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BULLDOZER BLUES FOR HISTORIC HAMLET

Town of Ramapo to make hidden hamlet disappear, eviction notice sent to home-renters

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KATHY KAHN

Residents of the small community of the "Hamlet of Ramapo," a dead-end street off Torne Valley Rd. in unincorporated Ramapo near the Village of Hillburn, have been told by the town to vacate the premises.

The property was purchased by the Town of Ramapo from the Ramapo Land Company during the tenure of former Supervisor Christopher St. Lawrence. The town board has desired to convert the property to commercial use to increase revenue to the town's coffers, a town official told the Rockland County Times.

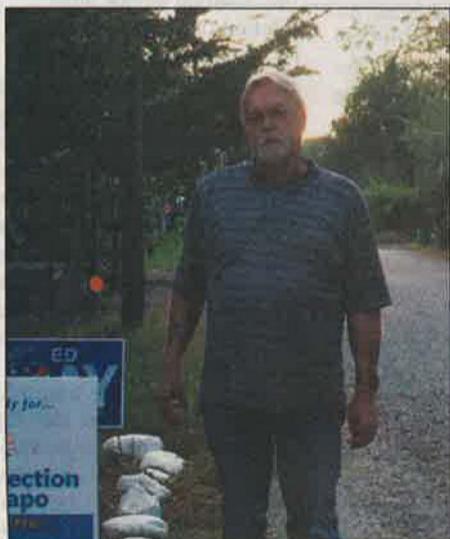
The homes, all rentals except for one, date back to the early 20th century, many occupied by multi-generational families. The Ramapo Land Company first purchased the land over 100 years ago. George Kozachenko lives in the house he was born in and has made several improvements to the cozy home he is now being asked to leave. He said, "[Ramapo town official] Tom Sullivan came around on Friday, September 29 with a typewritten letter on blank paper letting us all know the land had been sold and we'd all have to be out by November 30."

The letter from Sullivan, who is a third-party candidate for Rockland County executive, does offer residents extra time if they cannot leave by November 30. Another letter tenants received in mail on Monday, October 2 (postmarked September 29) on Town of Ramapo letterhead and signed by Sullivan, officially notifying residents to vacate by November 30.

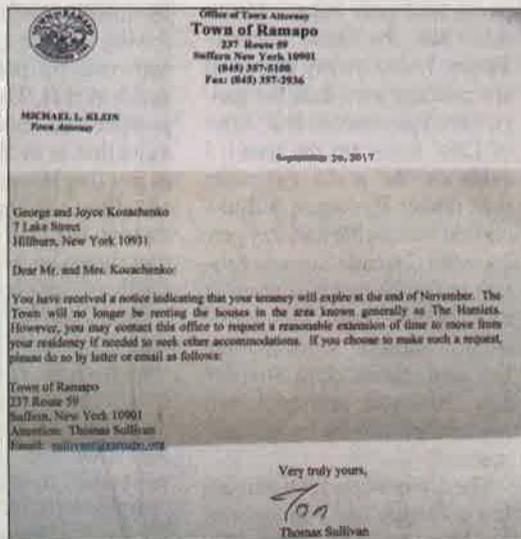
Kozachenko put a call into Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee, who sits on the Committee for



Homes along Lake Street, a quiet dead-end street in the Hamlet of Ramapo



George Kozachenko rents the home he was born in



Letter from Town of Ramapo notifying tenants to get out

Families and Children, and is waiting for a call back. He and other residents were told by Sullivan to stop paying rent, which was sent to his office directly each month. Sullivan told Kozachenko and others he would "push" for a March 2018 date before any evictions took place. "We don't have that in writing, however," said the lifelong resident.

Hamlet resident Tanya Cirincione said she often went to her great-grandfather's house on Lake Street as a child. "This was more like family than a community," said Cirincione, "and it's still that way. My mom still lives in the same house I was born in. It's hard to

believe what's happened to this town."

The community is about a quarter mile from the Torne Valley Vineyard mansion, which is just across Torne Valley Rd. from the county's garbage dump in Hillburn. The hamlet has significant history and has been featured in many Rockland Historic Society [RHS] events. At one time it was in the heart of the region's iron industry, serving as a "factory village" for the formidable Ramapo Iron Works company.

In promotion of a 2013 "Walk Through History" event, the RHS described the hamlet as "a very historic area of Rockland County, which has remained

in large part unchanged." RHS did not return a request for comment before press time.

The hamlet is to be replaced by a site for self-storage, a town official told the Rockland County Times. The official claimed that tenants of the hamlet owed the town tens of thousands in back rent and many of the homes there were in disrepair.

The new use for the property will have to be approved by the DEC because the state has used the area to study timber rattlesnakes, a protected species. A proposed power plant not far from the hamlet was rejected by the state 15 years ago because it would disturb the habi-



Judge Craig Johns, Chief McCullagh and his wife, Terry

New Chief for Clarkstown PD

STORY AND PHOTO BY KATHY KAHN

The Town of Clarkstown chambers were packed on Tuesday evening, October 3, for the swearing-in of Raymond McCullagh, a 29-year veteran of Clarkstown Police Department, who praised fellow officers, saying, "Their's is the toughest job there is."

McCullagh, sworn in by Judge Craig Johns and McCullagh's wife, Terry, replaces ousted Chief Michael Sullivan, who is running on the Democratic ticket against current Supervisor George Hoehmann, a Republican.

The swearing-in was not clouded by the Hoehmann v. Sullivan run-ins occurring between the current supervisor, Town Board and Sullivan since his suspension July 2016. Sullivan announced his candidacy April 2017 and was fired by the board on a 3-2 vote last month.

American cycling champ special guest at opening of 7 Lakes Bike Barn



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MUNDY

Next Sunday, October 15 at 1 p.m., Michael Bruno, founder of 1stdibs, hosts Floyd Landis at the opening celebration for his village complex and state-of-the-art bike shop, 7 LakesBike Barn located in Sloatsburg, NY just a few steps away from the entrance of Harriman State Park.

Landis will lead a 1.5 hour ride through the picturesque landscape followed by a brief presentation on the benefits of CBD products for cyclists.

Guests will have an opportunity to get an autograph and photo with Landis and ask questions.

PRESS RELEASE

County Executive Announces Proposed 2018 Budget

COUNTY PRESS RELEASE - Rockland County Executive Ed Day on Monday unveiled a proposed 2018 budget, which he boasts stays under the state property tax cap, keeps spending flat, funds not-for-profits and avoids layoffs.

County Executive Day also announced that the county's deficit

The budget calls for no layoffs. Vacant positions are eliminated and new and redefined positions are created with a net reduction of 11 positions without layoffs. The new, redefined positions include:

- One full-time County auditor, two new public health engineers for housing inspections in Department of Health, one new Clerk of