

Michelle Poppensiek

From: Rebecca Warren Davidson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2010 3:15 PM
To: Kate Supron
Cc: Mary Mills
Subject: Comment on DEIS for Cayuga Heights' Deer Management Plan
Importance: High

Dear Mayor Supron,

I would like the record to show that I am strongly opposed to the killing of deer in our village using the "Net-and-Bolt" method proposed in the Draft "Cayuga Heights Deer Management Plan." This cruel and inhumane activity has no place in our community, no matter what the reason.

Yes, deer can be an annoyance to gardeners, but there are other ways to solve this problem. An important one is to allow residents to fence their yards. As a landscape and architectural historian I can tell you that the fencing of private property has an honorable tradition in this country since colonial times. It was only with the development of the "garden suburb" in the 19th and early 20th centuries that open, unfenced property became a design choice. Fencing of property is an equally valid design choice, and one which can be expected to have a positive effect on our community in terms of reduced antagonism between neighbors and toward deer and other animals.

Deer, by the way, are only one issue gardeners and other residents of our community face, and by no means the most significant one. The primary impact on any landscape, designed or not, is man. Improper use and overuse of pesticides and herbicides, badly-constructed roads, and lack of proper drainage are serious concerns affecting all residents of the village, and are all the result of intervention by humans, not animals.

In other comments and letters you have heard from myself and many other people that the Draft Cayuga Heights Deer Management Plan is a deeply flawed document in terms of the reliability and validity of the information it contains, so I will not reiterate those arguments here. I will merely state that it is based on incomplete and in some cases inaccurate data, and that it does not represent the wishes of the majority of people who live in the Village of Cayuga Heights.

Finally, I wish it to be known that I will not allow my property to be used for baiting deer, killing deer, or for the discharge of a firearm within 500 feet of my dwelling, which is illegal under any circumstances.

I urge you to continue to search for solutions to the deer issue which will not pit neighbor against neighbor and citizens against the village governance, which will be not only legal but also humane toward the living creatures with whom we share this planet, and which will be worthy of an enlightened, intelligent, and non-violent community. The proposed plan is none of those things. Enacting it will result in long-term physical, psychological, and economic harm to our community, without any long term gain, as has been repeatedly demonstrated in other communities--such as Princeton, New Jersey--where over a decade of killing deer has not solved the deer "problem."

Sincerely yours,

Rebecca W. Davidson
[REDACTED]

Resident of Ithaca for 24 years
Resident of Cayuga Heights for 12 years

12/17/2010