

# Village Views

by Elliott Auerbach, Ellenville Village Manager

## I Am Excited! I am NOT Excited!

I am excited about the prospect of casino gambling. I am excited about the prospect of 3000 onsite jobs with salaries ranging from \$27k to \$32k. I am excited about the prospect of 3000 indirect, offsite jobs and the secondary and tertiary business it will bring in food services, laundry services, legal services, insurance advertising and innumerable professions.

I am awed by the thought of 5500 daily travelers, the 100 daily buses, the parking for 3000 cars, the 2500 slot machines, 75 gaming tables, the 2000 seat bingo hall and the 660-room hotel. I am excited about the biggest economic development project to date in Ulster County that claims it will cost between \$200-\$250 million.

I am NOT excited about the ill-prepared way we are moving forward. I am not excited about the County, which has an everything-to-gain-and-nothing-to-lose attitude. I am not excited about \$15 million dollars being filtered through the County with little or no money finding its way to the Town of Wawarsing or the Village of Ellenville.

I am NOT excited about moving forward with any agreement that will mortgage our future without performing the due diligence that any multi-million dollar deal would entail.

I want casino gambling to work. I want it to work quickly. And I want it to work in the Town of Wawarsing.

One does not have to be a Gallup pollster to realize that this [agreement] is a fait accompli, destined to pass.

What I would like you to consider is a modification to the agreement as follows:

- Include a thorough impact study.
- Assemble a non-partisan blue ribbon panel to do a "windshield" assessment of the effect to the Town of Wawarsing and the Village of Ellenville.
- Take the months of April and May to conduct a study
- Look at the infrastructure.
- Look at the public safety issues, including volunteer emergency services and law enforcement.
- Look at the housing issues.
- Look at the impact on the school system.
- Look at the traffic.
- Look at the overall impact on the quality of life in the Town of Wawarsing and the Village of Ellenville.
- Return this issue to committee until we can be confident that it represents the best interest of not only County Government, but of the people of Wawarsing and the Village of Ellenville.



(Village Manager Auerbach spoke to the Ulster County Legislature on March 18<sup>th</sup> during a public comment segment on the casino issue; the edited remarks, left, are excerpted from his presentation.)

## From the Office of the Mayor

To the Village and Citizens of Ellenville:

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the citizens of our community over the past eight years – four as Trustee, and four as Mayor.

As Mayor, I have always striven to lead by example and to set a course for the improvement of our Village. I feel that we have started to turn the corner towards bringing our community back to where it used to be. This has been, and continues to be, an effort by the entire community. I would ask all members of our community to continue to do their part in making this area a better place to live.

I congratulate the newly elected, and re-elected, members of the Village Board. I know that they also desire and strive for the very things that I believed in as Mayor. I feel confident that under the direction of Jeff Kaplan as our Mayor, the Village will continue to grow, prosper, and better itself.

I intend to stay involved in the activities of this community, and I urge all citizens to join me in our continued efforts to improve the quality of life in our Village and Town, and to create a better place for our children.

Thank you,  
**T.J. Briggs**  
Outgoing Mayor, Village of Ellenville

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