

Post Star
January 18, 2010

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Agency is positive influence on park

Editor:

Your Jan. 13 editorial calling for the abolition of the Adirondack Park Agency was disappointing. You base your opinion on two poorly reported anecdotes out of thousands of enforcement cases the APA has handled since 1973. Several of your assumptions were untrue.

You accuse the agency of micromanaging the lives of park residents.

Nearly 1,000 homes are built in the park each year, but the APA deals with only 300 permit applications. Many of those are proposals from nonresident developers, not Adirondackers. In those cases, the APA is the only protection local residents have.

You claim local government can handle the planning and zoning functions of the Park Agency.

Yet of the 104 villages and towns in the Adirondack Park, only 18 have land-use plans on par with APA standards. Many towns still have no zoning at all. When an alleged violator refuses to cooperate with an APA inquiry, is the agency supposed to just give up and go away? That is the impression left by your editorial.

In the first case, the APA withdrew its complaint as soon as it was granted access to the property for an inspection. In the second, it signed a new, supervised settlement agreement with the landowner, which he told you he was happy to sign. This is your proof of an agency that is out of control? Please ...

Census data and recent surveys show that Adirondack residents have a higher average income, higher education level, higher level of home ownership, higher level of business ownership and a better income-to-cost-of-living ratio than all other areas of rural New York.

The park is the only area of rural New York to consistently gain population over the past 50 years. The APA is a positive influence on the economy and the quality of life.

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The Adirondack Council

Albany