



LAKE • GEORGE
WATERKEEPER®

PO Box 591, Lake George, NY 12845

Tel: (518) 668-5913 Fax: (518)-668-5915

Email: info@lakegeorgewaterkeeper.org

www.lakegeorgewaterkeeper.org

NEWS RELEASE

July 27, 2011

For more information: Chris Navitsky (518) 668-5913 x301
Kathy Bozony (518) 668-5913 x 303

Lake George Waterkeeper Applauds New Public Hearings Law Adopted by Town of Lake George, Calls on Other Lake Towns to Enact Similar Laws

New Town of Lake George law mandates public hearings for all projects before the Planning Board within 300 feet of the lake. All projects in Queensbury are subject to public hearings, while Town of Bolton holds almost no public hearings.

Waterkeeper calls on the Town of Bolton to hold more public hearings and follow the lead of the Towns of Lake George and Queensbury.

Lake George – The Lake George Waterkeeper applauds action this week of the Town of Lake George to require public hearings on all projects before the Planning Board within 300 feet of the shores of Lake George. This is a major step forward as prior to this law the Town of Lake George Planning Board required few public hearings. The new town law is expected to go into effect within a month.

“We applaud this new law by the Town of Lake George because it opens the process for improved review by the Planning Board that will result in projects with decreased negative impacts to the community and water quality. We recognize the tremendous effort from Planning Board member, who are volunteers and are asked to make important decisions for their community. They need the opportunity to gather



THE FUND for LAKE GEORGE

information to make important decisions for the benefit of their community and for Lake George as a whole,” said Chris Navitsky, the Lake George Waterkeeper.

“A public hearing initially scheduled for Site Plan Review allows all issues, concerns and questions that the public may have regarding the proposed project to be addressed at the beginning of the process. The Planning Board then has the opportunity to request all necessary additional information at that first meeting. A more timely decision, saving the applicant time and money, may be realized based on the fact that the information is requested up front and early in the planning/discussion process,” said Kathy Bozony, Natural Resource Specialist with the Lake George Waterkeeper. “In addition, more residents would attend meetings. Being involved in the process may promote agreement of the final outcome, with support for the board when making planning decisions for the community.”

By comparison, the Town of Queensbury Planning Board regularly holds public hearings. A review of town records found that all applications to the Planning Board have public hearing scheduled. A review of records from the Town of Bolton found that public hearings were held for 7% of the applications submitted to the Planning Board.

“The Town of Queensbury regularly holds public hearings and we believe that this is a good process. This allows for new information to be brought into the process and for greater involvement by the public. We encourage robust public participation in local planning decisions” said Navitsky.

Waterkeeper Calls on Town of Bolton to Pass Public Hearings Law

The Town of Bolton holds the fewest public hearings on any community around Lake George. The Lake George Waterkeeper has sent a letter to Town Supervisor Ron Conover urging the Town of Bolton to adopt a public hearings law. “It’s important that the Town of Bolton open up its process to include public input in the planning process. This will improve information available for Planning Board members, such as differing perspectives, local information and technical options, that will make for more informed decisions by the Planning Board for the benefit of the community and the environment. There have been recent planning decisions that have not been in the best interest of the community or the protection of Lake George. It is time to allow the involvement of the public in the process of decision making for the community and the protection of our environment; that is the basis of our democracy,” said Navitsky.

The Lake George Waterkeeper

The Lake George Waterkeeper was launched in 2002 with a mission to defend the natural resources of Lake George and its watershed through promoting the compliance with existing laws, scientific research and sound engineering principles, which provides for the common good of the community. The Lake George Waterkeeper is a resource for concerned citizens in the Lake George Basin who are concerned about land use and water quality. The Waterkeeper responds to all public inquiries and acts as an ombudsman with respect to issues having an environmental impact on Lake George and its watershed. The Waterkeeper monitors and intervenes in development proposals around Lake George and provides professional analysis by a licensed engineer to local and state regulatory agencies. The Lake George Waterkeeper (www.lakegeorgewaterkeeper.org) is a program of the FUND for Lake George. The Lake George Waterkeeper is a member of the Waterkeeper Alliance, which represents over 190 water bodies nationally and internationally.

##