

Q. 1. What do you appreciate and value about living in Knox, or what aspects of life here would you like to be protected?

Q. 2. What issues concern you about living in Knox, or what problems need to be addressed?

Q. 3. What kind of place would you like Knox to be 15 years from now?

Q. 1 Advantages of Living in Knox:

1. Aesthetics

Anyone who lives in Knox knows the best part of living here is the joy of being surrounded by the natural beauty of this rural setting. Maintaining that special quality must always be uppermost in planning as it has been up to now. What I value most about Knox is the beautiful country setting with gorgeous views.

I appreciate the beauty.

I like the beautiful views – the view of the “Three Sisters” in the Catskill Mountains, and the view from the Helderberg Escarpment.

Mountain views.

The landscape. We have some of the most beautiful open space in NYS.

The landscape.

Clear skies and picturesque views.

More views of nature and less views of traffic.

No traffic lights.

Wildflowers along roads throughout spring-fall, and stone walls.

I appreciate the rural beauty of the Town and of all the Helderberg vistas and communities. There is always something interesting to see and experience: the beauty of a field of cattle, or wheels of hay just baled; the quiet beauty of a stream by the roadside, sometimes roaring with watery life and sometimes still, bare to the rounded rocks that cover its bed.

1. Agriculture

The presence of individually owned working farms and the availability of fresh produce.

The rural quality ... seeing fields, cultivated crops, animals.

I like the “rural character” and the amount of agriculture we have.

I enjoy the rural qualities.

The rural character.

Small town USA – working farms.

Working farmland.

By “rural character” I mean open space, both agricultural fields and extensive wooded areas.

Most of all, I value the rural character of Knox – the farms, open fields and forests. I like the fact that I can own a farm just 15 miles from where I work in Albany.

I have loved living in Knox since 1977. We moved our family here from the heart of Albany to the wide open country side. My children quickly adapted to the “farm life” and the acres of total freedom.

I love living in Knox because of the rural environment.

I value the ability to be able to continue to farm in town.

By way of background, I was born on January 11, 1926 in the old farmhouse that was across the road from my present home on Ketcham Roar here in Knox, and I have lived on the farm ever since. I love my home and its location and hope I will be permitted to stay here as long as I am given life. Of the more than 6 million miles I have traveled for work and/or pleasure (which includes 5 continents) Thompson's Lake in Knox Township has always been home

with every special connotation that implies and I wouldn't want to change very much. I loved the animals, from the cows and horses to the barn cats coming at milking time for a taste of warm milk, to the friendly shepherd dog that rounded up the herd at milking time. I loved the aroma of new-mown hay and harvested grain in the summertime and the coming together of neighbors to work together to gather in the food provisions for the winter ahead. While agricultural land is diminishing, I like that there is an agricultural exemption to help preserve what agricultural land remains.

We are big supporters of sustainability, local farms, farmers markets, farm-to-table, small farm operations etc. and in our research of the area found these things prevalent. We appreciate the idea of a small town with beautiful vistas and easy access to convenience and charm (Albany, Altamont, Thatcher Park etc.) but that "felt" like the country. I would like to see this "country feel" protected.

Farming community

1. Convenience

We had to move to the Albany area as a requirement of my husband's job transfer, however we chose Knox because of the location to the Interstate Highways and the rural setting.

Close proximity to Altamont, Berne and East Berne for needed services.

1. Culture

I love the community events

1. Economics

Lower cost of housing.

I very much like the way it was a few years ago, with a post office, country store, gas station, barber shop, laundryomat, etc.

1. Education

Smaller schools where teachers and staff know the students and the families better.

I appreciate the parental involvement in our school.

We wanted a small town in a small school district for our kids.

1. Environment

The peaceful environment.

I like the rural quiet.

There is not much noise.

I like the low population density, that there's never a traffic jam.

We appreciate the peaceful, scenic and rural character of Knox. Very importantly, there are no housing developments and the population density is low.

Quiet.

The relative quietness.

Quiet, peaceful.

Better air quality.

The air and water are cleaner than many places.

Clean air.

On a clear night I can look up and see stars.

I like the fact that at night it is pretty dark here with some exceptions.

I like our clear skies, relatively unpolluted by night lighting.

Darker night skies.

I moved to Knox because of the green spaces. Having wildlife, big skies, nature "in the raw" was particularly attractive for someone who was used to traffic jams, overcrowding, dangerous neighborhoods, and unfriendly people. I feel like this is nirvana.

The large size of the majority of building properties.

Wildlife habitat.

We love the open spaces and the continued work to protect that and limiting overdevelopment of this beautiful place.

We value the rural environment of Knox ... People have room to breathe without being crowded.

We value the open space and lack of developments (housing) and that is what we would like to see protected.

Uncluttered by industrial structures, sprawling businesses such as used car lots, junk cars.

No industry.

I even appreciate the winter wildness (sometimes)!

Wildlife as in deer, rabbits, various birds etc.

My family has been here since 1940 and we value it so much that as we have grown up, we've settled for all or at least part of the year here. We live in the rural parts (Bozenkill Road) and really love the natural setting, observing the wildlife and the low-key pace of life here.

Natural resources (viewsheds, wetlands, forested areas, open space)

Low density communities

1. Government

I love the great transfer station for our use.

Good road conditions.

I appreciate and commend the Knox Highway Department with their continual efforts in snow removal and mowing, maintaining the drain systems, overall road maintenance and repairs.

Rural private community where you can do what you want on your property without the Town or people bothering you.

1. History

I love living in Knox because of its history.

Our family has lived here for generations.

While we have only lived in Knox for a month, there are things that drew us to the hill towns and, in particular, Knox. First and foremost, the history. Knox and the surrounding hill towns are rich in history. We were completely captivated by the books and stories about the hill towns of 100+ years ago.

1. Recreation

Easy access to hiking, bike riding, camping, fishing and hunting.

Having a back yard that is a nature trail.

Nature paths and wildlife.

Nearby public parkland.

We have FANTASTIC nature preserves and wildlife areas, and a great town park.

Proximity to Thacher Park.

I appreciate living in the Town of Knox very much. I like the fact that there is protected open space, Thatcher Park, Thompsons Lake, Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy areas, and State Land. These areas are important for wildlife and as recreation areas for people.

The place & times that I grew up in doesn't exist today – then we played in the streams, ponds, swam & fished in Thompson's Lake, went sledding on farmland hills, hunted, trapped, target shot in our back yards, picked wild strawberries, blackberries & blueberries. We ate what we caught, drank from streams and raised our own food. Neighbors helped one another and settled their own disputes. We didn't need permits to build, burn trash, etc. Pollution wasn't in our vocabulary. We learned to drive in the fields, had junk vehicles to practice mechanics, and looked forward to church socials and county fairs and visiting friends and neighbors. The wild berry fields are now filled with houses, the farms broken into building plats, can't keep too many pigs, cows, etc. unless you have certain amount of land etc. We shared food, machinery and didn't have movies every day, shopping malls, etc. I think it was a happier time to live.

1. Social Environment

The aspect of life in the Hilltowns that I most appreciate is the rural lifestyle.

I enjoy the small town feel of Knox.

The more relaxed and slower pace of living.

The best things are the relative quiet and peacefulness of our community.

Low crime rate and relative safety of living in the community.

I like the people, mostly.

The independent, creative, and talented people who live in Knox.

The many nice folks who live here.

I was born in the farmhouse on Ketcham Road 87 years ago. I have always had wonderful friends and neighbors whom I have always treasured. We have lived together in peace and quiet with neighbors being there for each other in good and bad times. This is what makes a community valuable because it is truly home. I wouldn't know what a town board could do to "protect" this quality of life which comes from mutual respect and friendship as opposed to some government regulation. No other place in the world could be more "home" to me.

The people. We have some of the best residents who really know how to support each other in a way that has long since disappeared in many communities.

What I appreciate about the town is the friendliness of the people in town.

Friendly neighbors.

I appreciate the good neighbors.

Neighborly.

The fact that we are a small community and the neighborly feeling we have for one another.

The closeness of knowing your neighbors and being there for them.

The willingness of neighbors to be neighborly.

We love that everyone is so friendly and that neighbors help neighbors without hesitation.

I love living in Knox because of our friends, family and neighbors that help make up the strong community.

I loved the competition among the women of the little community as each one tried to outdo the others in the massive meals prepared for the hungry neighbors harvesting the crops from one farm to the next until everyone's harvest was complete. No one ever had better neighbors than we had here in Knox. Everyone took care of the land and their animals and they did it as a matter of pride in protecting our living and watching us young folks learn a bit about responsibility as we grew into adulthood. We need to value our relationships more than we sometimes do, concern ourselves a little less sometimes with politics, worry less about zoning and planning and be more thankful for our blessings.

Living in a place where folks can give something back to the community without being paid.

The spiritual life of our small communities has been outstanding.

I like the Hilltown culture and identity: You have to be tough to live on the Hill.

I like it that anyone who wants to participate in the community life of the town can get involved in a meaningful way.

There are many public service needs and volunteer opportunities.

Anyone who wants privacy can be left alone.

Most of all I appreciate and value the character of many of its inhabitants -- generous, large-hearted, quiet with a sense of humor about life, determined, hard as quartz when they need to be, determined to be stronger than their environment, ever hopeful that sometime, soon, things are going to be just fine. This is a good place to live, but it's not an easy place to live, and the people of Knox seem to find ways to watch out for one another, to care for one another in ways that are so subtle as to be almost unobservable. This is a good land, and these are good people.

Tight knit community that looks out for and supports each other

Q. 2 Disadvantages of Living in Knox:

2. Aesthetics

What concerns me is the appearance of the hamlet center. With the store, gas station and post office abandoned, it makes the area look messy and uncared for.

A main issue of concern for the town is poor conditions of existing buildings.

Poor conditions of certain buildings in the hamlet are a concern, i.e., the vacant Knox Country Store, the old Post Office building, the old Stevens Mobil Station, and various dilapidated homes throughout town.

Our biggest concerns with moving to Knox were ..., 2. the run-down "town center" which we can see from our porch (namely the old Knox Country Store and post office building, both of which are in run-down condition and seemingly out of place),...

2. Agriculture

On some occasions certain farmers assume they can use others' lands with little or no concern for the land owner.

These farmers abuse the right of permission from the land owner who has allowed them to farm their land.

The farming community seems to be on the decline and needs to be supported.

2. Economics

Jobs are few and hard to come by;

The majority of residents are forced to commute to earn a living.

Unfortunately, there is no way to make a living in Knox except by farming, so the majority of Knox residents have to work off the Hill. (Ok – we have the Pleasant Valley Exquisitum, Armstrong Furniture, Pritchard's car repair – a couple of people trying to eke out a living here and there.)

No work for single parents/young adults. No eateries or general store for everyday items. NO GAS!! Something needs to be done fast!!

Many kids graduating do not want to live here anymore because of the lack of things to do. I am one of them.

Rising costs related to living in a small, non-industrial area.

A main issue of concern for the town is lack of local businesses.

Knox needs a store.

Needs a store.

As far as services are concerned, there are none in Knox. I feel that Knox is a dead zone and needs some kind of revitalization.

No businesses within the town! No store, no post office!

Now there is nothing! My children have come back for a visit and can't believe what happened to Knox. They now call it a "Ghost Town."

There is no Main Street with available amenities such as gas, restaurant, post office, a place to buy staples and maybe even a few small businesses.

It (disappearance of businesses) makes getting basic staples more difficult.

The store/post office is a liability as there are so many problems associated with it, that it is difficult for anybody to make a profit operating it as a commercial establishment. Perhaps the town should take control of those (store/post office) buildings and sell them for \$1 with a proviso that the premises be used as a grocery/coffee shop as it has been in the past.

The town needs to find ways to increase business in the town.

The lack of small businesses (i.e.: country store) really hurts our tax base (school taxes)

Issues: The local economy and the lack of a business district.

Without a store, I feel we are now an extension of the town of Guilderland; not a rural village or town.

The issue of commercial development has become politicized and reason/planfulness must prevail over rhetoric

2. Education

Our biggest concerns with moving to Knox were 1. the BKW school system which we heard and read mixed reviews about,...

2. Environment

Local water quality is poor (high minerals, iron, sulfur, etc.)

Light Pollution: Don't we treasure the beauty of night with glowing stars? Nobody is going to come and rob or vandalize your home just because your outside lights are turned off. If you can't turn them off, at least shield them.

Ours have been off for nearly 40 years. To their credit the town board has worked on this problem

I think the Town should apply for a brown fields grant to take care of the problems of the gas station.

Hydraulic fracturing in the marcellus shale is a threat.

2. Government

Concerns/Problems: Development. In our time here we've seen a gradual transition in land use away from commercial farming toward land-going-to-brush and residential development. Has anyone figured out what this has meant for groundwater supplies/quality, and how that's affecting other natural resources (e.g., trees)? Is anyone looking at how hi-speed internet service and cell phone communication are affecting the local economy, and education? Has anyone studied the changes in composition and speeds of road traffic? Does anyone analyze the records from what local fireman have dealt with?

Our biggest concerns with moving to Knox were ..., 3. the speed limit on 156 through the "town" as most town centers and villages have a village speed limit. Perhaps we can think about incorporating a village speed limit.

Noise pollution and Speeding: Living on Berne Altamont Road we experience motorcycles going by way over the speed limit and at noise levels that rattle our windows. Nothing against motorcycles. We had one for 26 years. Cars also drive at excessive speeds this stretch is a passing zone. It amazes me how easily one can get a speeding ticket in Altamont at a few mph over the limit, but up here no one seems to care.

- Excessive Salting of Roads: So much salt is used on our roads that it kills trees ... and shouldn't we wonder about the future of our wells?

Major problems that need to be addressed are the lack of **basic services** available to all resident. These services must include:

- Transportation, Postal services, Gas station, Grocery store, Senior services, Garbage pick-up, Café/diner, Senior housing, Tennis teams (lessons), Mini golf course, Cross-country ski trail, Postings for all town jobs available, Televised meetings placed for view on internet site,
- Assistance at the transfer station (23 years living in Knox and was asked only twice if I needed help) and less socializing with customers who park their trucks/cars at the main hopper and go into the sitting area for long periods of time, thus blocking others from a more convenient access to the hopper, or perhaps cut back on the staffing,
- Appropriate rules and standards for all Knox town officials, that are performing their job duties on site, that also addresses other attendees that are non-official (significant others, dogs, and children) assisting those officials,
- More surveys with resident's input, and
- Needed changes made quicker than a snail's pace.

The desire of some on the Town Board trying to bring industrial wind turbine into the town, and passing self serving ordinances.

I would like to protect the people of Knox from being left behind by the changes that are coming to all of the people of this country, namely, the post-automobile age, the age of the Internet, the age of the Global Village, the age of the democratization of technology. I think the leaders of this Town need to look thirty or forty years into the future and contemplate what must be done today to secure the best for its citizens in the coming decades.

2. Medical Care

Having to travel to locate any sort of health care facilities.

2. Recreation

The issue that concerns me the most is that the tennis courts are not maintained. We used to play tennis in Knox a few times a week and have not been able to use the courts for many years. The town has invested in a new town hall, but has let the tennis courts deteriorate. The courts are covered with grass filled cracks and have no nets.

We need more Knox activities and more activities, particularly summer activities, at places like Thompson's Lake State Park.

There is little activities for kids, teens & elderly – (we have to go elsewhere).

Lack of facilities and improvements in the park such as more swings, playground equipment for children, a nicer pavilion and closer toilet facilities (at least during the summer) than the Town Hall.

People need to be made more aware of the many fabulous recreational opportunities that are available in Knox and in the Hilltowns.

2. Seniors

There is no affordable senior housing.

Absolute lack of any sort of Senior transportation.

Seniors need services.

2. Social Environment

(The lack of small businesses (i.e.: country store)) hurts our town identity by not having any commercial area.

There is little neighborliness – there is no “mom & pop” store.

There is no “community,” no gathering place/central locale for locals to converge.

Knox used to be a wonderful town. We have lost a store, the post office, a gas station, and several businesses. Sy's place used to supply ice cream the kids could walk to and the elders used to sit on the porch and catch up on the latest news. The store (Knox Country Store) had milk, butter, bread, pizza, etc. that you could pick up on the way home from work. The post office was convenient. All of these places had a bulletin board where the town's activities, lost pets, items for sale, etc. could be posted.

The issues that concern me about living in Knox are that the town is becoming increasingly composed of older people. We are losing the vibrancy of young families and as a consequence slowly becoming stale and non sustainable.

Kids need public places where they can socialize.

2. Transportation

There is no public transportation.

Isolation due to a lack of any kind of transportation.

I am concerned that it is unsafe to walk in the Town. We need sidewalks extending along Route 156 from Zimmer Road past Knox Cave Road as far as the "new" cemetery and on Knox Cave Road between the trailer park and Pleasant Valley Road.

Q. 3 Vision for Future

3. Aesthetics

I would like to see the hamlet of Knox improved. I personally wouldn't mind a Stewarts in place of the existing country store building, as long as it was designed with a country hamlet in mind. I would like to have sidewalks in the hamlet, and think lot sizes there should be smaller to encourage a neighborhood fee. I would love to see the post office building saved, as it is original to the hamlet.

I would like to see those (hamlet) buildings re-furbished to look like they belong in a small town setting. I do not think industrial looking buildings are attractive, nor do I think a strip mall would fit in. Maybe the planning board could consider facades that have a charming country look to them, so they look like they have always been here. In 15 years, I would like Knox to be a place where obvious eyesores such as dilapidated houses and falling down structures are removed;

Can Knox do anything about the dilapidated houses along the main street? How about the piles of garbage in the back yard next to the town hall? I'm all in favor of live and let live, and don't want some preservation organization making rules and regulations for home owners, but there must be a way to use friendly persuasion to get things cleaned up so Knox does not look like a ghost town in the making. If I lived near a deserted house that is falling down, why should I invest in my own home since property values are being dragged down so low it is not worth the investment?

We have residents who have decaying unregistered vehicles in their yards. Perhaps the town could provide an amnesty program for their removal, and then levy a tax on each of these vehicles each year.

Aesthetics: Enforcing existing laws about junk in peoples' front yards. At the same time, many people don't have money or resources to, say, get derelict cars towed, so it would be nice if the Town could spear-head a volunteer corps of people who have the ability to tow or have trucks they could use to help people clean out the trash in their yards and take it to the dump. I don't have a truck, but my brother does and we'd be willing to join such a help-your-neighbor corps.

Perhaps the (vacant store) spaces could be used for small businesses that would benefit the people who live here and draw others to the hill. Some suggestions might be a specialty store with local products similar to the Carrot Barn in Schoharie. Perhaps an art/antique studio, wine/liquor store or small deli/bakery/cafe shop would work. I'm sure many people would like to have the post office return!

If housing developments are in the town's future, I would want them to be attractive with natural landscaping, not plain cookie cutter tract houses. I also think that these developments should be built where they do not interrupt the sweeping vistas. Seeing an open field from far away makes me breathe easy, seeing houses crammed on a parcel is just ugly. Developments should be positioned so they fit in with the natural environment, not overpower it. In 15 years, I'd like Knox to resemble a well established village similar to those quaint places you see in Vermont. I'd like to see the main crossroads as a place where neighbors meet and greet and tell tall tales again. I'll see you there! I would personally like to see increased acreage required for any new housing.

I would like to enter the town and not see such disrepair of abandoned buildings and horrific lots that are currently present, besides the fact that this is such a deterrent for people considering living here. The entire corner is in dire need of renovation. It is truly depressing to see such a waste of valuable real-estate.

3. Agriculture

We would like to see Knox retain its rural character.

I hope that the Town of Knox will retain its rural character.

I hope there would be room for some new farming operations so we don't lose track of our roots.

I am hoping that in fifteen years Knox has at least maintained, if not increased, the amount of land devoted to agriculture and open space.

I would like to continue being able to drive on uncrowded roads and to see lots of farms, open fields and forests.

In 15 years, we would like to see the rural character and low population density maintained.

I'd like to have a thriving agricultural community and protect our open space.

I would like the open spaces and farmland protected, to maintain the quality of life that we currently have.

My vision for Knox in 15 years is not much different than it is today. I would like the rural landscape to be maintained, and possibly encourage more farming in the town.

I hope the town will grow and adapt to the future ahead and yet maintain its largely farm based economy - but with increased growth of "cottage" industries.

I would love to see more opportunity for local farmers – perhaps a harvest fest again.

Promoting local agriculture helps farms.

Encourage farming, protect tillable land and encourage small scale farmers.

More regular farms and pocket farms, farmers markets with folks supporting them.

To protect the rural character of the town, I think representatives to town and county governments should look for opportunities to get more people farming: attract young people who want to farm by providing opportunities that stabilize land prices (e.g., with an Ag & Markets Farmland Protection Grant); make farming profitable (E.G., find ways to get Knox's products to markets in nearby population centers).

It is important that an active farming community survives for several reasons. Foremost is to the benefit of the other residents in town. Locally sourced food is available and resident consumers can exercise their right to know how their food is grown. There is an active local food movement here. Consumers are becoming aware of the proliferation of over-processed food, genetically modified food, poorly monitored and inspected food, chemically treated food and foods from livestock treated with growth hormones, antibiotics, unwholesome by-products and feedstocks. This elevates the importance of maintaining a good land resource for local farmers. In 1992, a member of the Knox Planning Board told me that "Farming is dead in Knox". Thankfully, he was so wrong and let's keep it that way.

Use of pesticide treated and genetically modified seeds is becoming an intrusive problem across the country. Honey bee populations are negatively impacted. The effects of this practice are not confined to the fields where the treated plants are grown; they spread to neighboring land and gardens of folks who may want to avoid its effects. I would

like residents in Knox to be able to successfully keep bees and grow organic produce if they want to 15 years from now.

Appreciate/Value: The land. We've lived here since 1975 and I am not tired at all of what I see out the windows of our house and on drives around the Town. I like that it's rural, and that for the most part it is real. No Disneyland here. There are "sore spots" (old gravel pits, neglected buildings), but you get such things anywhere. I like the variety in hill and dale, forest and field, hamlet and countryside, seasons, weather, people. Good people, mostly. Knox is pretty much a quiet, peaceful place. It has changed some in 38 years, though.

I like the rural nature of Knox. I definitely do NOT want it to become a Guilderland or Altamont which seem to be just bedroom towns.

We need to preserve the rural environment by promoting sustainable agriculture and maintaining open space while encouraging growth and development that does not turn Knox into just another suburb of Albany/Guilderland.

I think that encouraging agriculture by keeping land affordable and looking for ways to make farming profitable, will also discourage suburban sprawl.

In the next 25 years, the Capital District Regional Planning Commission has predicted a large buildout in the region. They hypothesize that the area from Clifton Park to Voorheesville will become saturated with housing. If that is true, then good planning to defend from suburban sprawl is paramount in Knox. That should start with embracing the agricultural community and paying attention to the importance of its existence. This is a complicated issue and worthy of getting professional help that is not myopic toward agriculture, planned hamlets, public water and sewers, and public transportation.

In the next 15 + years, more development is likely to occur along road frontage, which could lead to access issues for farmers who work farmland that would still be available farther back from the roads. Provisions should be made to keep access open to farmland without road frontage, and accommodation should be made for farm equipment that can require 20 foot wide culverts and carry loads (hay, grain, cattle, etc.) that weigh 20 tons.

I hope that the mandatory setback from streams and creeks for agricultural work to prevent run-off and pollution will be enforced.

I would like to see laws that make the area welcoming to farmers and businesses. I would like to see Knox encourage new farmers. Keep the agricultural exemption. Keep the one-cut rule. I would like to see tax breaks for people who give up the development rights to their property as a way to encourage keeping land as open space. I would like to see some new young farmers growing different types of crops.

Since last Thursday (Jan. 2nd) I've been having a hard time sleeping. When I do wake up, it's like living a nightmare, after reading in the Enterprise what you are conceding regarding GMOs/RoundUp/glyphosate. At that very same time I started to read a new book written by Dr. Arden Andersen. I'm wanting you and everyone in Knox to read it. Should you not read this book, myself and others will consider you and the town grossly negligent! It's called FOOD PLAGUE: Could Our Daily Bread Be Our Most Life Threatening Exposure? It also would not hurt to pick up another one by Arden called SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE. Why not really expand your mind by reading a book or two by his teacher, Dr. Philip S. Callahan; TUNING INTO NATURE or EXPLORING THE SPECTRUM. You see there is a known true science in agriculture. It's just that "they" really don't want you to know how nature really works, and how to actually grow for optimum nutrition. GMOs are political science. It is not a technology as you-all think. We (the people) do NOT need more poisons to deal with crop weeds and insects. Same as, we do not need more synthetic drugs to rid our bodies of disease. We only need high Brix, nutrient-dense foods, achieved by proper mineralization, not synthetic fertilization of the soil. Weeds and non-beneficial insects are a symptom of improper soil management. Scientifically this has been known for decades. But be advised that in the spring of 2005 the 2nd generation of GMO corn will be for sale. They've spliced 2-4D into it. It's Agent Orange, the Viet Nam defoliant, the most cancer causing

agent known to man. Do you want this growing next to your house? Please read. Please learn. If you do, you will outlaw GMOs.

I would like to see sustainable, independent, organic farms supported and patronized by the local community.

3. Economics

Lower the taxes.

I hope Knox will have the ability to continue to keep taxes affordable and provide at least a few amenities to save on gas.

I have always felt that property taxes were unfair for farmers -- people who depend on large land-holdings for a very modest income. Can anything be done about that?

We have to encourage small business in the hamlet.

Knox needs businesses! We have NOTHING and it is frustrating sometimes. You can have a thriving business community (Main Street) while also maintaining the small town feeling. We would like to see some form of business district to bring revenue to our town.

We would love to see a small business area in Knox that would help to make shopping for items more convenient. (Keep Knox) pretty much the kind of place it is now, but with one or two hamlets developed for small businesses and possibly slightly higher population density.

I would like to see new development discouraged in the outlying areas, but encouraged in the hamlet.

It would be nice to strengthen the "hamlet" to create more of a cohesive small town feel and make it a place for people to gather (the Knox Country Store was such a place about 10 years ago!).

The Town needs to do more to encourage and nurture business. A minimum of 3 "business districts" should be designated in the Town.

I would welcome a business district in the Hamlet.

I would love to see a business district with thriving local businesses.

It is important that we do permit and encourage compatible business activity. So we should create business districts in appropriate areas.

We need a small commercial area perhaps extending from the fire house on Route 156 to Knox Cave Road and down Knox Cave Road at least as far as the trailer park.

We desperately need a "town". The word 'town' in the Town of Knox realistically is missing. The ordinance prohibits the only logical location to be established as a business district to support basic necessities. Necessities that would serve the community, establish businesses that could introduce some of our youth to the work force and avoid having our seniors travel off the hill unnecessarily. This must be addressed immediately.

We need business districts and businesses in town. Businesses that will provide us with basic services. The Town Board should be encouraging this and sadly seems to have been discouraging this for decades. I can't wait to vote in November!

I hope Knox will be a town with a gas station/store.

I would like to see more of a center for services and local products. Gas will probably be really expensive, so provide more locally!

Let's have some areas where small home businesses could be welcomed, and hopefully the board could look for a small convenient market with availability of gas for lawn mowers as well as cars. I would like to see the board be a little more proactive in that regard and perhaps call on the business background of our County Legislator to a little better advantage. We need to encourage more small business and a place to start might be establishing a business district. Perhaps it's time to establish a business development committee to brainstorm some possibilities. We could use some new and fresh ideas, and I think there is plenty of talent in the town if we all look a little more closely.

I hope the town will be much the same as it is, although more open to a variety of businesses in the hamlet and in the township area.

Residents need a place to get a few convenience groceries (eggs, milk, bread, etc.) a cup of coffee, maybe some ice cream. It would also be nice to have a good deli, a bagel shop, or maybe a place to get breakfast on the weekends. I hope we won't have to drive five miles to a food store.

I'd like to see a local mom & pop store – just bread, eggs, milk, newspapers, gas.

Keep Knox the same as it is, but with a convenience store.

You can't buy a gallon of gas, a quart of milk, or take a pee in the Town of Knox. After two hours (at our parks) you have to drive to another town to get a bottle of water or use a bathroom (or find a bush). A convenience store combined with an activity center would be a great addition.

We need to allow some small businesses to exist in our town. Retail stores, cafes, restaurants, bakeries, wine and liquor stores, auto repair and inspection shops, hair salons, recreational facilities, small scale meat processing facilities, veterinary clinics, office space, and other small low impact businesses should be encouraged. The zoning ordinance should be changed so that it does not enforce the bedroom community kind of development we have now. Cottage industry should be encouraged.

We need to encourage some small business in the town, perhaps home-based, or a small convenience store so one doesn't have to go to Altamont or Voorheesville when the coffee cream or bread runs out.

I would like Knox to be more self sufficient, with more of life's necessities being available locally from neighboring cottage industries throughout the town. The town should encourage small businesses in peoples' homes so people can make a living here without a lot of overhead expenses. The zoning ordinance should accommodate low impact businesses and tourist destinations such as bed and breakfasts, small cafes (such as Wellington's Herbs and Spices), bakeries, ice cream stands, card shops, candle shops, antique shops, florist/garden shops (such as Helderledge), cheese shops, art galleries, barber shops/hair salons, bicycle repairs and rentals, etc. throughout the town, not just in business districts. Their development (beyond home occupation) could be controlled by public hearings and special use permits. We also need business districts to be developed for higher impact operations that need separate, (larger) brick and mortar facilities. We frequently see groups of bicyclists touring through town in nice weather. Our residents could make attractive destinations for these tourists, and business opportunities for themselves and the community.

We would like to see the town revitalized with small businesses where we can purchase all of the food that we need. Now we are young enough to drive 15 miles to a grocery store, but in 30 years that may be a challenge.

We need a grocery store possibly providing gas such as Stewart's. This would create jobs, help with taxes, and give us the convenience we once had instead of travelling 6+ miles for milk, bread or gas.

What about a Stewart's shop with a gas pump for us? I never heard Knox mentioned in all the discussions. Or how about looking for a Mini-Chopper?

At the same time, Knox is also a rural community. As such, the needs of its residents must be considered. I'd like to see a convenience store, such as Stewart's, located in the hamlet. Gas pumps would be very welcome indeed, almost a necessity at this time. I want the Knox post office to reopen, though it would probably have to be relocated.

Perhaps a trailer near the Town Hall would work temporarily.

We would love to see a business such as Stewarts go in where the country store was ... It can look like a country building. So many people from our area go off of the hill to work at the Stewarts in Altamont and it would be a great benefit to have those employment opportunities here in our own community. We would benefit greatly as a town having Thompson's Lake and Warner's Lake so close, the tourism dollars could really help to bring in some revenue to our town.

We have at least two auto repair shops that are not officially recognized or regulated. Both are valuable assets to the community. If we could bring them under our purview, we might help them minimize their negative environmental impacts.

I would love to see more opportunity for local businesses to revive the community.

I would love to see Knox as a Cooperstown or Saratoga, but I think that's wishful thinking indeed! That said, though, I would like to see more smaller businesses get attracted to the area. For instance, Sharon Springs is undergoing a huge transition as it's attracting cafes, galleries and small shops. I think that is something that could be in the cards for us here if implemented properly.

It would be great to not have to travel to Guilderland or Voorheesville or Cobleskill for errands and such. Possibly local tax incentives that would benefit small businesses that would be in keeping with a rural lifestyle might be an idea?

I hope that any business districts that we create are compatible with the neighborhoods they are proximate to. I hope that all industry continues to be excluded as well as non-conforming businesses especially in areas zoned agricultural and residential and that this rule be strictly enforced.

We would love to see the town center built up with a few shops and maybe a restaurant. We would love to see history continue to be preserved and pay homage to the town of years gone past (how fun would it be to see Merryman's Tea House reborn?)

While I appreciate these (rural) aspects of living here and would like to see both open space and agricultural lands preserved, I also think that the Town needs business districts and needs to encourage businesses within the Town. Business districts- I would like to see Hitman towing be able to keep operating at their current location in Knox. I think they provide a valuable service for the town. I have spoken to many people who have used their services and are very impressed. They arrive within 15 minutes of being called. That part of 146 should be a business district. It is not in an agricultural area and it is not particularly scenic so I see no reason that it cannot be a business district. I think the town needs to actively encourage business. I believe that the Town can maintain its rural character and still have businesses. I think it is important to the future of the Town to encourage business and needed services. I would like to see a hairdresser, place to have breakfast and lunch, maybe medical doctor, social worker. I would like to see a place for young adults, early teens to hang out with a pool table, ping pong table and wii, show movies. So I think that there should be two to three business districts in the Town and definitely one should include Hitman. They appear to have a thriving business, something that the Town needs more of. If you have areas where business can exist that keep the agricultural areas open and leave areas for residential development.

In the hamlet, I would like to see a mixed commercial and residential district from Knox Cave Road to Knox-Gallupville Road. Storefronts, businesses, homes or apartments in the same area. It would be nice to have a sidewalk, if possible.

I would like to see Knox be more business friendly, hopefully with some thriving businesses and services. A downtown with a hairdresser, place to have lunch or breakfast. Hitman on 146, still have an auto mechanic on 146, and perhaps other business on 146 and in the hamlet. Maybe a social worker, or doctor with an office downtown or somewhere in the town. Downtown with a place for young people with a pool table and ping pong table, wii so that young teens have a place to hang out and interact, not just video games.

I would like to see low income housing - perhaps taking foreclosed low cost homes and renovating them perhaps with habitat for humanity or not discouraging anyone who wants to build housing for low income people.

You have asked for my comments about a commercial or business district and I have been giving a considerable amount of thought to this.

First, there are several types of business districts to consider including one which allows grocery stores, banks, post offices, restaurants, retail stores, professional services such as legal, medical etc. and another which would allow light industry, car repair, car sales, manufacture of things such as pill boxes etc. I would think that the town would like to distinguish between the two. The Zoning Ordinance addresses, somewhat the objective of a future Business District in that it should be centrally located, provide adequate highway transportation and incorporate those areas which have been commercially developed. The first two objectives appear to be met by

establishing a business district for commercial purposes on the north side of Route 156 between Knox Cave Road and the Fire House. The third objective would need to encompass the entire town because the town has refused to take the step of creating such a district.

The second type of business district which may include some light industry, car repair and sales etc. may be much more difficult to form with the approval of the people who live in the town. However, that being said, such businesses are springing up in various places throughout the town. Some, in fact, are located close by the Town's own garage for storing its highway vehicles, supplies for road repair and equipment. Perhaps this is a type of business that should be allowed on a case by case basis and only after they go through a review by the Planning and Zoning Boards. In this way, the town could institute reasonable requirements, depending upon the type and location of the proposed business, to insure that the health, safety and general welfare of the town residents are provided.

When residents come to the Zoning Appeals Board for a use permit, the first thing that the Board considers is whether the proposed use is allowed at all. This guidance is found under Article IV. According to Article IV, the following businesses are not permitted in Knox: banks, general business offices, bars and restaurants, bowling alleys, car washing facilities, dance halls, shopping centers, drive-ins, equipment sales and rental services, gas stations, car sales and services, newspaper offices, barber shops and beauty salons, public garages, retail stores, retail businesses or services not specifically mentioned, for-profit schools, buildings for public assembly, wholesale business, dance, art or music studios, laundries, manufacturing, light industry. I note that while veterinarian offices are allowed, medical offices for people are not allowed. In short, any business, other than farming and agricultural support or country clubs and outdoor recreational facilities, are not allowed in the Town of Knox.

I am not sure if or how such businesses as the Knox Store, the Township Tavern, the Highlands Restaurant, the various beauty salons and barber shops, the farmers markets, laundromats, car sales, repairs and services etc. ever received permits because clearly Article IV of the zoning law does not permit such uses. That being said, I think that town residents benefit greatly in having such services available to them.

I am in favor of the establishment of a commercial business district in the center of the town. Such a district would create a true center which would add to the health and vitality of the town. I am not in favor of the creation of a second district which would centralize all other types of businesses into one area, but strongly support permitting such businesses in the town on a case by case basis after a thorough review by the Planning and Zoning Appeals Board to assure that the health, safety and general welfare of the town residents are protected. As it is now, these businesses are being established anyway, but without guidance from the town. I also support allowing restaurants and B & Bs to be established in areas outside a business district. It doesn't make sense to require all restaurants to be located within one small area of a town.

In your initial survey of what kind of town residents like to have 20 years from now, I wrote that I wasn't sure I could even live here in my old age because there is a lack of services that are necessary for an elderly person to be able to live independently within the town. I am pleased to see that the town has decided to allow establishment of senior housing facilities in Knox, but seniors need more than special housing facilities to live here and that includes many of the commercial businesses that are currently not allowed in the town. Thanks for asking my opinion.

Thank you for keeping us aware of proposals to establish a business district, and hearings on that topic, particularly those proposals that might affect property located adjacent to ours.

My wife & I have discussed this matter, and I concur with what she has written to you (below). I would add only the comment that the definition of the problem or challenge under discussion needs to be grounded in the reality of the way things are as shown by data (facts). To explain:

The reality of the location of economic activity in the Town of Knox is and for many, many years has been largely a matter of entrepreneurial action taken without regard for such constraints as the Zoning code, the Planning Board, the Building Inspector, and other instruments springing from the police power of government. In my observation,

what seems to govern in this matter---that is, what seems to have the upper hand---is the principle of live and let live. People acting individually or in groups in positions of power and authority seem to me in general to have been unwilling to interfere much with the desires and more importantly the needs of people who simply wish to make a living.

So, as my wife has pointed out, we have seen during our 38 years as residents of the Town businesses of various kinds all over the place, some ephemeral and some enduring to the present day, many of which did not or do not conform to the Town Plan or its various instruments of implementation and enforcement. These constraints take a backseat to such pragmatic considerations as where business talent and energy happens to arise, and how people support or ignore the business entities that arise from it. The Town government overtly supports this structure through the activity that channels most of its resources, which is investment and maintenance in roads. The road system, being excellent, makes widely dispersed business entities conveniently accessible to nearly everyone; and we have seen from the history of the past ten years or so that any advantage or necessity of concentrating business activity in a small acreage has evaporated.

If the People of the Town wish to create through their government a structure of business location in Knox different from that we have now, so be it; but let them not kid themselves with plans and regulations that can have very limited effect on the reality of what happens around here.

The primary concern I have about life in Knox is the lack of "connective tissue," if you will, that serves to knit together a living community. In brief, "there's no 'there' there." The Town of Knox needs to have at least one actual center of community living -- a "hamlet," if you will -- and perhaps as many as three or four. The first should center on the Town Hall and Firehouse. We need to have the following:

1. A Post Office.
2. A Library with a full-sized Community Center.
3. Stores (maybe a bookstore, an antique store, crafts center, etc.)
4. A grocery store/general store/eatery.
5. A place to buy gasoline (that could be with the grocery store above).

I further propose a couple of "way out there" ideas that I think would be very successful. First, a Community Swap Center -- a covered structure and large paved (or graveled) lot, where people from Knox can come with items that are still so good that it's a shame to throw them out. These could be date tagged, and after 30 days if nobody collects them, they can go to the Transfer Station for disposal.

Second, a place (perhaps in the Community Center) where people can find tools and machines to make things, so that this community can tap into the growing "Maker" movement that's developing across the country. Basically, people with ideas about how to adapt things for new purposes get together, share their thoughts, and then go about making things. There's a huge reservoir of creativity going on with this movement, and I'll bet practically nobody in Knox has even heard of it. With such a center, who knows what sort of 21st-Century business could be born in our town, "The Incubator of the Helderbergs."

I think 15 years from now Knox should have retained its rural, agricultural character. I'd like to see emphasis on developing apple, grape, and hops crops in the Town, and perhaps a microbrewery to produce wines and beer products with the Knox label. A restaurant could be situated with the craft brewery, and both operations would provide much-needed employment in the Town, both at the agricultural and commercial level.

Fifteen years from now the Town should be in the midst of developing itself out of the Automobile Age. Photovoltaic and wind power generation has to be part of the Town's future, and anyone who's driven around the Town recently can see that private citizens are already moving to photovoltaics. Why should the Town lag its own citizens in this realization?

My "Knox of the future" would have a system of public transportation, several electric-powered vans providing mobility to those who want to get away from reliance on their internal-combustion monstrosities. The vans, which would provide transportation not only around Knox but to key public transit connection points off the Hill, would be powered by Town-owned photovoltaic arrays tied directly into the electric grid. No fuel costs. Electric vehicles have minimal maintenance costs to their power trains, too. Keep their bodies in shape and their suspensions in good nick, they should last for a very long time, indeed (GE Elec-Trak tractors built over 40 years ago are still going strong, despite the fact that GE pulled out of the market over 30 years ago!). Additionally, the Town would have electric-powered sanitation trucks to collect waste and recyclables, rather than everybody having to load their stuff into their pollution-rich pickups and drive to the Town transfer station. Again, this is environmentally responsible and forward thinking, which is what the Town needs to do, in my opinion.

How do we pay for these things? By broadening the tax base with the new businesses we have carefully permitted to locate in the Town, which can be integrated into our rural environment in such a way as to augment and not detract from its rural and agricultural character.

3. Education

The town needs to promote as much involvement in our school district as possible. If we want Knox to prosper, along with a business district we need a top rated school. Everyone's input matters and the more people know the more we can band together to find solutions to long standing problems. Without either of these items growth will be extremely challenging.

Since the Town has a brand new town hall, perhaps its rooms could be put to use for community focused events for seniors, as well as moms and babies (toddlers), such as health and exercise classes, library sponsored events for kids. adult education classes, etc. With the town hall and town park adjoining it seems a natural setting for these activities.

Be sure to push for better educated teachers at BKW. I want my tax dollars well spent!

In talking to folks from the area, as well as the other hilltowns, it seems that many of them don't put a strong enough emphasis on education as they are frequently irate over their taxes - essentially not realizing that a strong school system will also draw in a stronger family and community structure. I see that as short-sighted and problematic. In order for Knox to move forward, we need to attract educated people who will contribute to the community.

I hope the schools won't be taking any greater proportion of our income than they are now.

Contribute to the Berne Library so that Knox kids have a library.

When we ask the question 'what can Knox and the Helderbergs be in 5 or 10 years?,' we are obviously dreaming of improvement, but also want to preserve those things that we love about the area as it is now. What kind of economic activity could we encourage that would take advantage of what is happening in the world around us yet leave no ugly footprints on the landscape and open space we love so dearly up here? We know that manufacturing and agriculture as an economic engine are gone and not coming back. Could the answer be something that actually turns our landscape s and open spaces into a competitive advantage for the Helderbergs? Why can't we be trend-setters and innovators? How about hi-tech? We should work to incentivize technology companies to set up shop in the area however we can. We should encourage our schools to embrace the exciting new developments in online learning and help our young people to be comfortable with technology so they can become the bedrock of a high tech workforce that actually wants to stay here in the Helderbergs. Many technology based businesses do not rely on city center locations, but only need reliable network connections. Many tech companies have workforces in India and China. Again, what happened to America #1? Imagine the Helderbergs as a tech-friendly place for online companies to set up shop where the living is green and clean and less expensive than the city and where there is a local workforce of kids who have been raised in a tech friendly school system? Why not embrace the future in a way that makes our beautiful secluded environment an advantage just the way it is?

3. Environment

We take for granted safe and clean air, soil and water. Protection of these assets should be a top priority.

I'd like to know that our environment should be at the top of our list for protection and stewardship for future generations.

Clean environment.

Whether or not I'm living in Knox in 2028, I'd like the town to still have peace and quiet, clean air, and beautiful spaces.

Quiet.

Wildlife and birds.

No big industry.

I hope Knox will be a place where residents value land, air and wildlife, but don't exclude all development, or industrial progress, because of "green" issues.

No housing developments.

Don't allow the trailer court to expand.

I hope the traffic passing by has fewer tractor-trailers and goes by more slowly than it does now.

I would like Knox to be a low density community with a tight knit community of people who value conservation and ecology over development.

3. Government

As Knox continues to grow, and our population becomes denser, we need to consider how to preserve these good aspects of our life here.

As Knox becomes more densely populated, we can keep our quality of life good if we are good neighbors to each other. This requires good laws and consistent enforcement.

It seems that we rarely see police patrols on our roads for traffic enforcement and crime deterrence. I enjoy seeing the nearly ever-present officers in Altamont. It would be nice to see more of them up here.

I hope Knox will be livable, affordable, reasonably governed, progressive, tolerant, and a good home with a plan that has considered what Knox might desire to be 7 generations later.

I'd like the town to use its resources wisely in a sustainable effort, so that older citizens can remain safely in their homes and younger people want to stay around.

I ask the Board to consider ideas that may be unconventional but are directed at improving some aspect of life in Knox. Our town could become an exemplar for other small, rural, cash-strapped communities in creatively addressing its issues.

We need a more open government.

We need to explore the talents of more of our residents and worry less about regulating too much what people may and may not do.

It is most unlikely that I will be around 15 more years, but by that time, I would hope a new generation of young people would bring some new ideas to our town.

I have been approached by dozens voicing strong opposition to the constant and automatic re-appointment of planning board and zoning board members. The town has some great hard working appointees who are greatly appreciated for taking on a thank less job but in some instances it may be time for the board to finally get some new blood in there and alter the perceived 'old boys club' (not my words) a term I hear constantly.

I hope Knox will be a place where there exists a better relationship between Democrats and Republicans (as well as other organized parties) and they have respect for each other.

I know it's costly, but many of our roadways are in strong need of repair and maintenance.

I also need to ask why are some roads paved half way such as Street Road, Zimmer Road and Becker Road just to name three. We all pay our taxes.

I hope the County and Town will still be taking as good care of the roads as they are now;

We will have to upgrade our infrastructure to protect ourselves against more severe weather brought on by climate change. More extreme rainfall and wind and potential drought must be planned for.

My concern would be with anything that might change the character of Knox. I want to see all the guidelines that make Knox what it is maintained and never diluted.

I don't expect to be around 15 years from now since I am 87 years old, but I don't see much wrong with Knox as it is. Knox in 15 years will hopefully look much the same.

I would like to see the people taking a little better care of what they have in some cases, but certainly NOT more government out there breathing down our necks.

My question to you is, what are the issues you (the Town) want to address? I'd be glad to sit down and talk about the problems you see, but for a country farm town, I think we're doing OK. We don't owe much money, we're pretty well governed, so what do you see a need for?

My model would be someplace like Cooperstown, which thanks to strict zoning laws, has remained unchanged in over a century (i.e.- no "Golden Arches" in the business district). "Progress" for me is not measured in how much land can be "developed".

Communication: I would like to see more public education and information disseminating regarding issues and concerns of the Town of Knox. I know it's expensive to send out a newsletter or flyer to everyone in the town but so many people out in the hinterlands of Knox aren't really up on the things we should be aware of to be a well functioning community. The Altamont Enterprise could have a special column on what's new from the Town Hall in Knox – new regulations and reminders of existing ones, such as removing derelict cars from your property, and noise levels (such as dirt bikes and motor cycles without mufflers – if mufflers aren't required they should be).

Time Warner – the town has allowed Time Warner to be a cable monopoly provider. To date, Time Warner only installs cable with houses above a random house per mile criteria. We live in a very low density area. When we contacted Time Warner for service, we were told that it would cost us \$3,500 for them to run the cable to our home and we would have to commit to their service for 7 years. This is not the case for everyone else living down the road from us. This is clearly discrimination. High speed internet and cable TV should be available to everyone in the Town of Knox at the same cost.

Our zoning and other local laws provide the framework to protect the things mentioned above (junk car removal), but the Town must enforce those laws better than it is currently doing. In addition to cleaning up junk, things like the metal boat storage building across from Highlands should not have been permitted. Why has the derelict building at the corner of Rt. 146 and Witter Road not been removed?

I hope the mail still comes six days a week, by the hand of a mail-lady as nice as Barb, and now Sherry.

15 years? Why 15 years? Why not 5 years or NEXT year? Why not November, 2013? Knox needs to be a well rounded community, where one can live either "in town" or out in the country and not be judged or punished for their choice. We don't need regulations on our lighting and our noise and our livestock. We need a town government who is working for the people, not in hiding from the people.

We wanted the freedom to have some acreage for animals and room to run. We would like to see the Town respect those freedoms and the privacy that comes with living in a rural community and not make laws, such as full cut off lighting and a noise ordinance that puts restrictions on this life. The town needs to be proactive, rather than reactive.

The conduct of Town employees needs to be addressed. The only ones who seem to have set hours, and who abide by those, are the Highway Department and the Town Clerk. Ninety nine percent of the people I talk to have complaints about the Building Department and their lack of responsiveness. The Town Supervisor is nearly inaccessible and the Planning Board chair, while accessible, is a bully and incredibly rude, not to mention the fact that

he thinks his opinion is highly valued as opposed to all others. How about you (the Town Board) start running the town like a public business instead of your own private company?

Why isn't the town's budget on the website? Why aren't the town's meeting minutes searchable? Has anyone looked into streaming the town meetings on the internet? These are all completely do-able things in this day and age. Why aren't we, the town, up to speed with the rest of the world?

I have had long-time residents accuse me of this -- "damn state worker move'n up here and writing regulations." But what about HHA, doesn't that improve things for the old timers and people who want to engage in agriculture?

3. History

Something should be done to protect the historic character of the community; the metal façade on the country store was not appropriate in the Hamlet.

I would like to see the old houses protected -- especially those along Route 156 towards the center of the village. Those are what make Knox unique and welcoming.

We have to find a way to save the existing historical buildings we have.

I would like to see the older homes and barns protected. This could possibly be done with tax credits for existing and/or historical homes and barns. I hate to see the existing barns falling into disrepair, and would encourage a tax credit for that in particular.

Regarding the old houses, for those which are vacant and pose a danger to the adjacent homes, I think that the town should condemn them and take steps to restore them. Are there state grants -- either historic preservation or main street grants that the town could take advantage of? Perhaps a habitat for humanity project is another alternative.

I would like to see Knox restored to its previous beauty with its historic homes glistening and store fronts at its center.

Ten years from now will be Knox's Bicentennial. While the members of the Knox Historical Society might, if we are lucky, be around to enjoy the celebration, most of us will not be in any condition to organize and run it. NOW is the time for the town to consider how the celebration will be financed, and to start thinking about what the options are. The Bicentennial could be a huge fundraiser for local organizations if it is well run and promoted. That takes planning and organization. I know making definite plans 10 years ahead is not reasonable, but it won't hurt to have the idea planted in your minds.

One of my favorite small towns is Rensselaerville. That is the kind of hamlet I would like to see Knox have.

I would hate to see Knox become what the Guilderland hamlet is now (not Guilderland Center, but the old Guilderland hamlet on Route 20). I still can't believe the Guilderland Fire Department knocked down those historic buildings. I think that's a real shame, and I'd hate to see that happen here.

There are areas of historical significance which might meld together with our little historic one-room schoolhouse, to produce some interesting efforts in enhancing the town's place in our area's life.

3. Hydrofracking

I am in favor of allowing the use of hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas and petroleum liquids in the Town of Knox. Any decision on this matter should only be made following a deliberative and objective examination of the process, science-based literature that examines the impacts of ongoing extraction efforts on the environment and existing and proposed mitigating measures. To do any less, is a disservice to Town residents and is bad public policy. We have plenty of time to engage in a reasoned process, as the industry is not banging on our door.

Why is there such determination to get a moratorium on hydro fracking?! Ms. Pokorny has only done research to promote NO hydro fracking. A perfect indication of the one sided view of the town board. Educate yourselves and present an unbiased view of this and all things, so that the true pros and cons are publicized and an educated decision can be made. Above and beyond all that, there are previously sold mining rights that need to be taken into account and the fact that the actual chances of companies knocking on our doors to do hydrofracking are minimal, if

not non-existent. The Town Board should spend their time on REAL issues, rather than wasting time on trying to prevent something that might actually be a good thing.

Hydrofracking would give farmers the extra income they need to stay in business, pay the taxes, and keep from having to sell off portions of their land to pay off debts. Fracking would keep much of the farmland available while oil and gas are extracted far beneath the land. Unfortunately, pumping thousands of gallons of poison into the earth is part of the process, and most people on the Hill would object to that as we all depend on our own wells for water. I think it is important to take notice of the recent seismicity in the area and particularly in respect to our Karst topography. In nearby Berne, during the month of August 2011, Columbia University recorded 22 seismologic events. I think these naturally occurring phenomena are strong reasons to ban hydrofracking from the area. We live with a tenuous water supply in areas of the town and every effort should be made to protect this resource. The infusion of known carcinogens into subsurface rock formations is a highly risky process and not proven to be safe. Now that other towns have successfully passed and defended bans on this technology, I think it is time for Knox to follow suit. I feel totally against fracking. We keep taking from our planet, whoever what are we doing to protect it for the future generations?

We have a great concern that hydro-fracking must be prevented in Knox. The town should take proactive measures to ensure this does not happen. We all depend on our wells for drinking water and if there is even the most remote chance that our water could be polluted, it is not worth taking a chance. There are numerous reasons why fracking should be prevented, including destruction of our roads. It is imperative that the town take action before it is too late.

No fracking.

I hope that the Knox Town Board would officially say "NO" to hydrofracking.

Ban hydrofracking!

And I'd like to never see a fracking rig in Knox.

Fracking for natural gas should be prohibited.

Protection of our water resources is a concern and should be a factor when considering future development in the town or allowing hydrofracking in our community. I believe that fracking would destroy everything that makes Knox a special place to live.

The aspects of life that need protection against are prevention of fracking and large businesses from ruining the land and rural character of Knox.

3. Land Conservation

We would like to see open space and the quiet rural character protected; also, more land set aside for special protection because of its unique features.

I would like to see some important elements of our landscape (at least important to me) protected. These include active ag land, brushy abandoned fields woodlands and connecting passage ways for wildlife. I don't however think that this can or should be accomplished through restrictive zoning. Rather, the Town should:

1. Identify important natural elements of the Town.
2. Work with government agencies and land trusts to secure protection for these elements.
3. Ensure that property tax assessments for "conserved" properties fairly reflect the diminished value of the fee.
4. Commit to create a fund for land conservation.

When developing a large former agricultural land if there could be cluster development in one part of the property and the balance left as open space, rather than 3 acre zoning, if this is possible given the water and septic requirement.

I hope that I am still here and enjoying the area and that we have a few more businesses and services while protecting our farms, natural areas and environmentally important areas.

3. Lighting

I would like to see people who have large outdoor lights without top shades encouraged to have inexpensive shades installed.

Regarding the lighting district along route 156 in the hamlet, could the lights have top shades added to minimize light pollution?

Light pollution should be controlled by the requirement of lighting which does not shine beyond our property boundaries.

I would like Knox to have less light pollution.

I would like Knox to be what it was like 20 years ago, only with less ridiculous ordinances that are self serving for the members of the Town Board, i.e. full cut off lighting.

3. Medical Care

A place where you might find a satellite clinic with at least limited medical services.

Town of Knox needs a general practitioner of medicine.

I'd like to see (before I die) a local doctor in the Town of Knox.

I would also like to see some kind of "senior van" service. This could be partially funded by the town, with volunteer drivers. Many communities have them so seniors can get to doctors, etc.

3. Noise

Noisy activities should be controlled so they do not have impact beyond our property boundaries.

Noise: There are two very noticeable noise-makers in the community (the Bozenkill-Bell-Quay Roads area, anyway) that reduce the quality of living in this otherwise peaceful, rural setting: a. the gun club on Quay Road. The repeated crack of a rifle or, worse, the rapid-fire sound of an automatic assault weapon are very unpleasant. It's usually in the afternoon or evening, just when you are sitting outside to enjoy a cocktail or relax after a day of work. The noise (which is over a mile away from where we live) just shatters the atmosphere. Perhaps if silencers aren't a solution (not sure they are legal), could the town require that the shooters stand inside an individual 3-sided structure with noise absorbent inner walls and shoot from there, not out in the open where the crack of the gun travels for miles? b. Unmuffled dirt bikes and motorcycles. Again, these noises travel for miles over land and even through thick forests. The irritating and unsettling sound of dirt bikes revving up on Township Road are easily heard on Bozenkill and Bell Roads. Same with a particularly noisy bike that speeds down Bell Road, down Bozenkill Rd and then up Township Road, which you can hear for miles. Does the Town have a regulation on noise from small vehicles like motorized bikes?

I don't want to take away anyone's fun, but there are ways their fun doesn't have to become torture for the rest of the community – such as muffling unpleasant, excessive sound.

3. Promotion

We should promote the many recreational facilities in Knox.

We are better governed in Knox and we need to "blow our horn" more than we do rather than seeing anything new look only at Berne as a possible location.

Promote the town, and help make Knox a better place to live in.

The Town should promote small businesses.

We need a directory of local services and businesses that we could use to keep our money spent locally.

Asking businesses to come to Knox just might be a start. Please consider what the residents are requesting and move forward, not stay in the rut.

I want Knox to be a little more well known when you travel more than 40 minutes. I want a store, and more community events. I want to be able to be proud to say I lived in Knox.

We should promote that (Hilltown culture and identity/You have to be tough to live on the Hill) more.

The topics you point to in the survey would lend interest to a committee approach to building appreciation for our little hometown.

3. Recreation

I'd like to see use of Town of Knox Park more frequently for all age groups.

More organized childrens' activities.

Needs more for kids to do.

The wetlands boardwalk off of Street Road needs maintenance, and the Town Park could use a play area suited for small toddlers (the slides are great for older children, but the stairs to the slides are too high off the ground for little ones, and even short parents such as myself:)

I would like to see the town park improved with more play equipment.

I would like to see Knox have a place for kids to get together and get some exercise, like a facility for roller skating, ice skating in the winter, roller blades, scooters, skate boards, etc.

It would be useful to encourage recreation related businesses to serve people as they travel to Thacher Park or as they cycle through the Hilltowns.

Bike paths should be put on all roads being resurfaced and the roads should be widened.

I would like to see Knox as a destination for recreational day tourists 15 years from now.

I would like to make sure that the green spaces are protected. We have a magnificent park; one anyone would be proud of.

Open spaces should be protected for hunting, recreational use.

Some people need to control their dogs so it is safe for pedestrians, runners, cyclists, horseback riders, etc. to use the roads. Perhaps the town could have a Recreational Safety promotional campaign to educate homeowners about preventing this public safety threat.

A century ago, our home stood as a summer house and farm for a family out of New York city. They traveled likely by stagecoach across the hilly terrain to reach Knox. There was something that drew them here as it drew us and the other people and families that choose to live here. We moved to this area in hopes that the town may be a on a precipice of change-so we are happy to see this survey! We'd like to be a part of making good change happen to Knox as residents and people who care about the community and its future. I would love for Knox to once again be town synonymous with country living at its best. I'd like to see a good network of community events and support-farmer's markets, seasonal activities, festivals, creative art (they used to have pottery classes in our yard 100 years ago), hiking, fishing, outdoor activities, classes/workshops (yoga, woodworking, cooking).

3. Recycling

Environment: I am proud that the Town of Knox dump has a recycling program. Recycling, re-use and avoiding waste (i.e., using re-usable products rather than throw-away) are great ways to be environmentally savvy and friendly. I would like to see the Town (again, by some means of communication or maybe road signs) engage in active public education on recycling and re-use, such as encouraging the following:

- Take your own cloth bags to the grocery store to avoid using plastic bags, or at least to reduce the number you get. If people don't want to use cloth bags or forget them, encourage them to tell baggers at the store to put more items in each plastic bag (I've seen baggers put no more than 2 medium-sized items in one bag and people going out of Hannaford's with 10-12 plastic bags only half full).
- Use re-usable cups, plates, utensils rather than paper or plastic ones.

- When going to a restaurant, take a re-usable plastic container with you in case you want to take some of your meal home (rather than having the restaurant put your food in Styrofoam clam-shell containers).

In 15 years, I'd like to see the Town of Knox as a model for other rural townships in recycling, re-use of materials, and community mutual help organizations, including tool banks for residents on the same stretch of road.

I appreciate being able to leave and pick up (recycle) useable household items from the Transfer Station to keep them from taking up valuable space in the landfill. I would like to see the Knox Transfer Station have a simple shelter (pavilion style, open on all sides) for these items so they could be more safely accessible. Items that aren't claimed in a reasonable time could be moved to the dumpster. The men who work at the Transfer Station have been very helpful about encouraging people to recycle these items.

3. Renewable Energy

Knox should contribute to the health of the planet by developing local use of renewable energy. We can be self sustaining by using wind and solar power.

I would like to see windmills/solar farm if feasible.

I'd like to see a lot of solar panels on peoples' roofs and wind turbines on larger parcels – I'd like to know that many residents are getting their energy from the sun and wind.

Promote and encourage the use of electric cars. Consider placing a public charging station at the Town Park/Hall to encourage visitors from off the hill.

Things I would love to see: more alternative energy (wind)

Landowners with large parcels should have incentives to keep their property intact rather than selling it off in subdivisions. Renewable energy (wind or solar) installations could be productive uses to make of the space in order to generate revenue to offset their tax burdens.

I would like people of Knox to be able to make use of renewable energy to meet their domestic and small business needs 15 years from now. Farmers and small businesses who want to have solar installations or wind turbines to offset their property taxes and their electricity costs should be able to have equipment that produces 100 kW or more of electricity.

The key to keeping Knox rural is to make it possible for farmers to succeed. If they can't succeed, they will sell off to developers, and Knox becomes Upper Guilderland. One option is to lower farm taxes, but that would increase taxes for everyone else, so doing that and staying elected isn't likely.

Farmers have a "Right to Farm," so why don't we let them "farm" the wind blowing across the land? Commercial turbines actually take up little land, allow farmers to use the land around them, and prevent McMansions from popping up around them. The farmers make money, the town makes money, the town's people can feel good about the carbon footprint and sustainability. I know the objections – windmills kill birds and bats. If people were really concerned about this issue, they would keep their cats inside. Since most people would refuse to keep cats inside, the protection of birds and bats is not the real issue – they are looking for reasons to prevent turbines. People will complain about the flicker from the blades, but they watch TV for endless hours. How many people actually had seizures during the hippie and disco era from the strobe lights and mirrored balls? Back then people paid to have flicker in their lives. Sound is another argument. I lived over a subway in Boston and every 10 minutes the walls and floor shook, the brakes squealed, and my roommates and I all survived with no bad health effects. When visiting a commercial turbine, any noise was drowned out by a farmer several fields over plowing the land. When he stopped, the birds chirping made so much noise it was hard to hear the whoosh of the windmill, even though we were right next to it. If noise were really a threat to health, then people should not be allowed to live near highways, airports and railroads. If an accurate formula exists to determine the decrease in land value because of a nearby turbine, that formula must also be able to calculate the increase in land value because of the turbine. Any attempt to make a turbine owner compensate for a decrease in land value must be balanced by a payment to the turbine owner for an

increase in land value. (Or an equivalent tax break.) The argument that prices always increase for homes disappeared in the last recession. If you don't have an in hand accurate formula to use, then this whole land value mess is just a waste of everyone's time and energy, and is just another way to block wind turbines, and not really an issue. SO...farmers need a way to stay in business so they don't have to sell off their land. Commercial wind turbines provide that option. Those who want to block this option need to come up with another alternative, or keep quiet. Imagine the increase in school taxes if a 300 acre farm is split up in 50 or 100 lots with 2.5 kids per lot.

I am disappointed in the shortsightedness of those administering our potential for developing wind energy in the town. Here, a real opportunity has been missed. Locally developed energy has a strong potential here by virtue of this God-given resource. To eliminate the future development of this resource is about as smart as saying that "Farming is dead in Knox". Wind energy is in its early stages of redevelopment. We will not advance the technology without allowing it to go through its growing pains and evolution. To illustrate my point, look at the evolution of rail from its early days. The smoke belching trains of the 19th Century have only some resemblance to trains today that are capable of speeds approaching 300 miles per hour. A new industry simply cannot evolve without engaging the learning curve and that only happens when you don't kill off an industry in its infancy. Clean, non-carbon, locally produced and distributed energy should be a trademark of Knox into the future. This is our responsibility and should be our answer to climate change and the Earth-changing effects of greenhouse gases. In this policy we have not "Acted locally and thought Globally".

I encourage the Board to consider ways of using what we have to sustain what we need, such as the development of renewable energy. We already have plenty of free wind on Beebe Road – why not harness it?

Encourage the building of energy star, passive solar and net-zero homes by providing information to people who want to build in the Town. Perhaps could provide a list of architects that are familiar with these concepts. Have the Town building inspector give out information to people about free energy audits providing a list of three companies that provide free energy audits. Try to encourage homeowners to make their homes more energy efficient if possible. This area is heavily dependent on oil to heat most of the homes so encouraging energy upgrades to homes would be good. People cannot afford their heating bills and cannot afford the commute to jobs with the price of gas.

3. Seniors

I'd like to see affordable senior housing in the Town of Knox.

I hope Knox will be a place with affordable, low rise senior housing.

I would like to see some kind of senior housing available for those who find that they can no longer care for their own homes.

Low income and senior citizen housing should be strongly encouraged.

Senior living facility (facilities) and a new pool at Thacher Park (ha!).

As I "mature" I am looking for more things designed for senior citizens. Like a community center, public transportation, home health care, senior activities, food deliveries – things I might need to stay a Knox resident, rather than turn into a vegetable in a nursing home in some city.

I believe there is a need for affordable senior housing, and the town hall should be utilized for more community services such as senior gatherings and meals.

My husband and I are retirees. While we're currently able to get around independently, this may not always be the case. We'd like to know that Knox is invested in systems that allow us to live in our old farmhouse with community support.

In 15 years I will be over 80 years old. I would like to be able to live in Knox at that time. For me that may mean being able to function without a car -- hence the grocery store and perhaps other commercial amenities, sidewalks

15 years on. God willing, I'll still be walking the planet, at age 80. If I am still residing in Knox on our farm, I hope I'll still be able to keep up the place.

There are many people now living especially along Knox's main street that will be elderly in 15 years and there needs to be some provision for them to allow them to stay in the community they love.

The kind of place that I would like to see Knox to be in fifteen years from now, since I would be in my "golden" years with most likely less mobility by then, would include a place where I would have access to basic services.

I would like to see Senior housing - small handicap accessible, energy efficient homes

3. Social Environment

The Knox Town Hall is a real asset to the community. I would like to see more use made of it by different civic organizations if possible.

I'd like to see more use of Town of Knox community room.

I hope the future holds more community events and celebrations to give the town a greater sense of identity and pride.

Preserve the small town feeling, once a town is established.

Provide a place for the people of the community to call their own. Provide people of the Hilltowns with a place that they can frequent, small businesses that can provide everyday necessities.

Needs a gathering place, like the store and post office.

When we moved here eleven years ago, we could have chosen any area in the Capital District, but I liked what Knox had to offer: peace and quiet, clean air, clean living, simple life, rural area, wildlife areas, and sense of small-town community. The one thing that has changed, unfortunately, is the loss of our minimal "downtown" area, through the attrition of the small businesses and post office. Although we've been able to find "community" through local organizations, I do mourn the loss of "Main Street." I ask the Board to consider ways of encouraging small businesses, with the goal of re-energizing the village as the center of life in Knox.

Is there a "Welcome Wagon" or any effort to help newcomers to town feel welcome? When we moved in to Knox 11 years ago we were blessed to have a few welcoming neighbors who immediately helped us out and made us feel at home. On the other hand, I can't recall the name of the people who live right across the road from us. I have never seen them at a local event, and have had maybe three brief conversations in 11 years. If newcomers had neighbors like that, I can understand why recent arrivals are not involved with the town and its activities. The town might devise a way to make newcomers feel welcome and a way to help them become aware of what the town has to offer.

My husband and I recently wrote *Helderberg Hilltowns* for Arcadia Publishing and studied the socio-economic vagaries of the four towns over the past 230 years. Our geographic isolation has been a large factor in discouraging business development, and I don't believe that's going to change. I believe that Knox, like the other Hilltowns, will remain a small, rural town and not become a suburb of Albany. So we must continue to be self-reliant and stewards of our wonderful area, because no one else is going to do it for us.

A small group called Sustainable Hilltowns has formed in Medusa (Rensselaerville). We are still finding our focus as we explore the sustainable community movement, which emphasizes interaction of environmental, social, and economic development. At a recent meeting, we discussed a community currency, where people share their skills, goods and services in a simple banking system (like bartering).

Knox will need to continue to be self-reliant. Many, many services in the town are provided by volunteers, and I consider this to be our town's finest asset. We must continue to nurture these volunteer groups, as the town could never afford to provide these services otherwise.

I love the small town, close knit community feel. I like saying I live "in the middle of nowhere." Knox has been my home for 18 years now. I would like to see the small community protected but also bringing in new faces and businesses.

I would like to see Knox become, once again, a place that people are proud to call their home.

I think it would be great if we could have more of a sense of community - summer picnics, potlucks, etc. We're lucky to live in such a place and it would be nice to meet like-minded people who know the value of country living.

I would love to see continued community events to strengthen community relations.

In 15 years, we would like to see Knox continue to be a small rural community as it is now, where people know their neighbors and have room to breathe.

As far as 15 years from now, I may not be on this planet. However, my wish is to have Knox be a place that families have fond memories of living here and have a community that is active, caring, and supportive of future changes for the good of the residents.

We would like to see people get along with each other better and stop coveting other peoples' lands and/or threatening them and their workers.

I would like Knox to be a family friendly place with people of all ages.

3. Transportation

I'd like to see public transportation.

I would like Knox to have better transportation.

I would like Knox to be a place that has some basic transportation, especially for seniors.

3. Water

I'd like to be able to continue drawing my water from a well.

I also think that the next time someone talks about developing a large subdivision in the hamlet area it is imperative to address the sewer and water systems question. It may be wise to watch the sewer project in the hamlet of Berne and head in that direction. Again, this is about defending our most important natural resource, water.

Unpolluted wells.

I would like to have the land not developed into homes that are lived in for a few years, then abandoned. As a new home is constructed the underground water flow is tapped into, sometimes upsetting the pre-existing wells.

We must pay attention to water quality so that wells are not polluted. Septic systems must be adequate.

3. Young Families

I would like children growing up in Knox to be able to stay in the area when they settle down to raise their own families and be able to make a decent living locally.

Housing for other age/income groups (in addition to Seniors) should also be encouraged.

Finally, I would hope to see a future Knox that is vibrant, growing and full of young families.

Most of all I hope Knox will have continued to attract YOUNG people, and so the school buses will still stop nearby, so we can still hear the cheers from the Ogden Brower Little-League field, and that hymns still come down to the farm from the loudspeakers in the tower of the Knox Reformed Church.

I worry that the town can easily turn into a suburb like Guilderland. Protections against sprawl are lacking. The town might consider incentives that direct development toward the Hamlet (while keeping undeveloped land intact). This would create opportunities for empty nesters to remain in Knox as they age, and for young families to find an affordable community where they can raise children.

I would like Knox to be a place for our youth to come back to (or stay here) and raise their families, not a place they want to leave.

I would like to see new young families or new young retirees (55-75). Lately I notice that houses are going on the market up here and staying on the market for a very long time. Older adults when they can no longer live up here have to leave the hill to have senior services. This is not a good situation, we seem to be having a hard time getting younger people to move up here and a hard time providing older people with a home. I don't know how to change this; it is partly the result of the demographics of the country. Perhaps some low interest loans if possible provided by the Town to renovate houses once people purchase them as an incentive to get people to move up here. This might be a great expense but might be our only option.

Other:

15 years from now, if still alive, I probably won't know my own name, let alone where I live, so long term plans are not a concern for me personally.

Otherwise I like Knox the way it is.

15 years from now, I would like Knox to be what it was 20+ years ago.