

Sticking To The Facts

Since my family and I moved to Westport 12 years ago, the Y has always had a strong presence in my life. From swimming lessons to Camp Mahackeno to pick-up basketball games after school, the Y has played a major role in my life as a Westport resident. In 2006, I was elected to the Board of Directors as one of the High School Advisors and was excited to finally give back to an organization that had provided me with so many opportunities.

When I first stepped into the role as a board member, I was unaware of the controversy surrounding the new Y facility. However, after the first meeting, I became aware of how significant and difficult a decision moving the Y to the Mahackeno campsite was. I have seen firsthand how much each board member cares about the facility and truly wants it to remain a strong presence in the

town of Westport. Throughout the months of meetings, the Family Y has been professional and factual in its presentation. From the traffic to the environment, the Y has accounted every detail and taken the process very seriously.

My experience has taught me that when change occurs, all perspectives must be accounted for and all voices heard. The final hurdle is the P&Z, where the Y has presented its application, and the floor has now opened to the public. The P&Z should review and make a decision on the Y's application without being swayed by the emotions of the residents, whether for or against the Y's move to Mahackeno. Responsible citizens should be factual in their statements at the meetings, not exaggerate the facts or distort the truth. Although public emotion is always a factor in the decisions of elected officials, the standards of the application and the regulations for a special permit should remain the focal point of the P&Z decision.

The Y means a lot to Westport, especially to the young adult community. It would be sad to see it disappear based on distorted facts propagated by speakers at the P&Z meetings. The residents of this town deserve better. Now, more than ever, we need to make Mahackeno happen.

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