

TOWN OF RAMAPO

237 Route 59

Suffern, New York 10901

(845) 357-5100 Fax: (845) 357-8513

CHRISTOPHER P. ST. LAWRENCE
Supervisor

CHRISTIAN G. SAMPSON
Town Clerk

At the Regular Meeting of the Ramapo Town Board held on October 28, 2009, the following resolution was **moved by Councilman Ullman, seconded by Councilman Stein** and adopted by all board members present with Councilman Friedman being absent:

Resolution 2009-568

WHEREAS, United Water New York (UWNY) is the primary provider of drinking water to most of Rockland County; and

WHEREAS, UWNY has an obligation to provide clean, safe water to its consumers in a cost effective manner without adversely affecting our environment; and

WHEREAS, UWNY has developed a proposal, known as the "Haverstraw Water Supply Project", to draw water from the Hudson River for use, after treatment, as drinking water in Rockland County; and

WHEREAS, the Haverstraw Water Supply Project seeks to treat water to be drawn from the Hudson River by what the proposal terms a "desalinization" plant; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has assumed the status of lead agency for this matter under provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA); and

WHEREAS, environmental review of the desalination plant by the DEC is now in its early stages; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that the project may have potentially significant environmental impacts, the DEC has issued a Positive Declaration under SEQRA dated April 2, 2009; and

WHEREAS, desalination plants may have adverse environmental impacts on wildlife, causing injury and mortality to fish and other aquatic life from water intake structures; adverse impacts on water quality from brine discharge; detrimental impacts on sensitive ecological areas from construction and siting; and negative impacts on air quality due to increased emission of greenhouse gases and other pollutants from the significant amounts of electricity used during plant operation; and

WHEREAS, the proposed desalination plant's water intake and discharge may disturb and harm the delicate estuarine ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the water intake for the proposed desalination plant is near enough to the Indian Point Nuclear power station to raise ongoing concerns that the water being drawn may be contaminated with trace radioactive substances that no treatment can remove; and

WHEREAS, the desalination process may create a waste disposal problem by creating effluent that must be transported to, and will add to the burden of, the Rockland County's sewer treatment and solid waste management facilities; and

WHEREAS, it will be the residents and businesses of Rockland County, who already pay taxes and utility costs far in excess of most other communities, that will ultimately pay the tens of millions of dollars for the construction of the desalinization plant and its operational costs including ongoing high electric use; and

WHEREAS, there has yet to be an adequate analysis of potentially more cost effective and less ecologically problematic alternatives for increasing Rockland's water supply, including building new surface water supply reservoirs, using and promoting green infrastructure to better manage and reuse storm water, replacing existing pipes and structures to minimize leaks and waste, reusing wastewater and providing incentives for water conservation; and

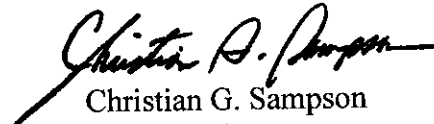
WHEREAS, there has yet to be an adequate analysis of water supply and demand on a regional basis crossing both county and state lines as well as the jurisdictions of multiple water providers so as to address this most important issue of a reliable and constant clean water supply broadly and regionally, not provincially; and

WHEREAS, upon the Ramapo Town Board's consideration of the proposal of UWNY, it is our judgment that the "Haverstraw Water Supply Project" is premature, unnecessary and unjustified, and that it appears that the costs and risks of producing additional drinking water with a Hudson River desalinization plant far exceed the value of its possible benefits;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Ramapo declares itself opposed to construction of the "Haverstraw Water Supply Project", and any Hudson River desalinization facility at this time; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Board urges the DEC to continue to scrupulously conduct its environmental review of the proposed "Haverstraw Water Supply Project" and to carefully consider the concerns voiced by the Town of Ramapo and all interested municipalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Attorney shall keep the Town Board apprised of the status of UWNY's application for the "Haverstraw Water Supply Project" and shall recommend what concrete actions the Town of Ramapo may take either individually or in conjunction with other concerned municipalities, public interest groups and citizens to oppose the project before the DEC or in any other appropriate venue.


Christian G. Sampson
Town Clerk

CGS:so

CC: Town Board
Town Attorney
Finance
Janet Burnet