

June 12, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor, State of New York

Dear Governor Hochul,

Sustainable Saratoga urges you to consider other available options for the proposed State Police Barracks in Luther Forest, ones that do not require clear-cutting and fragmentation of a long-established natural woodland system.

Sustainable Saratoga is a not-for-profit organization that provides education and advocacy on environmental and sustainability issues in the Saratoga region. We concern ourselves with many different sustainability matters, but a common theme is that a healthy natural environment means a healthier world for its inhabitants. Whether it's urban street trees, small wooded areas, or larger forests, it benefits everyone to retain these features. This results in increased property values, reduced water pollution, improved air quality, support for a variety of wildlife, and a general enhancement of people's quality of life. The deforestation of natural areas should be undertaken only after careful consideration of all other alternatives.

In the case of the development proposal in question, we understand that alternative locations have been proposed. While we support the need for appropriate infrastructure for our public servants, there are other potentially feasible options for citing this proposal. The destruction of 4 acres of forest, part of a larger area of contiguous natural land, undermines an increasingly rare but urgent principle – to clear natural areas only when necessary and when other options are not available.

In addition, it appears from reporting that this proposed development presents numerous additional practical concerns, for nearby neighborhoods and for the preservation of an important but dwindling natural ecosystem.

Governor Hochul, we trust that you will give this important issue the attention that it warrants and will come to understand how the suggested alternatives to the clear-cutting and fragmentation of a long-established natural woodland system are in the very best interests of all concerned.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kelsey Trudell, Executive Director



Amy Durland, Board Chair



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