

# McKownville

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## 'Sold Out'

Editor of The Knickerbocker News:

Since the early 1950s I have enjoyed serving my community, the hamlet of McKownville, in the Town of Guilderland, as a volunteer fireman, member of the water advisory board and member of the board of fire commissioners.

It is, therefore, greatly distressing to me at this time to see the Guilderland Town Board acting in a hostile manner to all wishes of the residents of McKownville. Zoning laws, carefully formulated to protect residential areas, have been carelessly altered and the community is being sold out to outside developers and land-grabbers. The latest action of this type is the current one which threatens the erection of a sorely needed new firehouse.

The board of fire commissioners, of which I am a member, has spent countless hours during the past three years in the study of relocating the firehouse. The need to do so has now become acute to house and protect the costly equipment owned by the taxpayers. Many sites were explored and were either unsuited for various reasons or owners would not sell. As a last resort, condemnation proceedings, permitted by town law, were entered into on one of the suitable sites.

The parcels chosen were two lots containing vacant frame houses, valuable only if rezoned for commercial use. How dare we take such valuable property off the town tax rolls? The owners, Potters Club Alumni Association, negotiated a contract through a realtor located in our district to sell at a large profit to a Syracuse firm.

At a rezoning hearing held by the town board, a large group of McKownville residents expressed vigorous opposition to rezoning. The fire commissioners requested a deferment of the rezoning pending the outcome of the condemnation proceedings and a referendum of the people to purchase the land. The town board, seeing only dollar signs, completely disregarded the wishes and good of the residents of the area by rezoning the land—for the good of the whole town, they say. Probably adequate fire protection isn't. The condemnation proceeding has been jeopardized and local residents have been sold out to outside people who have no interest in the area.

The next step is a hearing on a permit for the purchasers to build, to be held May 14. If the people of McKownville are to have a new

firehouse, planning adequately for present and future needs, everyone seems to agree on this part, they had better present a solid front. Of course, the only sure way to control our own facilities and resources would be to incorporate as a village, a costly process but possibly our only resort.

FRED B. ABELE

McKownville