

Keyana Shaw
165 Teatown Rd
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

September 8, 2022

Hon. David Douglas
Chairperson of the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals
and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
Cortlandt Town Hall
[1 Heady Street](#)
[Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567](#)



Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, Inc., Case No. 2016-24

To the Hon. David Douglas and Members of the Zoning Appeals Board,

I am writing to express my sincere concern at the proposed development of the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center on Quaker Ridge Road in the Teatown area of Croton-on-Hudson. As a resident of Teatown, I am greatly worried about the negative impact that a high-density drug rehab center will have on our rural, family-oriented residential neighborhood. I ask you to vote against the variance needed for this proposal for the following reasons:

Safety and Substantial Area Variance

First and most importantly, I ask you to consider the safety concerns that arise with the substantial area variance that the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center is requesting. Zoning requires that a hospital or health-care practitioner need to front a state road. The proposed site for Hudson Wellness Center is approximately two miles from the nearest state road. This is a safety concern to not only residents, but patients of the proposed center as well.

Quaker Ridge Road and the roads adjoining it, including Quaker Bridge Road and Glendale Road, are narrow, hilly roads with little to no shoulder, and extremely limited sight distance.

Quaker Bridge Road, which adjoins Quaker Ridge Road and would see an increase of traffic as well, intersects twice with the historic Old Croton Aqueduct hiking trail. This is a well-loved trail, frequented by residents of Cortlandt as well as other towns of northern Westchester. Increased traffic on this road would pose a danger to the many hikers crossing at the two intersection points. It is common to see large families hiking this trail up to the Croton Dam, with children happily and safely running ahead. This road has limited sight distance at best, and is, as most roads in Teatown, narrow and hilly. I shudder to think at the potential for pedestrian injuries with the commercial traffic that the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center would bring to this road.

The closest crossing point of the Croton River, which no doubt would be a route many delivery vehicles and large trucks serving the center would take, is across a one-lane historical landmark truss bridge with only an 11ft 5in clearance. This bridge, built in 1894, is one of the oldest bridges in use in Westchester

County. It was not designed to and cannot accommodate the heavy traffic of a commercial enterprise such as the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center.

Given the nature of the rural, rough roads, the local foot traffic, and antiquated bridges around Quaker Ridge Road, I cannot fathom how this variance would serve the best interests of either the community or the patients of the proposed center.

An Undesirable Change to a Zoned Residential neighborhood

Beyond safety concerns, the proposed Hudson Ridge Wellness Center would cause a significant undesirable change to a zoned residential community. Currently, Quaker Ridge Road is a quiet road frequented by cyclists and walkers. This road lacks sidewalks, is rough in places, and is both windy and narrow. However, I feel comfortable walking this road with my toddler son in his stroller alongside my new neighbor and her child. During her maternity leave, these walks brought us peace and joy, and instilled in me a sense of community.

A high-density drug and alcohol rehab center will significantly change both the type and frequency of traffic on this road, making it much more dangerous and unfriendly to the local walkers, cyclists, and hikers that use the road. I no longer would feel safe walking these roads with my young son and would grieve the loss of what has been an important part of our life in Croton.

Adverse Environmental Impact

Residents of Teatown rely on well water for their homes. The near-drought conditions of this past summer have illustrated the delicacy of our ecosystem and the limits of the aquifer. We have neighbors whose wells have run dry this summer, even given the low population density of the Teatown area. The strain that a high-density facility serving 52 people would put on our already depleted aquifer is significant; not to mention the challenges the facility itself would run into in terms of adequately caring for patients with a limited and dwindling water supply.

Broadening the scope beyond people, I ask you to consider the larger environmental impact on an area rich with protected species. The Hudson Valley comprises only 13.5% of the land area of New York State, yet nearly 85% of the bird, mammal, reptile, and amphibian species found in New York State. The encouragement of high-density commercial enterprises that this center would pave the way for would contribute to large-scale reduction in available land for these species.

I ask the zoning appeals board to seriously consider the safety issues, negative impact to the residents of Teatown, and adverse effects on local protected species that would result from granting this variance. Please vote against the proposed Hudson Ridge Wellness Center and help us maintain a safe, residential neighborhood for our families.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Keyana Shaw

Nathaniel Root
1814 Teatown Rd
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

September 8, 2022

Hon. David Douglas
Chairperson of the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals
and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
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Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, Inc., Case No. 2016-24

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I am writing to express my sincere concern at the proposed development of the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center on Quaker Ridge Road in the Teatown area of Croton-on-Hudson. As a resident of Teatown, I am greatly worried about the negative impact that a high-density drug rehab center will have on our rural, family-oriented residential neighborhood. I ask you to vote against the variance needed for this proposal for the following reasons:

Safety and Substantial Area Variance

My greatest concern is that this Wellness Center will be local roads. Quaker Ridge Road and the roads adjoining it, including Quaker Bridge Road and Glendale Road are tight, windy roads with no shoulder, blind spots, and substantial local foot traffic from parents and children. The roads are challenging enough for local cars, I can't imagine how we'd expect the Wellness Center's heavy commercial traffic would navigate these roads without causing real risk for Teatown residents, not to mention local bikers and hikers on the historic Old Croton Aqueduct hiking trail, which intersects twice with the road.

It's also worth flagging that the closest crossing point of the Croton River, which no doubt would be a route many delivery vehicles and large trucks serving the center would take, is across a one-lane historical landmark truss bridge with only an 11ft 5in clearance. This bridge, built in 1894, is one of the oldest bridges in use in Westchester County. It was not designed to and cannot accommodate the heavy traffic of a commercial enterprise such as the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center. Even if the Center agrees to ask their vendors to avoid using the road, what's to stop them and who's going to be hold vendors responsible for the cost of damage? It'll just hit the tax payers.

Finally, the roads themselves aren't really rated for regular, heavy traffic to support a facility of this size. Outside of the initial construction, a facility of this nature will have a steady stream of trucks – laundry, septic, food, supplies, deliveries, energy, further ongoing development. The impact on our roads not only puts people at risk, it degrades our infrastructure and comes with a not insubstantial cost to tax payers.

Adverse Aquifer Impact

Residents of Teatown rely on well water for their homes. The near-drought conditions of this past summer have illustrated the delicacy of our ecosystem and the limits of the aquifer. We have neighbors whose wells have run dry this summer, even given the low population density of the Teatown area. The strain that a high-density facility serving 52 people would put on our already depleted aquifer is significant; not to mention the challenges the facility itself would run into in terms of adequately caring for patients with a limited and dwindling water supply.

I ask the zoning appeals board to seriously consider the safety issues and negative impact to the residents of Teatown. Please vote against the proposed Hudson Ridge Wellness Center and help us maintain a safe, residential neighborhood for our families.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Root

Hon. David Douglas
Chairperson of the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals
and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
Cortlandt Town Hall
1 Heady Street
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567



Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, Inc., Case No. 2016-24

My name is Javier Picayo and I have been a resident at 7 Teatown Rd. for the past thirty years. It is not only as a longtime member of the neighborhood that I want share my comments about the proposed Hudson Institute, but also as a person who has been sober for a decade. I frequently work with people in centers like the one being proposed, and so I offer my opinion as both a sober person whose job is to work in these facilities and as a member of this community. I was the kid who rode his bike up and down the streets, who picked raspberries in the summer, and who has hiked the trails at Teatown for his entire life. Today my siblings, nieces, nephews, and cousins are some of the children who do the same. I was also the kid who struggled with dependence on alcohol and fought to overcome it.

I strongly oppose the approval of this project for three reasons:

- 1) The approval of a specialty hospital in a residential neighborhood would cause irreparable harm to the character of the community. The commercial lighting, transient nature of the residents, security guards and added traffic are elements that have never been a part of this neighborhood, and would drastically alter its character.
- 2) As per the zoning requirements, specialty hospitals need to front a state road, which this one does not.
- 3) The problem that the applicant faces is entirely of his own making, a problem that he created after the new zoning requirements were passed.

Perhaps the most drastic point is the one about the character of the neighborhood. The homes in the Teatown area value the preservation of nature. The character of the community can be described as nothing less than residential, oftentimes being called bucolic by the applicant and his representatives.

One of the main features of this area is that it is pitch black at night. It is so dark that a single light on a house late into the night can be seen by the entire neighborhood. I once received a note from my neighbors that a single new light on my house was able to be seen from their bedroom and was keeping them awake at night. There are no street lights and no commercial lighting at all. To have such lights on late into the night would be a dramatic vicissitude that would irreparably harm the quality of the community.

Secondly, the Teatown area is a place with long-term residents. It is filled with people who know each other, who watch each other's kids grow up and are a part of each other's lives. The neighbors who I know have, like me, been here for decades. The newer members of the community are raising children here and are laying roots to be here long-term, constantly making an effort to get to know their neighbors. Introducing hundreds, if not thousands of transient visitors into this area is diametrically opposed to the character of the residents and community. The people at the institute will not be active members of the community but will merely be passing through.

Similarly, to have security guards in this area is entirely unheard of. People here walk through the woods to each other's houses, knock on a neighbor's door if they need to borrow something (etc.) - there is a real spirit of community in which neighbors are accessible to one another. To have a place guarded by security would be to introduce an element of life that this area has not known (at the very least in the thirty years that I've been here but I suspect for much longer).

All of these things are entirely out of place and not merely out of character with the area, but they would actively cause harm to it.

Throughout the public hearings the applicant's representatives have tried to paint a picture where there are already businesses in the community doing all of the things which the residents oppose. Such a depiction is absolutely false. It is a lie. The horse farm, which they frequently use as an example, was bought under an LLC but was never used as a business and always operated as a home. It didn't introduce any traffic, commercial lighting, transient visitors or security guards. The Danish Home is nothing like this specialty hospital as it added essentially no traffic to the area and the residents were long-term members of the community, not transient visitors staying for a month at a time. It was also a welcoming place that made an effort to know its neighbors and engage with them. The GE building is directly off a state road, very far away and in no way impacts the daily lives of residents of the Teatown area. The other business which they refer to, the event space, was operating without approval and was ordered a cease and desist letter. That event space was a huge disturbance to the neighborhood and was in fact introducing transient visitors, however they were doing so without approval. It had an incredibly negative impact on its neighbors and they were ordered to stop.

For all of these reasons I believe it is clear that the impact to our community by this proposed specialty hospital would be negative and harmful, as well as entirely out of line with what is already here.

With regard to the second point, the zoning board has determined that a specialty hospital of this kind needs to front a state road. This one does not. The applicant makes it seem as though they have an inherent right to proceed with this project, which is entirely false. If they had an inherent right to do what they are trying to, they wouldn't need your approval on this matter. This is not a matter of a waiver for 100 feet, we are talking about 20+ acres of land. To approve this request would essentially be to re-zone the neighborhood. There is a reason this requirement

was put in place, and we merely ask that you uphold the zoning guidelines that are already there. Specialty hospitals need to front a state road. This one does not. There isn't one easily accessible from the project. It shouldn't be approved.

Lastly, while it is not a factor which should be the sole determining one when considering such a project, it is important to note that the problem the applicant faces is entirely of his own making. That, combined with the harm it will cause the community and the fact that it does not adhere to the zoning requirement of the state road frontage should be enough reason to reject this request and determine that it will have a destructive impact on the character of the community.

The applicant bought the property after the current requirements were put in place. His attorney often talks about how much money they have already put into the project as if that gives them a right to continue, however, it does not. In fact, the applicant continued to disregard the rulings of this and other boards, spending more money on the project despite rulings against it and the opposition of the entire community. They have shown nothing less than complete disregard for Cortlandt, these boards and their members, and the residents of the area that they will so drastically impact. I would hate to see how that treatment will continue over the years. It certainly isn't aligned with the way residents currently treat each other.

Oftentimes the applicant protests how long the process has taken. An odd claim given that the applicant has never shown up to a public hearing and the only person who has is his attorney who is being paid to be there. We residents, on the other hand, have been showing up to these meetings for years, without getting paid, and facing a threat that has more money and power than we do. You, the zoning board members, are our last hope in this fight to save our homes. Please help us.

With this decision you will set a precedent for our entire community. We are zoned as a residential neighborhood. There is nothing residential about this project. It is a for-profit, commercial business. We ask that you please help protect our homes, communities and families. Trust the people who have been here for decades, not the ones who never show up or spend any time in the area, when we say that this project would be catastrophic to the neighborhood. Trust the people who aren't getting paid for their opinions when we say that it will fundamentally alter the entire area negatively. Help us protect our homes in the same way that you would want somebody to protect yours if you weren't on the zoning board.

Thank you for reading this long letter and for your time over these years. If I could fill a page with the word please without looking ridiculous, I would. Please trust us when we say that the depiction the applicant's attorney is giving of this community is false and that this would be a drastic and harmful facility to have operating here.

Most sincerely,

Javier Picayo MA, MS LAc
7 Teatown Rd.
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520

Chris Kehoe

From: debra lovecky <dlovecky@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 7, 2022 12:13 PM
To: Chris Kehoe
Subject: Hudson Wellness

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning:

I had an opportunity to view the recently recorded public meeting regarding the Hudson Wellness proposal. I really can't add anything to the many disturbing facts about this proposal that my neighbors once again emphasized last week.

I realize that Hudson Wellness is just one proposal in what could be viewed as a large rural residential area, but in allowing this variance to go forward, the Town of Cortlandt Planning and Zoning committees are opening a door that will irreparably impact the greater Teatown area going forward. A decision to ignore the state road requirement, as well as the commercial nature of the proposal, negates the current R80 residential zoning and now sets a precedent for mixed use. Once one non conforming enterprise is allowed, it is more difficult to stop the next one until the area becomes a hodgepodge of commercial/for profit and single family homes.

Please do not allow this to happen. Hudson Wellness is a commercial venture and should not be allowed to move forward.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Deb Lovecky
2171 Quaker Ridge Road
Croton on Hudson NY

Jill Greenstein
83 Quaker Hill Drive
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520
Jillgreenstein9@gmail.com

September 5, 2022

By E-Mail

Hon. David Douglas, Chairman
And Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
1 Heady Street
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567



Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center Case # 2016 - 24

I would like to thank the Board for the opportunity to speak at the August 29th meeting. At that meeting, the applicant's attorney made several comments that are simply not true. After hearing all of the community's comments at this meeting and at previous meetings, he stated that all of these issues had been addressed. I need to be clear – They have not been answered! The concerns from our community are real, considerable and serious.

The Zoning Board needs to consider whether an undesirable change will be produced to the character of the neighborhood. Even though the Planning Board has issued a negative declaration, it may be the most unusual negative declaration ever issued considering it included a long list of impacts, several of which remain outstanding that will negatively affect the quality of life in the community:

The well test administered a few years ago resulted in my well and the well at 78 Quaker Hill Drive being impacted. The home at 81 Quaker Hill Drive was not included in this test because at that time, the home was vacant and owned by the applicant's LLC. Today, we face drought conditions and many neighbors

have already indicated they are having difficulty with their wells. How much more will they be impacted by a commercial facility with up to 58 clients plus a large staff on the site at any given time, rather than the few homes that might be built on this property?

Lighting, traffic, sewage and noise will be substantially increased, again changing the character of our neighborhood. The applicant's suggestion that a shuttle bus will be used to transport clients and staff is obviously not practical or enforceable. Even if it were used by some, there would still be substantial employee and supplier traffic needed to support this large commercial facility and this will change the way in which community members currently enjoy this neighborhood. Instead of being comfortable walking along the roads or allowing children to set up stands selling lemonade or bookmarks, we will have to worry about the shift change and what days and times the large trucks needed to supply such a facility will rumble through our streets – a particular concern since we do not have sidewalks and the roads are narrow and without adequate sightlines to safely accommodate this type of ongoing commercial traffic.

Security guards manning a closed gate and patrolling the perimeter of the property (adjacent to my property and other neighbors properties) will certainly negatively affect the community. Here, I want to emphasize the issue is not with the patients or what activities the facility will undertake. The issue is the negative impact caused by putting in place a security framework that is simply out of character with residential communities. To ignore the fact that implanting a professional security force into a closely knit residential community changes the nature of that community in a negative way is simply to ignore logic.

The applicant declared that there were four non-residential, commercial enterprises operating in the Teatown neighborhood. As we have shown, this is not the case: The Rolling Stone property (99 Quaker Bridge Road) was never anything other than a private residence. The Lakewood Estate (2125 Quaker Ridge Road) was

operating illegally, shut down following a disturbance complaint, and is now a private residence. The Danish Home (1065 Quaker Bridge Road East) is no longer in existence and when it was, it was a permanent home for 24 long-term residents, aged 55 and older. The GE Conference Center located at 1 Old Albany Post Road, Ossining, NY 10562 is in Ossining – not Cortlandt.

Most significantly and troubling, the applicant's attorney implied that we are against people with disabilities. Let me be clear. I strongly support programs that help those with substance abuse issues. I am a retired school psychologist who has worked with families dealing with exactly these issues. I know how much we need such programs and that is why I know that this is not the place for such a facility. The safety of the patients should be a primary consideration. Quaker Ridge Road is a narrow, windy, non-state road. Just a few years ago, following a storm, trees fell down blocking access in and out of this area for days. We were actually unable to leave because both Quaker Ridge Road and Quaker Bridge Road were impassable. Imagine such a situation where there is an emergency at the facility and access routes are blocked. We support a substance abuse facility that is run by an experienced operator and is on a state road, as lawfully passed legislation requires.

There exist many large properties in Cortlandt that front state roads that the applicant could have purchased and operated by right. Alternatively, the applicant could have worked with the town collaboratively and participated in the development of the Medical Oriented District. Instead, they chose to pursue a residential site, which is clearly not on a state road (which was known at the time of purchase by the applicant) and therefore created a self-inflicted harm.

This request for a zoning variance should not be approved. It is not a reasonable accommodation to have the Zoning Board of Appeals ignore a clear requirement in the Town's code, ignore the self-inflicted nature of the applicant's problem, and ignore the negative impact on the character of our community by setting aside

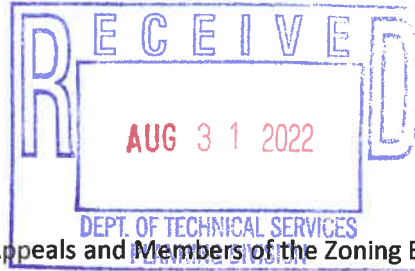
one of the largest lots in the area for use by a 24 hour a day business. Not granting this variance will prevent a de-facto rezoning of our community, and hopefully will spur on conversations about how we can safely help those suffering from substance abuse.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jill Greenstein". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sincerely,
Jill Greenstein

August 31, 2022



Hon. David Douglas

Chairperson of the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
Cortlandt Town Hall

1 Heady Street

Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567

Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, Inc., Case No. 2016-24

Respectfully to the Chairperson of the town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals and Members of the ZBA:

This letter is regarding the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, a proposed drug treatment facility located in the middle of a residential area in the Town of Cortlandt. My name is Robert Gardos and I along with my wife and three children live at 2071 Quaker Ridge Road approximately 1,000 yards from the proposed facility. We moved to this location nearly 18 years ago given the strong community and bucolic nature of the surroundings. Where else could you live in the woods surrounded by incredible people but also be an eight minute ride to a major train station? And the nearby Teatown Land Reservation further convinced me of the town's commitment to protect the nature and innate character of this wonderful area.

I strongly encourage the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals and Members of the ZBA to reject the applicant's request for a variance. I am aware of the mountain of material the board needs to review so I will do my best to keep this brief. My apologies for not attending the public hearing on August 29, 2022, but we were driving our oldest daughter to college for the school year. We did get to hear what transpired and I can't thank the board enough for taking the time to get feedback from the residents.

I know you have heard some of this before, but I feel obliged to repeat the *facts* about these discussions.

- Quaker Ridge Road is not a state road. It is narrow, windy, and dark. It was designed to fit into the very nature of the community (or more accurately the residential community evolved around the nature of this road). As important, Quaker Ridge Road is *nowhere near* a state road. This is a vital fact as the town considers the notion of making reasonable accommodations with respect to individuals with disabilities, a protected class under Federal law
- There are no sewers and municipal water in this area. I wish there were. Every house has to invest in the installation and maintenance of a well and septic system governed by the requirements dictated by the Town of Cortlandt.
- The number of residential properties in this area has increased dramatically over the last 40 years
- There are *no equivalent non-residential institutions that exist in this area*. The applicant's inability to cite anything beyond a full-time residence for the elderly that no longer operates (and was granted that permission *before* the zoning rules were updated) or a property illegally operating as a hotel, demonstrates this reality
- The zoning rules are *explicit* and were written for a reason well before the applicant acquired this property. Hospitals must reside on a state road and this area is zoned for residential use
- And finally, the applicant frequently cites the 'Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990' which includes substance abusers. This is an overt threat to litigation if the town does not acquiesce to a request that blatantly violates its zoning rules and impairs the character of our community.

Beyond these facts here is additional information that is critical for the board to consider when making this decision.

- It is irrefutable that this facility will materially increase the use of water and add more strains on waste disposal. It will increase traffic and light pollution. It will tax our emergency response systems. These items will not only detrimentally impact the character of the community but add material risk to fundamental livability. What will happen if the aquifer is depleted more than expected? Will the town invest in bringing municipal water to this community? There is massive risk here.
- Despite the threat of litigation, there is ample legal precedent (e.g. Get Back Up, Inc. v. City of Detroit) where zoning boards did *not* accommodate requests for facilities that supported people with disabilities (substance abuse and beyond) because these requests violated documented zoning rules. The legal takeaway is this – *zoning categories anchored in distinct uses are defensible in the absence of animus, even if they negatively impact disabled individuals*. It is simply *not* a reasonable accommodation to essentially rezone this property. If it was near a state road or there were other truly comparable commercial properties in this community then at least this request could be considered. This is simply not the case.

One last point – my family is completely in support of substance abuse recovery centers. My cousin grappled with drug addiction and benefited from treatment at one of these facilities. They should be placed in areas of the town which are zoned for such things. We would have the same exact objections to *any commercial entity in this property*. There is a reason the town updated its zoning rules years before the acquisition of this property. My only area of confusion is how this process has gotten so far despite the overwhelming objection from the community, the blatant disregard for our town's zoning rules and the applicant's intention of seeking special treatment for the obvious benefit of themselves and *not* the Town of Cortlandt (on the contrary the town will incur huge risks in both property tax collection and the potential for ongoing litigation if such a project proceeds).

There are critical moments in a community's evolution. This decision is one that may negatively impact generations to come. I hope this board will reject the request made by The Hudson Ridge Wellness Center. The community is unanimously against this request and the town is protected legally.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Robert Gardos
Suzanne Gardos
Maya Gardos
Benjamin Gardos
Dalia Gardos

Hon. David Douglas
Chairperson of the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals
and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
Cortlandt Town Hall
1 Heady Street
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567



Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, Inc., Case No. 2016-24

Dear Mr. Douglas and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

I live at 8 Quaker Hill Court East, very close to the property associated with the proposed Hudson Ridge Wellness Center. My husband, Mark, and I purchased our home in 1987 and raised our children here. We have seen generations change here and now other young parents are raising their young children here. Our grandchildren frequently come to visit and play in the neighborhood as well. I am sure that you and your fellow board members know that this is a very family oriented, quiet, peaceful, residential community. I support my neighbors who have been working to fully understand all of the ramifications of the proposed Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, and I personally am very concerned about several specific impacts that such a hospital development may have on our community.

My family members and I frequently walk, run, and ride bikes on Quaker Ridge Road and the surrounding neighborhood, and I am very concerned about road safety if the hospital development is approved.

My other serious concern is about water supply. I have not seen the report from the well-water study, but I do know that my well was not included in any such study. We have had many issues with low water pressure from our well over the many years we have lived here. And with the drought conditions we are currently experiencing, we are especially concerned about any additional draws on the water supply of the neighboring wells.

Please do not allow a hospital development in our quiet residential area.

Thank you,

Jannette Barth

Jannette M. Barth, Ph.D.
8 Quaker Hill Court East
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520

Jm.barth@mac.com

Chris Kehoe

From: Greta Hanson <ghansonsohmer@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 10:18 AM
To: Chris Kehoe
Cc: Paul Sohmer
Subject: Re: The Wellness Center 2016 Quaker Ridge Road

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chris,

This is regarding the property located at 2016 Quaker Ridge Rd.
Please direct our comments to the appropriate department.

Primary in our opinion against allowing the Wellness Center at 2016 Quaker Ridge Road is the requirement that a hospital such as this in a residential area be on a state road. We are opposed to the Town of Cortlandt approving a variance that would countermand this requirement.

Thank you.

Greta Hanson
Paul Sohmer
2125 Quaker Ridge Road
Croton on Hudson, NY

Sent from my iPhone

Chris Kehoe

From: Jennifer Schantz <jennifer.schantz444@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 12:29 PM
To: Robert Mayes; supervisor; Chris Kehoe; James F. Creighton; Frank Farrell; Cristin Jacoby; Robert Mayes
Cc: Andy Gould
Subject: Hudson Wellness Center

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I Dear Town Leaders:

We are writing to express our concern about this zoning waiver application. We live on Quaker Hill (right around the corner) and we strongly urge you to turn down the request as this development will change the nature of our neighborhood and we are concerned will impact our access to water. You represent us! Please do what is best for the people who live here!

Note that:

At least one of the nearby properties, directly across the street, has horse stables and corrals along its Quaker Ridge Road frontage. Until recently, it has been known as Rolling Stone Farm LLC, with an address of 99 Quaker Ridge Road.

Also, until recently, the Danish Home for the Aged, a nursing home for about 24 residents, operated nearby at 1065 Quaker Bridge Road since 1954. Currently, the Gurdjieff Foundation is pursuing an application before the Town to use the Danish Home site for a significant, "non-school curriculum program", a purportedly permitted religious use, including provision for up to 75 people to stay overnight. At its July 12, 2022 meeting, the Planning Board scheduled a public hearing for September 6, 2022.

The GE Learning Center, which conducts large programs, is located nearby at 1 Shady Lane Farm Road/1 Old Albany Post Road.

Lakewood House, near the Danish Home site, at 2125 Quaker Ridge Road, is a commercially used Estate property advertised as providing lodging for 18 guests and as being available for gatherings such as weddings and family reunions.

Regarding the Danish Home site, that property also now has a Verizon wireless cell tower, pursuant to a special permit approved by the Zoning Board on February 15, 2017. On or about July 12, 2022, the Building Department issued a Certificate of Completion for the cell tower and the Planning Board renewed its Special Permit for five years on that date.

Approximately 0.3 miles to the northeast of the Danish Home site, along Quaker Ridge Road, are high tension Con Ed overhead utility lines, within an approximately 350 foot-wide easement corridor, where trees and large vegetation have been cleared.

We strongly urge you to turn down the waiver request.

Jennifer Schantz and Andy Gould

August 29, 2022

Case No 2016-24, Application of Hudson Ridge Wellness Center for a special permit



Good evening, Mr. Chairman and the members of the Zoning Board. My name is Edward Kim and my family and I live at 3 Quaker Hill Ct East, Cortlandt, NY, near the Applicant's site.

I would like to voice my concern of the proposed hospital in a residential zoned district, since hospital and nursing home facilities are "only to be permitted on a lot in residential zones which fronts on a state road" as stated in Town Code, Article XI, section 307-59. In addition to hospital and nursing home facilities, the Town requires offices of doctors, dentists or other health-care practitioners are "only to be permitted on a lot in residential zones which fronts on a state road or on Oregon Road" for properties with 5 or more acres or "on a state highway and located within 1,000 feet of any point of the Crompond Road frontage of the Peekskill Community Hospital" for properties with 20,000 square feet lot size, as stated in Town Code, Article XI, section 307-60. Both of these Code provisions were implemented in 2004.

The code explicitly states that the purpose of the state road frontage requirement for hospitals, nursing homes and doctors' offices, **essentially all health-care related facilities**, is to ensure that such facilities are provided in a manner that is not disruptive to surrounding property or the neighborhood. This statement of purpose acknowledges that these facilities inherently are disruptive to the neighboring community regardless of size or specialty. The code does not distinguish between type of medical service or specialty offered at such facility – they apply to all health-care related activities. If the state frontage requirement applies to a single health care practitioner's office, it certainly should apply to a 50+ bed specialty hospital. Presumably, the disruptions the frontage requirement is designed to avoid include: traffic of doctors, patients, staff, visitors, supply deliveries and emergency services. These are all disruptions that can be expected from the Applicant's proposed facility.

Further, we cannot forget the safety of patients and neighbors. The Town has a duty in considering this application to look out for the safety of patients and the surrounding neighborhood residents. It is well-understood that patients in rehab will be in a fragile state of mental health, in some cases requiring emergency care. Emergency vehicles will have difficulty traveling on local town roads to access the Applicant's site. Pedestrians and bikers using the Quaker Ridge Road will also be faced with danger from emergency vehicle traffic and increased traffic generally. Also, as we face more weather extremes, we can expect to see more downed trees and electric wires that may block roads and any access to or from patients in need. This is all the more reason why the Applicant's facility does not belong in an area far from a state road, where the only access roads are narrow and in a heavily wooded area. The applicant is not simply requesting a variance of 100 or even 1,000 feet from a state road, it wants to site its facility almost 2 miles from the nearest state road, accessible only by crossing a one-lane bridge or narrow twisting local roads.

The applicant should have known there was a requirement for health-care facilities to front a state road before it purchased the property at issue. The state road frontage requirement was implemented in 2004 – six years before the Applicant purchased the Hudson Institute property. This is purely a ‘self-created’ difficulty, and it should not be waived by the Zoning Board. If the requirement to front a state road is varied for this Applicant – who clearly knew or should have known the site was inappropriate – what is to stop other health-care facilities from attempting this same approach?

Had the applicant chosen an appropriate site instead of creating this issue for itself, it already could have been providing a much-needed substance abuse treatment service to our community, for example, in the Cortlandt Medical Oriented District.

As I and the community residents have stated previously, the application for an area variance should be denied. The facility will severely impact the overall sense of community of the Greater Teatown area and will be disruptive to surrounding property or the neighborhood by not fronting a state road.

Thank you for your time.

Chris Kehoe

From: mary wilshire <marywilshire@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 4:35 PM
To: supervisor; Chris Kehoe; James F. Creighton; Frank Farrell; Cristin Jacoby; Robert Mayes
Subject: Hudson Wellness proposed variance

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To the Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Cortlandt

The property formerly known as The Hudson Institute on which owners are proposing a luxury drug rehab be allowed to be developed is situated directly above where I live with my husband and where we raised our children.

We are also next door to the property referred to in the appeal from the attorney for that owner as having "horses and stables" and "formerly known as Rolling Stone Farm." It is **not now and never has been in any way a commercial enterprise**. Those horses are not used by anyone except the people who live there and it is not a working farm. They are good neighbors whose purchase saved this area from yet another development more than 20 years ago. My dear friend Deborah Reich, who bought that property left it in her will to her son and meant it to be kept in it's current natural state. It is deliberate misrepresentation for this attorney to suggest anything otherwise.

Our area is being targeted by corporate and private enterprises with absolutely no interest in preserving the peace, quiet and environmental riches that we who live here treasure. **This is a residential area**. The water in aquifers which supplies several hundred homes of normal people with our drinking water is also a vital part of headwater area supplying the Indian Brook Reservoir with water for over 30,000 homes in Ossining.

We have a vernal pond system on our property fed by runoff water from the Quaker Ridge area, of which the proposed Hudson Wellness is a part. During the time that the current owners of that property were treating it with landscaping protocols demanding high water usage, chemical fertilizers and herbicides, the frog and bird population was dramatically affected on our property: **There has been no mating season for the frogs since. I consider this a direct negative effect of developmental efforts already**. Other neighbors nearby had immediate problems with wells running dry. I don't understand why this is considered less important than the prospect of enterprises seeking to anchor themselves here in an area that is now and has been for decades nothing but residences.

This proposed enterprise would only tax already stressed aquifers at an even greater rate. To suggest that a drug and alcohol treatment center with all the necessary staff and other required services coming and going would not change the character of this area is pure falsehood. The roads in our little community are barely wide enough for cars to pass one another going opposite directions. There are no sidewalks. There is abundant wildlife which is at risk from traffic as it is; turkey, deer, rabbit, possum, fox, rabbit, skunk, even bobcats. We grieve when we see these animals crushed on our roads. People ride bikes and walk here because it is our neighborhood, but that will not be safe or advisable with the kind of traffic that would result from such a facility being allowed to go forward here.

The property at 2016 Quaker Ridge Road also has significant areas of marshland which is supposed to be protected natural habitat and **abuts protected headwater land for the Indian Brook Reservoir. This is not a technical boundary issue but a critical environmental concern that *must* be considered a priority**.

Our neighborhood also includes the Croton River, already a fragile and threatened natural area which deserves to be protected from more drainage and runoff that would result regularly from such a development. The Hudson Institute

property is directly above our property and the Croton River is directly below it. **There is a steep gorge formed by the ridge after which Quaker Ridge is named and all rain and meltwater runs down to the river.**

Con Ed lines, cited by the attorney for the owners of the former Hudson Institute **are not a commercial enterprise** but an unavoidable necessity for the greater population. A drug and alcohol treatment facility can much better serve those who need it **in the area of the town of Cortlandt already zoned for commercial use.**

Lakewood Estate cannot be used as an example of a commercial enterprise. It does not operate a wedding venue any longer. The owners of the property have been in touch with the Planning and Zoning Boards as well as the Cortlandt Town Supervisor, Dr. Becker, about this matter.

Please do not allow greedy developers with no regard for us, our drinking water, our homes and our neighborhood to establish large commercial enterprises here where the zoning is intended to protect our rights as homeowners.

Mr. Davis, the attorney for Hudson Wellness is blatantly misrepresenting the nature of our community.

We implore you to consider our situation. You represent us and are charged with helping to preserve the best parts of our town in the smartest way possible. We desperately need you to support our arguments or this will set a precedent for other developers.

Sincerely,

Mary W. Magnusson
127 Quaker Bridge Road
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520

Chris Kehoe

From: Kasey Picayo <picayosmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 2:44 PM
To: Chris Kehoe
Subject: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center - Case No. 2016-24

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Dear Hon. David Douglas, Chairperson of Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals & Members of the ZBA,

Thank you for your attention to the matter of the Hudson Ridge Wellness Center.

We write with several concerns about this proposed business in our residential community. Although we understand that there are a few businesses currently operating in our area, this large facility seems that it will be in a completely different league to anything that already exists in our neighborhood. We actually would prefer it if there were no businesses operating here. We came to this area over 30 years ago because we wanted to be in a quiet, residential location. We specifically chose the Teatown area because of the space - no businesses, minimum 2 acre lots, as well as the peace and tranquility this provides. When we were looking to move out of the city, we considered going to an area that would be more accessible to businesses as that is what we had been used to in the city. We carefully chose to go to an area removed from businesses so that we could have a different quality of life. Although it was a difficult decision, we immediately knew that we made the right choice. We enjoy life in this rural, wooded area and take advantage of all that it has to offer.

We walk, hike or bike almost every day and appreciate the lakes, trails and neighbors that we have. We run and bike ride on the streets but that has already become more dangerous in recent years with the increasing traffic. We are very certain that adding even more businesses to the area will negatively affect all of the residents' ability to walk, run or bike on the streets. We all chose our homes in large part for the peace and quiet that we currently enjoy. Please don't let that change.

We are also concerned about our wells. I know tests have been done but this summer has proven that we are all in a precarious situation with our natural resources - some wells have already gone dry due to lack of rain. It will only get worse with global warming and increasing usage from having more businesses in our area.

The environmental factors of the traffic and water are just 2 of the issues.

We are also concerned about the night lighting for a business. We love the lack of street lights so we can enjoy the stars at night. Almost all residents in our area turn their lights off around 11 so we can appreciate the night skies. When the Danish Home retirement center is brought up as a comparison, I have to disagree. First of all - that housed 24 residents. And those residents were long term folks who also took part and cared about their community. It is totally different to have at least double that amount of residents, and they are there for a short term and then move on. Although I honestly would prefer no group residents, this does not at all seem a fair comparison.

One of the other businesses cited is the Lakewood House. This is a disruption to our environment and quality of life every time there is an event. I don't mind if a neighbor has a party once in a while, we all do. But having a party location with a PA system and lots of transient people, is a completely different situation. Also a problem for our community as far as we are concerned.

All of these factors will absolutely change the character of our neighborhood.

There are so many ways that this will impact our area negatively, I have only named a few.

I urge you to actually look at this quiet neighborhood and stop more businesses from setting up shop here. I feel like we are very close to the point of no return on our quality of life and I beg you to deny this business.

Thank you,
Mary and José Picayo

Chris Kehoe

From: Donna Aristo <donnaaristo@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 9:13 AM
To: Chris Kehoe
Subject: Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, Inc., Case No. 2016-24

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Donna Aristo

1595 Journey's End Road
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520
Donnaaristo@gmail.com

August 29, 2022

Hon. David Douglas
Chairperson of the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board of Appeals
and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
Cortlandt Town Hall
1 Heady Street
Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567

Re: Hudson Ridge Wellness Center, Inc., Case No. 2016-24

Dear Hon. David Douglas and Board Members,

Growing up in nearby Ossining, I have had a lifelong love affair with Teatown, it's quiet untouched beauty, a place to experience nature and recreate free of any reminders and dangers that accompany commercial roads. This is a tribute to the Town who had the foresight to create and uphold zoning guidelines for the entirety of my life- so far.

I was fortunate enough to purchase a home in Teatown in 2007, a dream come true. I hike almost daily on our trails and ride my bike through it's safe and beautiful winding roads. There is no place like Teatown, a peaceful enclave of nature preserved, less than an hour from New York City.

Our Town Board should be proud of this achievement because they created a master plan which has enabled this to be preserved. This is why now, I just cannot understand why there is even a consideration to allow a commercial property that

1. Will greatly change the the character of our neighborhood and by it's approval would set a precedent to open the door for more commercial businesses. Not to mention this is a hospital which is a 24 hour business
2. Should, by our own zoning laws, be on a state road
3. Would make our roads less safe
4. Would adversely impact its neighbors
5. Would greatly impact our environmentally sensitive area, especially water, since we are all on well water (this particularly top of mind during our current drought.)

I understand the applicant has spent a lot of time and money to try to get this variance, but these zoning laws were in effect when the property was purchased.

Any negotiating that has gone on so far by the neighborhood is only to mitigate what may be out of our control and does not in any way endorse the idea that this approval should move forward.

I understand a person or entity is entitled to pursue a variance but this isn't a garage or barn, this is a 24 hour commercial business, a hospital and everything, operationally, that accompanies it.

This, I believe is the tipping point. We have managed to preserve this little slice of natural beauty for the entirety of my life by sticking to the vision created in our Master Plan. The future of our beloved Teatown is in your hands.

I emphatically request that this proposal be rejected.

Sincerely,

Donna Aristo

