

## VILLAGE OF ALTAMONT

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**Mayor**  
**James M. Gaughan**  
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June 9, 2007

NYS Commission on Local Government Efficiency  
and Competitiveness  
30 South Pearl Street  
Albany, New York 12245

RE: Public Hearings on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness

Dear Commission Members:

The Village of Altamont has implemented a number of shared service initiatives, including a change in local Law that is a unique model for land use decisions and economic development. At the suggestion of Executive Director John Clarkson, I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Village of Altamont. I am unavailable to attend the Saratoga session on June 13, 2007.

Altamont is a Capital area Village of approximately 1,900 residents, one square mile in size, and nestled at the foot of the Helderberg Escarpment almost entirely surrounded by the Town of Guilderland. People are drawn to Altamont's uniqueness and charm. The community retains its significant country village design and character, and recognizes the important role its history and significant period architecture play in the community's character. Our local government welcomes partnerships with multiple community organizations and proactive citizens, and is open and responsive to the needs of residents and businesses. Altamont works cooperatively with surrounding municipalities to build and reinforce its unique Village character in ways that are environmentally, socially, and economically sound.

Altamont, in cooperation with the Town of Guilderland, has initiated several shared services initiatives which include providing access to lower cost fuel from the Town Depot; low cost intergovernmental agreements that tap into expertise of Town staff to assist the Village with economic development, grant writing, senior services programming; and expansion of its Farmer's Market, now in its second year.

Unique among the initiatives, and perhaps the only legislative initiative of its type in New York State, is our Town/Village Referral Law. This Law requires Altamont's review of Town applications for any special use permits, site plans, variances, zone changes and amendments to Guilderland's Comprehensive Plan which affect a specified area adjacent to the Village's border. Altamont's recommendations must be followed, unless overturned by a supermajority vote of the Town of Guilderland's Board.

The Referral Committee legislation provides Altamont with an expanded level of control about land use beyond its borders and in the catchment areas approaching the Village in a unique way and in a manner that usually is not afforded communities of its size.


Information about this unique land use Law can be found at:

<http://altamontvillage.org/ruralguilderlandreferralcommittee.htm>

In addition, please refer to the Village's recently enacted Comprehensive Plan, a complete modernization of the Village's three decades old plan at:

<http://altamontvillage.org/homepagecomprehensiveplanning.htm> .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James M. Gaughan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

James M. Gaughan  
Mayor

Cc: Board of Trustees