10 Knowles Terrace
Albany, N.Y. 12203

8 June 1980

Mr Carl Walters, Supervisor
Town of Guilderland, Town Hall
McCormacks Corners
Guilderland, N.Y. 12084

Dear Mr Walters,

Every now and then one of the largely invisible processes by which the Town governs its citizens in McKownville suddenly becomes visible. A week or more ago, we inadvertently learned from newspaper reports that someone in his wisdom — a fireman who just happens to be a local cog in the Republican Party, for one, as I understand -- was circulating a petition asking for consolidation of the local water system with that of Westmere. Without so much as a prepabatory breath about all this in the press, in directives from Town Hall, in information shared with private citizens or with local organizations in McKownville, it is claimed that some 200 signatures had been garnered (evidently carefully chosen from non-members of the McKownville Improvement Association, it appears, as we have learned from both Republican and Democratic members).

As of yesterday, 7 June, we have another piece of ineptness in this puzzle. We received a letter dated 27 May 1980, unsigned but claiming to come from the McKownville Fire Department and evidently mailed from Town Hall.

Who authorized the McKownville Fire Department to do all the things they allege in that letter to have done? They claim to have "discussed" such a consolidation with officers of the McKownville Improvement Association. (They do not tell you what they 'discussed,' nor what the tenor of the interchange was.) They have, they say, "requested" Town Board (which Town Board?) to take immediate steps to institute a water district consolidation -- without input from citizens affected! They were "assured" by the Water Department (of Guilderland?) that the necessary alternate hookups could be done with the department's (which department's?) "own forces to minimize costs." (What I should like to know is why the Devil adding a couple of additional hookups into a system that <u>already</u> supplies us with water cannot be made without said consolidation.) And, we are told finally, our firemen then submitted the proposal to the McKownville Water Advistory Board "for their approval." (Not, mind you, their possible rejection: or their discussion and even conceivable sharing with area citizens.)

I don't think at the moment that it is all a matter of cost; but if I did, I'd be completely at sea with the cost-evaluation figures given in the letter. Is the "approximately $1.00 per thousand dollar assessed value" a one-shot deal; or once a year; or once a month; or as often as someone up in the hierarchy thinks profitable? And the difference could be even more of a shocker

— more —

if we use the assessments recently rammed through by the present Town fathers.

Further, what frets me is that if now we get water from Westmere and do so without benefit of consolidation, why can we not continue to do so and simply add a couple of those additional hookups?

Finally, please clarify for me -- the letter does not -- whether are are guarantees that, somewhere farther back up the line, there is not some one "strategic single line" whose rupture would not put us in as much throuble as a break in the single line now allegedly serving the entire McKownville Fire District. Thus, in addition to wanting to know why alternate lines require consolidation with Westmere, I want to know if Westmere has alternate hookups with its source. The latter seems needful if we are to be safe. But ... if Westmere is able to have such alternate hookups without consolidation, how come McKownville cannot do likewise?

Very truly yours,

Daniel McKinley