

My name is Justine Blackmore Hlista, I am the Mayor of the Village of Volente. I am speaking in support of the BCRUA's request at this Chapter 26 hearing.

As you may know, there has been a considerable amount of conflict over the past 4-5 years between the Village of Volente and the BCRUA over their plans to construct and operate a raw water pumping facility on residentially zoned property within the municipal boundaries of Volente.

The conflict arises from our neighborhood residents deep concern about the negative impacts from blasting a 30 by 400 foot shaft for the pumping station within the neighborhood, and the thousands of heavy truck trips for excavation of the shaft and tunnel on small neighborhood roads where children ride their bikes, trenching along Lime Creek Rd for a buried electrical line, the continuous operation of a very large pumping facility and its associated infrastructure within an established neighborhood of single family homes. The Village of Volente, on behalf of its citizens, opposes and will fight any plan to construct a facility within our boundaries that is inconsistent with our legally established local zoning and use. Locating the pumping facility on residentially zoned property within our municipality is not a prudent option for this project.

Last October, in an effort to avoid a protracted court battle on this issue, the Village of Volente and the BCRUA began discussing alternatives that would substantially reduce the impacts of the project on neighborhood residents. Locating the pumping station outside of the neighborhood is critical to resolving the conflict. The proposed Sandy Creek Park location would put the pumping station on property that is adjacent to land already being used for a pumping and water treatment facility by Cedar Park, so it is consistent with the existing local use. The pumping station would also be buffered by 24 acres of park. The BCRUA is committed to ensuring the function and use of the park is not impaired and that any impact from the construction is thoroughly mitigated. This site is consistent with the adjacent use by Cedar Park, it is substantially buffered from nearby residences, it is not encumbered by legal issues surrounding municipal zoning, and does not permanently alter or impair the use and enjoyment of the park. Siting the pumping station on this location opens the possibility for a negotiated solution with Volente that reduces the impact on neighborhood residents while allowing the BCRUA to make reasonable plans for their water supply. It is a prudent alternative that supports the goals of our region.