

7 Brookwood Avenue  
Albany, New York 12203  
June 16, 1980

Mr. Donald J. Reeb  
5 Norwood Street  
McKownville  
Albany, New York 12203

Dear Don:

I received your circular proposing the creation of the Village of McKownville, and I am taking this opportunity to express my opposition. Since I will be out of town on business on June 18, I would appreciate your reading my letter aloud to the Association.

My opposition is derived from three perspectives -- one, as a long-time resident of this town; two, as a professional student of government; and, three, as a life-long career government employee and official. In all candor the citizen taxpayers of McKownville must not be deluded by the proposal simply because of our overriding concern about zoning and Crossgates, in particular.

Let us dispose of the zoning matter first. The absolute fact is that we will not be materially better off as a village than as part of a town. We will still have to be just as vigilant against commercialization. It will not be any easier than it is now. If this notion about zoning under the village format persists, you should consult a lawyer skilled in this matter.

One of the principal criteria for forming any element of government is that the area involved embraces an adequate economic base upon which to spread the costs of government. To think that McKownville meets this criterion is absurd. Even if all the residents of McKownville were very well-to-do, the village would make no sense. And, of course, McKownville is very much a middle income community.

The prospect of lower real estate taxes is about as remote as one could imagine. The history of local government in this country clearly demonstrates that the tax burden increases as the number of taxing entities increases in a given geographic area. Every serious study of local taxation in this State in the past 35 years has argued emphatically for the reduction in the number of jurisdictions. Thus, to form a village would be contrary to the best professional judgment.

Every function presently performed by the Town of Guilderland will still be performed, and we will still pay our fair share. In addition, we will be paying for the new layer of village government. Once formed, a village is tempted to embark on more and more ventures such as those you mention in paragraph 6 -- libraries, youth centers, parks, playgrounds, etc. And then there is the matter of roads and streets, a function very adequately

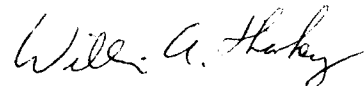
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handled by the town, county and state under present arrangements.

Then there is the matter of scale. McKownville is so small that the performance of municipal functions could not be accomplished efficiently despite the best of intentions.

In all candor I cannot help believing that unwittingly those who would support the village concept might find the idea appealing as an interesting exercise in local government. We simply cannot afford this kind of a toy.

Very truly yours,



William A. Sharkey

WAS:AB