



Town of Fishkill

Office of the Town Supervisor

May 19, 2023

Dear Fishkill Resident,

Last week, as news broke that New York City was beginning to implement a plan to relocate hundreds or thousands of individuals to the Hudson Valley, I wrote to you to inform you on the situation. I'd like to provide you with an update on what has transpired in the past week.

Since writing to you last Friday, I've been out to visit residents in the area of the former Downstate prison, and spoken to dozens of other residents at Town Hall on this subject, and I have been blown away by the overwhelming compassion residents have shown. As an elected official I am reminded every day of the goodness and faith of our community by the number of residents expressing their concern for the wellbeing of the individuals who may potentially be relocated to the Hudson Valley. I share your concerns, and my heart and the hearts of the Town Board go out to every family and individual seeking a new life here in the United States.

Unfortunately, lack of genuine federal action to address the issues with our national immigration policy has led to the situation we now face. While no one wishes to see others suffering, residents also told me that they recognize that the Town lacks the resources to accommodate an influx of individuals to our community who cannot legally work or support themselves, who lack independent transportation and who could possibly create a strain on central services such as medical or emergency response.

Sadly, in situations such as this, disinformation and speculation can spread like wildfire, so please allow me to take a moment to address a few rumors or mistaken impressions which have come to my attention.

It was widely circulated in local news and by several prominent elected officials that a number of homeless veterans housed in Orange County hotels were evicted to make way for migrants last week. [This story has since been debunked](#) thanks to excellent investigative work by the news agency which initially covered the story, and some politicians have been forced to retract their comments related to the matter. Further speculation that a number of homeless veterans have been relocated to Fishkill hotels has [also been debunked by this same news agency](#).

Please allow me to put your mind at ease and reiterate my pledge never to speak to you with speculation or bluster, and provide you only with facts, not rhetoric.

In my last letter to you, I also promised to let you know if any Fishkill hotels are being used to house migrants relocated by New York City. There are no hotels in the Town of Fishkill being used at this time, and all Town hotels have received a letter from my office containing the Town Board Resolution adopted last week, affirming our Zoning Code provisions and authorizing the Town to take legal action against any hotel which participates in the relocation program.

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In response to this ongoing and developing situation, Dutchess County and other neighboring counties are issuing a State of Emergency. This morning, Friday, May 19, 2023, I signed a similar document declaring a State of Emergency for the Town of Fishkill.

This should not be seen as cause for panic or concern. I issued the state of emergency so that as the situation continues, I will be able to respond to new developments and coordinate with other elected officials quickly to prevent our Town of Fishkill hotels being used as shelters or dormitories. Again, there is no cause for panic or concern. This is simply a legal tool at the Town's disposal. I earnestly hope there will be no reason to use this tool, and that leaders at higher levels of government quickly find and implement solutions to bring this situation to a swift conclusion.

I will continue to keep residents informed throughout this developing situation, and if you hear any rumors or speculation on this matter, please contact me directly at supervisor@fishkill-ny.gov and I will personally investigate each matter.

Regards,

Ozzy Albra, Town Supervisor