



SAVE Colonie

A Partnership for Planning

Neighbors and Neighborhoods First

May 11, 2018

Hon. Paula Mahan, Supervisor
Colonie Town Hall
534 Loudon Road
Latham, NY 12110
(VIA EMAIL)

Dear Supervisor Mahan:

Recent media coverage of ethics issues surrounding Colonie's Town Designated Engineers (TDEs) is unfortunate. Several months ago, SAVE Colonie brought this concern to your attention. Receiving no response, SAVE then filed a formal complaint with the town's Ethics Board. The Ethics Board's response that TDEs, as they are not town employees, are not covered by town ethics standards, was even more disturbing than the ethical challenges facing the town, and these TDEs, outlined in the original complaint.

We understand that the town's contracts with the two TDE firms will soon be up for renewal. This presents the ideal opportunity for the town to address this serious issue and reinsert the standard contract provisions barring TDEs from representing clients before the town. Going forward, in order to protect taxpayers and the integrity of Colonie, as well as the firms contracting with the town, such common-sense ethics standards should be included in all contracts which the town negotiates with engineering firms, consultants, and other professionals hired by the town. Neighboring towns' contracts include similar prohibitions as a matter of course.

This issue has raised awareness of the need to update the town's ethics law to include additional safeguards. Colonie should be a shining example of how an ethical and transparent government operates. We've researched the ethics laws and practices of neighboring municipalities and, to help address this issue, would be happy to share their ordinances with you and assist in drafting language that could be adopted in Colonie.

Building on your administration's legacy of financial well-being for our town, you now have the opportunity to ensure that Colonie moves forward with ethical standards codified in town law to protect taxpayers, making clear our town operates with the highest level of integrity. This ethical responsibility, along with fiscal responsibility, will cement a proud legacy for your administration.

We hope you will accept this offer of collaboration in the spirit in which it is made. Please contact Jessica Mahar at 518-669-5067 or jessicamahar@gmail.com to start moving forward with this.

Sincerely,
SAVE Colonie: A Partnership for Planning

Cc: Colonie Town Board Members