenia must increase its tax base. How should this be achieved? In order of preference:*

1. Other: Enable existing and compatible new businesses to flourish within Amenia and Wassaic.
2. Attract and build office parks.
3. Attract and build industrial parks.
4. Attract and build more residential units.
5. Encourage resort development.
6. Attract a big box store (I'm not in favor of this)

**VICKI DOYLE** (cont)

4. *A Wastewater system in the central hamlet will mean that householders and businesses there will see increased out-of-pocket costs. Despite this, do you believe a Wastewater system is absolutely necessary for the future of Amenia?*

Yes. A sewer is essential for a vibrant mix of residential and business enterprises to flourish in the downtown, make affordable housing a reality, and to enable owners to take full advantage of the new Zoning laws. A sewer will stimulate local businesses which will increase and diversify the tax base and thereby lower individual property taxes. The upfront and operating cost of the sewer must be affordable (offset by grants, donations, and cost sharing with developers). Bottom line: it must be a sound investment for property owners, far outweighing the risk of doing nothing.

### Joel Pelkey

While he did sign for the Questionnaire envelope from the post office, NO RESPONSE was received from Mr. Pelkey, candidate for Town Board.

### Robert (Bob) Riemer

1. *Where would you prefer to see commercial development take place in Amenia? In order of preference:*

1. In Amenia hamlet
2. Other: East Main to Mygatt, West Main to Serevan Restaurant
3. On Route 22 south of the light to Fudgy's "Plaza"

4. On (former) DDSO land in Wassaic
5. On Route 22 north of the light

2. *The Comprehensive Plan for Amenia has been adopted by the Town Board. What is your stance toward it?*

Entirely in support. The Comprehensive Plan sets the "road map" for Amenia's future. It was crucial that this document be adopted in July 2007 so that it can be implemented to insure that future development, at our doorstep, is done in compliance with the Plan. It protects our natural resources, protects our view shed, keeps our farm operating, and provides the opportunity for businesses to locate in the downtown hamlet.

3. *We often hear that Amenia must increase its tax base. How should this be achieved? In order of preference:*

1. Other: Attract businesses that would provide good, high quality jobs, leading to careers for young people and maybe, even retirees who can contribute as mentors.
2. Attract and build technology centers to locate here.
3. Attract and build office parks, small scale office areas.
4. Attract and build more residential units, affordable units mixed with market-driven development.
5. Encourage resort development.
0. Attract a big box store – No!

4. *A Wastewater system in the central hamlet will mean that householders and businesses there will see increased out-of-pocket costs. Despite this, do you believe a Wastewater system is absolutely necessary for the future of Amenia?*

Yes. The wastewater system is vital to survival of the hamlet of Amenia. We need to work with developers to make it affordable to those who use it. This will allow for businesses and residential, as well as entertainment facilities, i.e. movie theater, etc., to locate downtown. We have waited for too long. The time to move forward is now!

ADDITIONAL INFO: My military experience, as well as my 37 years teaching chemistry and physics, provides me with the leadership qualities that a seat at the Town Board demands. I hope I can earn your vote for this important position as your Town Board Councilman.

## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF IMAGINEAMENIA:

ImagineAmenia has been criticized in the past for not including the views and opinions of all candidates. The Board of ImagineAmenia decided to give every candidate the opportunity to tell the public where they stand on important issues facing the town. We were most disappointed when, after voicing criticism and complaint, some of the candidates chose not to reveal their platforms to you, the citizens of Amenia.

# Meet the Candidates for TOWN CLERK

Since the position of Town Clerk is not a political one, ImagineAmenia wrote a letter to both candidates for the office inviting them to participate in this newsletter by telling the people of Amenia about themselves and their qualifications for the office. Here are their responses:

## Maureen Bonds

Mrs. Bonds “respectfully declined the invitation to participate” but thanked the Board of Directors for their consideration.

## Dawn Marie Klingner

In 1982 the Lopez family moved from Yonkers to Amenia. The town of Amenia has been my home ever since and now is home to my family. I am running for Town Clerk because I feel that I am ready to serve and to give back to my community, which has given so much to me. In high school my teachers, principals and school board gave me the tools that made my success possible. They challenged me every day. And when the opportunities became available they were

supportive making it possible for me to attend a journalism conference in Washington DC, and leadership seminars in Santa Barbara, Ca., Boulder, Co and Albany, NY.

The school board encouraged me as I began the program at Webutuck that allows seniors in high school to take college classes at Dutchess Community College. The financial support of the local businesses, the Lions Club, my neighbors have helped make each experience possible. My husband Chris and I are no secret in this town. We have two children Zachary and Karlie. While our children were at Little Professors daycare we volunteered many hours, including helping organize and work Kids Days, chaperoning trips, and driving the school bus. For the past two years we’ve coached T-Ball and soccer. In addition to recreational activities we look forward to the annual events that Amenia has to offer...The strawberry fair, community day, fishing day, church BBQ’s, firemen’s carnival, spaghetti dinners, Lions dinners and school fundraisers.

I enjoy working at the Amenia Town Hall. As an administrative assistant to the town supervisor I have had first hand experience with the workings of local government, including the Town Clerk’s office. I enjoy this work and know I can do a good job as your Town Clerk.

I thank all of those who have believed in me and supported me over the years: my parents, my husband and children, family, friends, teachers, local businesses, Lions Club and local newspapers. I ask you for your vote this Election Day.

Remember to Vote November 6<sup>th</sup> for the one who cares and will do her very best! Vote: DAWN MARIE KLINGNER

**Nobody will ever deprive  
the American people of the  
right to vote except the  
American people themselves  
—and the only way they  
could do this is by  
not voting.**

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

# TWO INCUMBENTS WITH A SOLID RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

Supervisor **JANET REAGON** and councilwoman **VICKI DOYLE** are running for re-election.

**They have records they can run ON, not records they have to run FROM.**

When **VICKI DOYLE** took office in January, 2004, here is how things stood:

- An exceptional (let us call it by its proper name: SPOT) zoning law had been passed by the previous town board majority to allow a 12-bay auto repair facility to build on a residential parcel – surrounded by and across the road from other residential parcels – on a scenic hillside.
- The previous town board majority was entertaining, and refusing to discourage, a proposal from a development company to build a shopping plaza “anchored” by a 43,000-square-foot supermarket: all this to be located NEXT DOOR to the existing shopping plaza (formerly Grand Union, later Food- and then Freshtown). Oh, and it was also to be shoehorned into a tiny parcel traversed by a stream and bordering on a large wetland.
- The town had never written a zoning law to implement its most recent Master Plan. The zoning law of record was available (in 2003) for purchase at the Town Hall and proclaimed itself to be “The Zoning Law of the Town of Amenia.” It was full of specific requirements regulating such things as the allowable change of temperature in a stream flowing from a business to an abutting residential parcel, noise and light levels, the caliper of trees in a buffer between residential and business, and so forth. When a citizen requested an appointment with the then-supervisor (2002-2003) to discuss details of the application of the zoning law then in place, the supervisor said he hadn’t really studied that zoning law in enough detail to discuss it chapter and verse.
- A Comprehensive Plan Review Committee had been appointed to review and revise the Master Plan, which was last updated in 1990. But no funds had been allocated to hire expert consultants, and no efforts were underway to secure grant money to help pay for outside consultants.
- Preserving agriculture and open space were not priorities. The 2001-2003 supervisor’s “vision” for the town was to have a quarter of a mile of business in all four directions from the town light. The accepted wisdom was, We need more business to lower our taxes. This was the plan; this was the vision.

**VICKI DOYLE’S** first two years saw accomplishments but also considerable frustrations. She made contacts with county, state, and private organizations to learn how to get expert consultants and also grant money to help pay for them. She not only helped organize but also worked with committees to improve the appearance of Amenia’s hamlet centers – and also worked physically, picking up trash on clean-up days, decorating Fountain Square for holidays. She argued to spend money (much of which would be reimbursed from successful grant applications) on planning experts who could help us see past the pressing demands of *RIGHT NOW* to planning for the future. A shopping center might allow a local company to sell some gravel and might give a few months of work to a few local contractors, **BUT WHAT WOULD THAT PLAZA’S LONG-TERM EFFECT ON OUR TOWN BE? ON ITS TRAFFIC FLOW? ON ITS SCENIC QUALITIES? ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE THAT CONTINUES TO ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS?** Doyle knew that only experts can tell us that.

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# Who is Bob Riemer? Why Elect Him to the Town Board?

**BOB RIEMER** may be a newcomer to politics, but he is no newcomer to Amenia. He has been involved with this community for decades as a teacher, as a volunteer, an organizer of school clubs and community recreation activities, and more recently as a realtor. **He has friends in every quarter of our community.**

**He has followed the development of the revised Comprehensive Plan closely, and he understands the Plan's goals.** As a businessman, he also understands the details a Town Board member needs to master in order to make those goals a reality.

Bob is a Navy veteran who served in Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Later, he went to college and on to graduate work in physics and chemistry. He taught those subjects at Webutuck for 37 years. In fact, he taught some of the candidates for office in this fall's elections.

**As a realtor and businessman, Bob has gotten to know the commercial landscape of our area intimately.** He understands what businesses will work in Amenia, where they can be located, and how they can be encouraged to provide the good jobs our young people need and still preserve the town character we citizens value and want to keep: We are a small rural town blessed with great natural beauty. **Bob understands that growth will come, and that business is important, but he also understands that the business we encourage should be OF AN APPROPRIATE SIZE AND CHARACTER, AND IN THE RIGHT PLACES.**

His position statements mention "bakeries, coffee shops, laundromats, an internet café, wine and cheese shops, and book stores that encourage people to linger and enjoy the activity on the street." He understands that healthy hamlet centers are key to Amenia's survival as a place we can all be proud of. He understands that the health of the centers depends on a wastewater system, and he knows enough about business to negotiate with developers to get them to help us pay for that system. Without giving away the store. Without throwing the baby out with the bath water.

**Managing development is of course important. It's the major challenge facing Amenia at this time. But Bob's goals for Amenia include more than just that one issue.** He is concerned not only with protecting our future, but also with the quality of life for our citizens young and old, rich and poor, right now. He intends to support recreation programs and affordable housing for our seniors

and working young people. He looks toward a town building able to house activities we need to survive as a town.

**These good things cannot be accomplished unless we elect a town board whose members can work together.**

**The new board cannot afford to waste months of precious meeting time over distractions. There is too much important work to do.**

**BOB RIEMER** understands this, and he can do something about it because he has another quality we need in a town official: **HE KNOWS HOW TO STAND HIS GROUND!**

We want to be positive here, and Bob has a long list of positive qualities to recommend him. But let's also be realistic. Anyone who has attended town meetings (or watched them on TV) over the last four years knows that bullying is a weapon used freely – all too freely – in Amenia's Town Hall. And that bullying does not come from the audience side of the table alone.

In an ideal town, the whole Town Board works together as a team. If that can't happen (it hasn't happened in Amenia for at least four years), then at least a majority has to be able to agree and bring the minority along so that something positive can get done. A paralyzed Town Board is the preferred prey of developers out to make a quick buck at the expense of some rube town's "environment." A paralyzed Town Board can't concentrate on the needs of town citizens.

Bob Riemer can stand up to bullies – bullies representing the interests of opportunistic developers, bullies with narrow agendas in the audience at Town Board meetings, and bullies on the Town Board. At the Democratic caucus he answered critics who had spoken in public comment (while he was absent) to accuse him of "collusion" in proposing a real estate sale. He answered these critics forcefully, with full command of the facts, and decisively. One of his critics was present and – though questions were allowed – answered not a peep to Bob's presentations. Bob Riemer can stand up to bullies, and we need him as a member of our Town Board.

**VOTE FOR BOB RIEMER FOR TOWN BOARD ON NOVEMBER 6.** We have two great experienced incumbents, Janet Reagon and Vicki Doyle. Bob Riemer can work with them to keep Amenia moving forward.

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## TWO INCUMBENTS WITH A SOLID RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT (cont.)

The Comprehensive Plan Review Committee became the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee. With expert consultants, the committee continued the long and arduous task not only of finding out what the community wants for its future — a task begun under the previous administration — but also of doing the hard work of writing the zoning law needed to implement these goals. **THIS TASK COULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT VICKI'S DETERMINATION TO HIRE THE EXPERTS WE NEED AND TO RAISE THE GRANT MONEY NEEDED TO PAY FOR THEM.** At every step of the way she was backed up by her 2004-2005 supervisor **BONNIE HUNDT**, and by fellow board member **ROGER RUSSELL**.

Enter **JANET REAGON**, who began her tenure as Town Supervisor on January 1, 2006.

Reagon seamlessly continued the initiatives begun by Doyle, Russell and Hundt. She pressed the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee to continue its work, charging them with delivering a workable plan that could be enacted during her first term. Thanks to Reagon's determination and the support of Doyle and Russell, the new Plan AND ITS SUPPORTING ZONING LAW were adopted in July, 2007.

Anyone who attended the CPIC and Town Board meetings will remember that Reagon's steering our civic ship through such contentious waters was a heroic feat indeed. She and her colleagues, Doyle and Russell, put up with the worst kind of personal accusations, quibbling over insignificant details, willful misunderstanding, grandstanding for the camera, and shameless

attempts to delay passage of this plan until after the next town election. But, after a seemingly endless string of 3- and 4-hour meetings, all dragged out by rehashing the same tedious complaints, objections, and imagined conspiracies, 5' 2" Janet stood up to the bullies on both sides of the table to press what she (as a career teacher of government) knew to be right: the timely implementation, by proper legal procedure, of the vision statement and supporting zoning our town needs NOW in order to control its own future. This determined woman showed that her small stature is not an accurate measure of her strength. Supported by Doyle and Russell, she faced down irrelevant objections, ignored shouted insults (which included accusations that she was guilty of a felony), withstood the browbeating of a fellow councilman (who was supposed to work as her partner but preferred to try to put her on the spot in front of the tv camera), and pressed the vote. With the support of Doyle and Russell she passed the Plan, and at last, after many years, the citizens of Amenia could glimpse (through the murk of special interest and factional wrangling) the clear light of a promising future.

**JANET REAGON and VICKI DOYLE** have earned your vote for their re-election.

Much work remains to be done: the Plan has been passed, but it has not yet been put into action.

**THAT JOB FALLS TO THE NEXT TOWN BOARD MAJORITY. MAKE SURE THAT JANET REAGON AND VICKI DOYLE ARE PART OF THAT MAJORITY.**

# A conversation with Amenia's Town Supervisor, Janet Reagon

**Poughkeepsie Journal**

Thursday, October 18, 2007

## Reagon is solid leader in Amenia

From completing a complicated landfill closure deal to setting a new planning blueprint for the town, Amenia has made substantial progress during the past few years, in no small thanks to the efforts of Supervisor Janet Reagon. Voters should reward her with two more years in office.

Reagon, a Democrat, is facing a challenge from Republican Wayne Euvrard, a town councilman.

Under Reagon's leadership, the town is instituting good planning principles, including strengthening the town center and preserving open space and farmland.

Reagon also has had to deal with some criticism, most notably in her attempts to get the state to be more open with its plans for the sprawling Taconic Developmental Disabilities Services Office. The development center was built nearly 80 years ago and, at one time, housed more than 5,000 residents who were physically or mentally disabled. Today, there are fewer than 200 patients there, as an increasing number have been placed in community-based programs. The state has sold off some of the land, but still owns hundreds of acres.

Initially, a committee working on the town's comprehensive plan called for the state to close the facility over time. But it later modified that approach, saying Taconic DDSO is "an important element of the local economy." While stressing she hasn't called for the facility to close, Reagon makes the compelling case that the state needs to partner with the town, perhaps by extending water and sewer services from the site to areas where the town would like to steer development. In a definite sign of progress, a key state official is expected to attend a town board meeting tonight to discuss these and other matters.

Euvrard said he agreed "with 95 percent" of the comprehensive plan, but he thought there should be more commercial zones in places and, thus, voted against it. He also questioned some of the town's spending choices of late, saying Amenia needs to be more "financially conservative." Reagon countered that the town had a high fund balance and used some money on equipment and other purposes but has kept taxes in check during her time in office.

### PROGRESS ON FORMER LANDFILL

Last year, the town also took ownership of 28 acres, enabling a long-awaited cleanup of a former landfill site to go forward. The town may ultimately use the land for a park or other community purposes.

Reagon and Euvrard agree the town's cluster of businesses along routes 22 and 44 in the hamlet area must have a sewer system. They say the town will need help from higher levels of government, and both are hopeful the nearby Silo Ridge development project will be instrumental as well. Indeed, the comprehensive committee's good work centers around the premise that the needed infrastructure will be put in place to allow the town to grow responsibly. Both Reagon and Euvrard seem to have a good grasp of these issues.

In her first two years as supervisor, Reagon, a retired school teacher, has made herself available to town residents, devoting the necessary time to the job. Euvrard, a state corrections department employee, believes, he, too, can accommodate the demands of being supervisor. While he may be right, it is clear the town has made some good decisions with Reagon at the helm. Amenia residents should support her again.

*NOTE: This editorial was taken from PoughkeepsieJournal.com where the editor had corrected errors made in the printed newspaper regarding the party affiliations of the candidates. Janet Reagon had been incorrectly identified as a Republican (she is a Democrat) and Wayne Euvrard was incorrectly identified as a Democrat (he is a Republican).*

### Q: Janet, why are you running for re-election?

A: I feel that I have made a difference. Being Supervisor is a full-time job, with hundreds of problems and decisions, large and small, to deal with every day. I promised to make the government as responsive as possible to peoples' needs, and to do that I have tried to make our services more efficient. We have dedicated, hard-working employees in the Town of Amenia, and I have worked with them to get them the tools they need, like new computers and software. When I was a teacher – on the outside of town government looking in – I used to be very frustrated at the slow pace of progress. I believe that it is important to tackle issues as they arise and deal with them. The longer something festers, the harder it is to solve.

### Q: What have you learned in the past two years?

A: **A lot!** Every day is different. A Supervisor needs to know about finance, budgeting, SEQRA, wastewater treatment, grant writing—the list is limitless. Most important is connecting with people who can help. I have been able to forge relationships with people in the county and state government and in the private sector that have allowed us to do some things that no one in 2005 would have believed possible, such as beginning the cleanup of the Old Amenia Landfill and improving Wassaic Park. I have taken as many opportunities as I could to attend conferences and training sessions to learn about all aspects of this job, and I have brought back whatever I have learned to try to improve town government.

The other major thing I have learned is a healthy respect and admiration for all the talented people in Amenia who give so much to the town. I am proud of the fact that volunteerism is alive and well in Amenia, and I believe that its people are the town's biggest asset.

### Q: What do you see as your greatest accomplishment(s)?

A: Certainly the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update and new Zoning Law was a huge step forward. Now Amenia has a blueprint for future development, and a way to control growth. Planning for the future is key, and that is why I am excited about the work that is underway right now for the hamlet of Amenia.

When I assumed office in January, 2006, I stated that two of my goals were to get the Comprehensive Plan and new Zoning adopted, and to get the Old Amenia Landfill Cleanup process started. I am proud to say that both have been accomplished, and after the Old Amenia Landfill cleanup is completed, the town will have 28 beautiful acres for a park.

### Q: What difficulties or obstacles have you faced?

A: Well, I never anticipated an accident that destroyed the Town Clerk's office, and no one could have predicted the flood of April, 2007!

There are also the more constant challenges of doing the business of the town in the face of willful and relentless efforts to impede progress. We need to develop our infrastructure, bring Well #4-A on line, get water meters installed, and look to the future.

### Q: How have you met these challenges?

A: In both the crises I employed our Emergency Preparedness Plan, and worked with the local fire departments, county, state, and even federal officials to get through it. Interestingly, because of the flood, I became aware of an unrelated water problem at Tally Ho Park, and worked with the owners and the DC Health Department to see that the residents got enough clean water.

By working hard, reaching out to people who can help, seeking funding from other sources, and generally taking a hands-on approach to the business of government, I believe that I can meet new challenges effectively.

### Q: What do you hope to accomplish in the next two years?

A: There are a lot of projects underway that I would like to see finished, including the renovation of Wassaic Park, Mechanic Street Sidewalk, Old Amenia Landfill cleanup, Lake Amenia Road Bridge replacement, Historic Signs for Wassaic, and additional parking lot for Rail Trail users.

I am sure that I will be spending a lot of time trying to move along the sewer project for the hamlet of Amenia, which will involve working with developers, the county, and the state.

I share the dream of many residents of Wassaic that the Harlem Valley Rail Trail will be extended into the hamlet and I intend to push that as far as I can.

It is also important not to forget about the southern end of town. Working with the state and private entities, it may be possible to improve infrastructure, including recreational opportunities as well as water and sewer.

As infrastructure and facilities are improved, business opportunities will be enhanced and the town's tax base will be strengthened.

**All of these goals require a Town Board that is also forward-looking. Please vote for Vicki Doyle, Bob Riemer and Janet Reagon for the future of Amenia!**

# OMRDD Commissioner reaches out to the Town

**Diana Jones Ritter**, Commissioner of New York State's Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), attended the Amenia Town Board meeting on **Thursday, October 18**, to make a presentation and answer questions about the state's present and future plans for Taconic DDSO.



**BREAKING  
NEWS**

She started her presentation with an idea borrowed from *The Late Show with David Letterman*: a list of the "Top 10 Reasons for the Current Drama." **Number one on her list was, "Failure to work together to identify creative and reasonable options for the benefits of all New York State citizens."**

Commissioner Ritter went on to list some things that she would and would not do. Some of the things she promised she would not do are: own decisions or behaviors of the previous administration; be bullied into any decisions by anyone's private interests; lie, misrepresent, mislead or hide information; rush into long-term decisions or deals without full analysis; deny anyone's opportunity to be heard or comment. She listed some facts concerning the number of employees and consumers still on "the hill," a breakdown of the classification of the consumers, and the economic impact of the DDSO on nearby communities.

What was most encouraging was the commissioner's promise that, although her office is currently assessing the needs and resources of the OMRDD, both locally and statewide, she will involve all interested parties in the discussions, and that any decisions and the reasons for them will be "transparent."

She stressed that the decisions won't be made in a vacuum. She thanked the town for language contained in the Comprehensive Plan promising to work with the state and the DDSO as neighbors, in the best interests of both the consumers and the employees.

She also stated that while a preliminary evaluation of the waste water treatment plant on the hill shows an excess capacity for less than 200 households, the state is very interested in working with the town to see what might be possible.

An audience member asked Commissioner Ritter if the public could possibly be more involved in discussions and the decision making process. She asked **Supervisor Janet Reagon** to help her with that. Supervisor Reagon stated that it would be a good idea to set up a **citizens' advisory committee** with current and retired employees of the DDSO, town officials, and residents of the community. Commissioner Ritter was very receptive to this idea.

**Many questions on the future of the facility were answered with an honest statement that analysis was still underway, and details would not be available until that process was completed.** But she assured everyone that her immediate goal was to improve the options and care for everyone served by the DDSO.

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**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."** - Margaret Mead

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