

1/26/09

My name is James LaVeck, and I am an Ithaca-area resident and one of the spokespeople for Cayugadeer.org, Ithacans for Safe, Rational and Ethical Solutions for reducing deer-human conflict. I would like to thank Mayor Gilmore and the other village officials present for this opportunity to be heard.

I am here tonight to both present and request information pertaining the deer issue in Cayuga Heights. First, in response to the statements made on the new Deer Committee web site that "CayugaDeer.org have been unwilling to make a presentation or to participate in dialogue with the committee," I would like to present to each member of the village government as well as each member of the DRAC the complete text of CayugaDeer.org's website, which has been online and discussed in the local media since early December. Along with these 47 pages of footnoted information, I am also presenting a DVD of video clips from the CayugaDeer.org web site.

I am also here to file a freedom of information request for numerous documents that I believe our community has not only a legal right, but also a moral right to have access to. Some of these documents pertain to: the formation of the deer committee, legal opinions that have been rendered by the village attorney, including those pertaining Mayor Gilmore's comment at the November 20, 2008 DRAC meeting, "We were told by village counsel early on, Chief Boyce -- were we not? -- that actually if we frame this around the safety issue we don't even need the public's vote."

I am also requesting a number of documents that were removed from the village web site shortly after CayugaDeer.org went live, including minutes from the first two public meetings of the Cayuga Heights Deer Remediation Committee on September 30, 2008 and October 23, 2008, and Deputy Mayor David Donner's letter "regarding the formation of the deer committee and its proposal," distributed at the August 18, 2008 meeting of the Trustees of Cayuga Heights.

As many of you may know, our newly elected president has made the commitment to make his administration the most open and transparent in history. In turn, I hope that the Village of Cayuga Heights will be inspired to join President Obama's effort to revitalize the integrity of our democracy.