



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## SERINO AND BARRETT TEAM UP TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SUSAN SERINO October 7, 2016

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HYDE PARK, NY—Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park) and Assemblymember Didi Barrett (D, Columbia—Dutchess) today announced that legislation they championed to encourage community development in the local area was recently signed into law.

One of the bills, (S.7702/A.2384-A), will authorize the Village of Wappingers Falls to grant a property investment exemption for the purpose of promoting redevelopment of vacant and blighted properties for mixed-use while the other, (S.6803-A/A.9642-A), will allow the Town of Hyde Park to convey easements through Greenfields Park for the purpose of operating and maintaining a public water supply system.

*“As a representative, my goal is to think outside of the box to spur economic development and ensure that our communities have the tools they need to grow and thrive,” said **Senator Serino**. “These pieces of legislation will play a direct role in both Wappingers Falls’ and Hyde Park’s ability to continue to develop and I am proud that we were able to play a role in making that a reality.”*

*“Supporting our local municipalities to better deliver services to our shared constituents is a key part of our job,” said **Assemblymember Barrett**. “I am pleased that the Governor has signed these two local bills we developed with the Senator. One will stimulate economic opportunities in the Village of Wappingers Falls and the other addresses water infrastructure concerns in Hyde Park—a win for all involved.”*

The lawmakers championed the legislation at the request of the localities who are working tirelessly to encourage development in their area.

Wappingers Falls has suffered numerous building collapses and structure fires, leaving “missing teeth” throughout their downtown. By incentivizing development in these areas, the village can begin recovery by utilizing public-private partnerships. The goal is to replace contaminated and unsafe buildings with mixed-use buildings, bringing new commercial and residential spaces to the downtown area. Doing so will improve the quality of life in the village, while also creating jobs and expanding the tax base.

**Wappingers Falls Mayor Matt Alexander said,** *“The Village of Wappingers Falls is pleased to announce Governor Cuomo’s signing of legislation introduced by the joint bipartisan efforts of Sue Serino and Didi Barrett, encouraging taxing authorities to cooperate in supporting rehabilitation of blighted properties in Village Centers. These properties are often challenged by insurmountable obstacles that prohibit reinvestment. Communities are adversely effected by deteriorated buildings and the brownfields that so often accompany them. Taxpayers in all districts should be concerned that these properties are not generating their fair share of the total burden. This legislation specifically provides Wappingers Falls with an opportunity to incentivize development which was previously made infeasible by the high costs of infill construction. This will create a more sustainable property value for villages, towns and school districts. Additionally, the property tax burden for all will be lessened as these blighted properties stand to increase in assessed value. By working together and continuing to adopt progressive legislation, blighted properties can once again be rehabilitated and New York’s small urban villages can make strides toward realizing their economic revitalization.”*

In Hyde Park, the town requested this legislation after entering into an agreement with the Dutchess County Water and Wastewater Authority (DCWWA) to transfer the town’s responsibility for providing water service to certain sewer and water districts in the Town of Hyde Park, including the Greenfields Water District. As a part of this agreement, which came together after years of tireless effort on behalf of the town, Hyde Park agreed to convey easements to DCWWA for the purpose of allowing them the ability to properly operate and otherwise maintain certain existing wells within Greenfields Park. However, that

authorization for the easement is conditional upon the town making up for the easement through either capital improvements to existing parks and recreational facilities or the dedication of land, or a combination of both, which are equal to or greater than the fair market value of the easement interest being alienated. This bill will ensure that those served by the Greenfields Water District will be able to receive more cost-effective water service without jeopardizing the community's parks.

*“Government works best when all layers work together to benefit residents,” said **Hyde Park Town Supervisor Aileen Rohr**. “After a several-year effort on the part of the Town of Hyde Park and the Water Authority, we are grateful that the Governor and the Legislature provided legislation to allow the transfer of the Greenfields Water District to the Water Authority.”*

Both pieces of legislation sponsored by Serino and Barrett give the localities the statutory authority they need to make these projects a reality.

The bills were signed into law by the Governor on September 29, 2016