



Protecting the future of the Catskills

John Konior, Chair
Town of Kingston Planning Board
906 Sawkill Road
Kingston NY 12401

May 20, 2019

via email: tokclerk@gmail.com

**RE: Comments – for May 20th Public Hearing
850 Route 28 LLC Site Plan / Special Permit Applications**

Dear John Konior and the Town of Kingston Planning Board:

Catskill Mountainkeeper's mission is to protect our region's wild lands and natural resources, support smart development to sustainably grow our economy, nurture healthy communities, and accelerate our transition to a 100% clean energy future in New York and beyond. Our work includes considerable attention to the development of hiking and mountain biking trails in the region and particularly within the Catskill Park and on Catskill Forest Preserve Lands.

Catskill Mountainkeeper strongly opposes the Negative Declaration issued earlier this year by the Planning Board for the 850 Route 28 LLC proposed project, and we urge you to keep the public comment period open and not approve the project's site plan nor issue a special permit for this project until a more thoroughgoing review is conducted. This is an extremely large, noisy, and unsightly project, requiring the clear-cutting of 21.7 acres of trees, the removal of 162,000 cubic yards of material from the site, optional blasting and crushing, and construction of two buildings totaling 240,000 square feet with additional adjacent impermeable space for oversized vehicles. Moreover, the proposed project is located in proximity to existing protected open space and hiking and biking trails in the Bluestone Wild Forest and in proximity to additional planned recreational areas recently purchased by the Open Space Institute. Planning for recreational access on these lands is nearing completion and implementation is set to begin this year. The Planning Board should also consider and mitigate potential adverse impacts on Ulster County's nearby Ashokan Rail Trail, currently under construction and expected to open this fall.

While our review of the project is not yet complete, we note that the project, on its face, poses serious adverse impact on Aesthetic Resources and on Open Space and Recreation. We urge you to re-evaluate these and other potential impacts in relation to the beautiful and economically valuable nearby public resources. Noise should be assessed in relation to levels in protected recreational areas. We are also concerned about potential impacts on wildlife, especially threatened and endangered species.

Please rescind your Negative Declaration under SEQRA and offer an extended public comment period, in order for all potential adverse impacts to be considered fully. We strongly urge that you withhold permits until this application can be fully assessed and suitable mitigations and alternatives investigated.

Very sincerely,

Kathleen Nolan, MD, MSL
Senior Research Director

Catskill Mountainkeeper
PO Box 100, Livingston Manor NY 12758 Phone (845) 439-1230
www.catskillmountainkeeper.org