

An Open Letter To Indy Goldberg And Debbie McGinley, Y Downtown

The Water Rat Swim Team is used to being vilified in the opinion sections of our local media. The team is frequently — although mistakenly — cited as the only reason the Westport Weston Family Y intends to build a new facility on its Mahackeno campsite.

Nevertheless, the Water Rat Parents Club board is saddened to see that you are continuing your public opposition to the Y at Mahackeno. We are chagrined that you proudly proclaim that you are affiliated with us with one breath, and then you lambaste us with the next.

As the leaders of the swim team parent group, we are extremely concerned that in a few short years, our children and yours may very well have no place to swim, play basketball or dance. We assume you enrolled your children in the Water Rat Swim Team last spring because of their best interests, and not Y Downtown's. That is why we are surprised their participation on our team has-

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but the Y at Mahackeno is the only remaining alternative. There is no "downtown" property that is suitable or available to the Y.

Some of us are also directors of the Family Y and we can assure you that the Y has spent more than a decade working through Plans A through Z. We have exhausted all the possibilities. Now, our financial situation impels us to leave the building that Edward T. Bedford graciously gave us. If we do not move to Mahackeno, it is possible the camp will be sold; completely wiping out the open space you seem so desirous to maintain.

The Water Rat Swim Team has been a proud tradition at the Westport Weston Family Y for 58 years. Many of our families have been in the program for 10 years or more and have multiple children on the team. But we are not working to create a new Y out of self-interest. (Most of our children will be grown long before we realize the dream of a first-class Y at Mahackeno.) We recognize that the Westport Weston Family Y has enhanced the quality of life in Westport for 85 years and we want to ensure that it continues to do so.

You willingly sit with us at swim meets and you seem genuinely happy that your children swim with ours. That is why we think you should be willing to consider that we are telling the truth when we say we are trying to save the Y, not just build a pool. We believe it is time for Y Downtown to come to the table and work with the Y to mitigate its concerns. In fact, it is time for all Westport residents to put neighborhood differences aside and work together for the common good to Make Mahackeno Happen.

**WATER RAT
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