



McKownville village idea gets mixed review

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McKOWNVILLE — The president of the McKownville Improvement Association favors village status for the hamlet, and a volunteer fire department spokesman said members of his company feel so strongly against it they will resign as firefighters if the area becomes a village.

What about the thoughts of the person-on-the-street in the Guilderland hamlet, near the Albany City line?

Of a dozen quizzed during an informal canvass, five favored village status, three opposed it and four were undecided.

Lydia Hanrahan, who was mowing her lawn on Western Avenue, answered a visitor's questions with other questions.

"Would it make a difference in taxes? Would they go up more?" she asked. Proponents of incorporation, in-

cluding McKownville Improvement Association President Donald Reed, say the experience of other villages show taxes would stay the same or even decrease if a village were set up. But opponents say it is hard to imagine that something can be had for nothing.

Another resident, Raymond Moore of Knowles Terrace, said he favors village status. "We think it would be good in this household to be a village. We would have more to say about what's residential and commercial. We moved up here to be in a residential district."

Moore expressed anger over a statement by Fred Abele, spokesman for the McKownville Fire Department, saying department members would resign if a village were set up.

"These guys are threatening the community. They won't get the amount of money they're getting now if a village were incorporated. They wouldn't have as much to say about the fire department," said Moore.

"The Village of Menands is well run. And they haven't got more brains than we do," he said.

One Glenwood Street resident, who declined to identify himself, said the village idea is a bad one.

"I don't think it's needed. I went to the (Improvement Association) meeting. It seems we are creating a monster to save something you can't save anyway. I don't think we can stop Crossgates," he said of the \$85 million Crossgates Mall shopping center project, proposed for a site near the intersection of the Northway and Western Avenue.

"I think creating a village would cause more problems than it would solve," he said.

He said some residents fear incorporation might bring "revenge" from the Town of Guilderland in the form of decreased services, or that

leaders of the incorporation move are seeking personal power.

A Norwood Street resident, Dawn Mleczkowski, said she opposes incorporation.

"I don't see where it is going to improve things. It has been proposed before and I don't see how it will work," she said.

If stopping construction of the proposed Crossgates Mall is the object of the incorporation, it's a little late, Mrs. Mleczkowski said.

Sharon Levey of Western Avenue said she believes incorporation as a village would be a tool to stop Crossgates.

A Norwood Street man, hurrying off to an appointment, said residents of the hamlet want to control the destiny of their area: "I definitely favor a village. It's a tight neighborhood. We have our civic feelings. A lot of people feel we don't have control."