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Dear Editor,

In part two of his interview (January 31, 2013), Shalom Lamm states, “you do what you think is good and right and all you get is grief and lawsuits.” Maybe “good and right” for Mr. Lamm, but not for the environmentally sensitive Basha Kill wetlands and Shawangunk Ridge, which will be negatively impacted by his massive, “consumptive” Seven Peaks (even without the recently excised resort hotel) and Commerce Park at the Wurtsboro Airport projects.

Seven Peaks, consisting of forty-nine 8500 sq. ft. mansions (6 bedrooms, 7 + bathrooms) with future residential development proposed for another 27 acres, is sited on a 650 acre Shawangunk Mountain parcel that encompasses the ridgetop and lands extending down the eastern and western flanks, the latter directly upslope from the Basha Kill Wildlife Management Area (WMA). New York State’s 2006 Open Space Conservation Plan identifies safeguarding the southern “Gunks” in Sullivan and Orange counties as a priority for recreation, watershed protection, and biodiversity conservation, with the WMA designated for biodiversity preservation. Notably, two unnamed high gradient tributaries originate on the site and flow west down steep slopes to the WMA while two similarly categorized tributaries are the headwaters and drain eastward to the Shawangunk Kill, recognized as a New York State Wild and Scenic River.

Commerce Park is situated on 140 acres adjacent to the Wurtsboro Airport and comprises 1.5 million sq. ft. of office, warehouse, and distribution space in four buildings, the largest being 1.2 million sq. ft. (twice the size of Kohl’s). Gumaer Brook, which flows into the Basher Kill, forms the site’s southernmost boundary, while wetlands are on the North, and floodplains, the Delaware and Hudson Towpath and base of the Shawangunk Ridge constitute, or are near, the property’s eastern border. Primary entry to this complex will be at the end of McDonald Road, the same thoroughfare potentially accessed by Yukiguni Maitake’s pilot plant.

A student of history, Mr. Lamm is undoubtedly familiar with earlier threats to the Shawangunks and Basha Kill Wetlands that galvanized substantial public outcry, involving Minnewaska/Marriott, Sam’s Point/windfarm, “Save the Ridge”/Awesting Reserve, Shawanga Lodge, and Yukiguni Maitake. Therefore, he should not be surprised that his ventures, which follow a similar pattern, will engender careful scrutiny and the public’s need for project accountability.

Sincerely,  
Paula Medley, President  
Basha Kill Area Association