

Citizens Against Re-Zoning for Ethanol in Seneca Falls



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Location too close to our schools
and neighborhoods

Location too close to our parks
and waterways

Location too close to our
tourist attractions

Empire Biofuels is attempting to **RE-ZONE** agricultural land for an industrial ethanol plant on Auburn Rd. less than 1 mile from the village. Ethanol plants have caused controversy over odor, safety, noise, traffic and property values in other states. (There are no operating ethanol plants in NY.) As residents of the Village and Town of Seneca Falls we urge you to take an active interest in the impact an ethanol plant would have on our public safety, property values and future economic development. For more info please visit: **www.CareSF.com**

Most ethanol plants are in much less densely populated areas than Seneca Falls. Empire Biofuels often refers to the Ace Ethanol plant in Stanley, Wisconsin which was built by their construction partner Delta-T. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the average number of people per square mile in Stanley is 22. In Seneca Falls it is 437. Stanley does not participate in the tourist industry. The largest employer in Stanley is a 750 bed prison which employs 405 people. Ace employs under 40 and paid a \$300,000 emissions fine in 2004.

Ethanol production at the proposed Auburn Road location jeopardizes future jobs and our long-term economic and residential growth. Seneca Falls has turned a corner and is entering an exciting period of renewal with the first update to the Comprehensive Plan since 1963 and a commitment from the Town and Village Boards to facilitate pro-active Economic Development. We are already seeing new investment in our community, such as the \$3 million renovation of the historic Gould Hotel, the expansion of the Women's Hall of Fame to the Seneca Knitting Mill site, plans for townhomes/condominiums, and new businesses such as Aldi's and Kinney Drug. 35 ethanol jobs now, could chase away more jobs in the future.

Empire Biofuels is late with its Environmental Impact Statement. As documented in the 12/11/05 edition of the *Finger Lakes Times*, Empire Biofuels failed to submit its draft statement as promised in December 2005. As of February 6, 2006 they still have not submitted the statement—not an encouraging sign.

School tax payment claims appear inflated. In a 1/29/06 opinion column in the *Finger Lakes Times*, SF School Board President James Clark claims that Empire Biofuels will make annual payments of \$1.4 million in school taxes. It is our understanding, this is based on a \$40 million assessed value for the property. This assessed value is hard to believe based on the fact that the Gould's Pumps property is only assessed at approximately \$4.4 million and the Ace Ethanol plant in Stanley, Wisconsin is only assessed at \$5.6 million.

Are we prepared for fires, spills and accidents? In the fall of 2005 overnight evacuations due to ethanol were necessary in Brentwood, CA and S. Hutchinson, KA. The plant in Caro, MI has had several serious fires since opening in 2003. Empire Biofuels told the Town Board that evacuation plans are not necessary here.

No independent testing will be conducted. Empire Biofuels' plant operation proposals do not include any continuous, independent emissions testing. At the June 05 Town Board meeting, Empire Biofuels explained they will conduct sampling and testing themselves and then report the results to the NY DEC.

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We **CARE** about Seneca Falls and the protection of agricultural land. We believe Empire Biofuels' currently proposed site for an industrial ethanol plant on the "Van Cleef Farm" (just northeast of the village on 5/20) is simply too close to our schools, waterways, parks, and the most densely populated areas of our community. The noise, odor, hazardous materials, and truck/train traffic of an ethanol plant at this site, would unnecessarily threaten our public safety, natural resources, tourism industry, economic development, quality of life and property values. We urge our elected representatives on the Seneca Falls Town Board to protect the integrity of our zoning laws, the character of our community, and the safety of our residents by denying Empire Biofuels' industrial re-zoning request.

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