

# Tolerance valued in McKownville, so is neighborly compromise

To the Editor:

Concerning Cindy Glass Peaslee's claim in the Oct. 4, *Enterprise* that, as president of the McKownville Improvement Association, I had instructed "...a family in our neighborhood to go live at 'Denny's' on Western Avenue...." That claim is wrong.

I did say that there are more than four properties in McKownville on Western Avenue that could easily accommodate a 10,000-square-foot Shabbos building and its requested 30 parking spaces: the Denny's site; the lot next to Christ Lutheran Church, the property on the corner of my street where Germano's Garage is located; and the three properties across from the University at Albany entrance on Western, the one at 1210 Western now being vacant. The latter would give the Shabbos [House] both better visibility and centrality to the students.

She also states that there are "...current board members..." who disagree with the position. The officers and board members since 2004 had been unanimous in their opposition to the Shabbos proposal though there is now a board member who favors it.

And as far as I know, the next-door neighbor at 318 Fuller and the immediate neighbors on Parkwood West oppose the Shabbos proposal. This is not to ignore Cindy's support for Shabbos but she lives some distance away, a few houses from the western end of Providence Street. Should not the opposition of the abutting neighbors to Shabbos count for more?

As for the claim of "...a state of intolerance and anti-Semitism..." in the Shabbos discussion, let me explain that, for the 31 years I have been either an officer or a board member of the McKownville Improvement Association, I have attended upwards of 300 meetings — zoning board meetings, town board meetings, planning board meetings, anti-Cross-

gates meetings, neighborhood association public meetings and board meetings, and Harriman Campus and Nanotech meetings. In all of that time, I have never heard an anti-Semitic remark. Guilderland residents, your neighbors, are not anti-Semitic.

In addition to purposefully trying to mislead the audience reading her letter, she asks for "...community tolerance..." The community has been very supportive of the Shabbos [House].

It welcomes the valuable service that the Rubins provide to University at Albany students and has asked that the Shabbos [House] consider alternatives to its proposal:

- 1. An expansion of its present site (316 Fuller Road), including adding the requested parking spaces; or
- 2. Relocation to a site on Western Avenue; or
- 3. A very large reduction in the proposed building at 320 Fuller with much greater attention given to storm-water and parking problems.

Many association public meetings included discussion of the proposed Shabbos [House]. Though there were two or three persons present, in addition to the Rubins, who spoke in favor of the Shabbos [House], the overwhelming sentiment of those present was that the Shabbos proposal needed to be changed in numerous ways. At more than one association meeting the rabbi and/or his wife were given podium time to address the concerns of the community.

Community tolerance is highly valued in McKownville but then so is neighborly compromise.

The association tries to fairly represent the 3,000 residents of McKownville. It may not do this perfectly, but for 83 years it has been trying.

**Don Reeb, president  
McKownville Improvement  
Association**

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