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cc: Admin

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To the Mayor and the Members of the Council:

My name is Ray Winch. I live at 27 Park Place in Old Flanders. I also own and operate Walt's Barber Shop which is located in the front of my house. I am strongly in favor of the Old Flanders sewer proposal for three reasons... Financial, quality of life, and environmental.

My parents bought the house that I now own in 1972. In 1977 the septic failed and was completely replaced. In 1992 major repairs were done. My septic is currently in good condition, but I am confident that at some point in my life it will need to be replaced. The current cost to replace a septic is around \$35,000. If my septic fails 10 years from now I can only guess it will cost \$50,000 or more. Who knows what it will cost if it fails 20 years from now? The high number that has been thrown out there in terms of sewer cost is \$35,000. And given the fact that you get to pay it over an extended period of time at low interest, it's a no-brainer. This is an incredible opportunity for the overwhelming majority of residents to save tens of thousands of dollars in future septic replacement cost. Still there will be some who will be inclined to vote against their better interest due to the sticker shock of that \$35,000 number. That's why if feel it is imperative that we finance this project over the longest possible term to keep the monthly cost and immediate impact to peoples budgets to a minimum. This may also help to make it more affordable for seniors and give them the chance to pass their house on to their children someday without the liability of a costly septic replacement. Even those with new systems will benefit with the increased resale value of their homes and the peace of mind that 20 or 30 years from now, when their new septics have become old, they won't be anticipating the huge expense of replacing their systems. So it seems to me in the long run this is a financial win for everyone. Even for those who can't see beyond their short-term finances.

Regarding quality of life, it's been my experience that people who haven't lived with a septic do not fully understand how it affects your daily life. Living in a house with a septic system, especially an older one, negatively affects your quality of life on a daily basis. We've heard it said that people are babying their septics... and that doesn't sound too bad. But for those who don't know, this is what it means to baby you're septic.... You can't do too much laundry in one day for fear of using too much water. You don't do laundry when it rains. You have to take short showers. Many people don't flush their toilets every time they use them so they will put less water in their system. I have an elderly neighbor who puts her used toilet paper in a bag and throws it in the garbage rather than in the toilet so her septic will last longer. Many of the systems currently being used in Old Flanders are way beyond the typical life-span of a septic system. If people don't take these extreme measures, system failure will result. I feel it's unacceptable for people to be living like this. When looking over the minutes from the meeting that occurred on **May 8, 2007 Mr. Rattner** said this regarding the situation in Old Flanders, **"What we are going to have is failing systems in the future. We have fifty-foot lots. None of those houses can put in a replacement septic system under today's standards. So, that becomes a real serious problem for the people that live down there. The worst thing that could happen is we force people out because they cannot live in a house with no septic system."** My lot is only 40 feet wide. If there is a real possibility that people could lose their homes over this, I don't see how the Council can fail to get this done. In my case I would also lose my business.

My experience that people who haven't lived with a septic

Most people are going to vote with their wallets on this issue, but there is also the environmental impact to consider. I don't know to what extent our ground water and rivers have already been contaminated, if at all. But it seems to me we have all the ingredients of a perfect storm. As I mentioned, my system is 30 years old. Most of the systems on my street and I'm sure a good many of the septic in Old Flanders predate that. Some residents even have cesspools. That, combined with the huge financial incentive to not report failures is a recipe for disaster. **Septic systems are not recommended for areas such as the Old Flanders triangle where the lots are narrow and the houses are densely packed.**

In closing I would just like to say that I, like many of my neighbors, am a life-long resident of Old Flanders. The residents of Old Flanders have supported all the major projects in Mount Olive over the last 40 plus years. In my life the Cloverhill development was completed. I've seen Oakwood Village and Flanders Crossing go in... all with water and sewer. We've helped pay for Turkey Brook, an addition to the High School and a new Middle School, which was necessary due to all the development. Through all this we haven't asked for anything. Now we're asking for sewers... and not just because we want them, but because we desperately need them. You as a board have the opportunity to save a hundred or more families tens of thousands of dollars. You can eliminate the possibility that we could lose our homes if our septic fails. In my mind, the fact that people could lose their homes over this trumps every reason not to do it. Who among you would be content to live with knowledge that you could lose your home when your septic fails? This issue will not go away. It seems to emerge every 15 years or so, and each time it does people are a little more desperate and the cost of the project escalates. The window of opportunity is closing. Let's tackle this now and take care of it once and for all. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ray Winch