



STEVEN M. NEUHAUS

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

June 18, 2015

Hon. Andrew Cuomo  
Governor  
State of New York  
Executive Chamber  
State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

When I was elected Orange County Executive I was confronted with the State Laws governing municipal annexation. Two annexation proposals are presently being considered by the Town of Monroe and the Village of Kiryas Joel. Under State Law, only those two municipalities were eligible to be "Lead Agency" under SEQRA. Upon taking office I asked for an amendment to the SEQRA regulations or law that would allow the County to apply for Lead Agency. That did not happen and Commissioner Martens ultimately named Kiryas Joel as Lead Agency.

This very frustrating decision left Orange County without a legal voice in the annexation process. Earlier this year, legislation (S.5643/A.7639) was proposed and passed both the Senate and Assembly to give the County Planning Commissioner the same authority he has in numerous other land use related matters. For example, currently, under section 239-m of the General Municipal Law, the County Planning Commissioner is entitled to comment on matters as local as a fence being placed on a property line near a county park. However, the transfer of over 500 acres of land into a village is not subject to review by County planners.

This legislation is something I endorsed the need for and believe can ensure better countywide and regional planning. I respectfully encourage your support of this legislation. I am available to meet with you and/or your staff should you and/or your staff feel that is warranted.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Steven M. Neuhaus  
County Executive