

MyRye.com

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RYE - The Hen Island Dispute and Mr. Floatie

(view the actual web story by [clicking here](#))

The following response to comments made by Hen Island homeowner Mike Johnson were provided to MyRye.com by fellow Hen Island homeowner Ray Tartaglione. Tartaglione is in a dispute with Rye City and other Hen Island homeowners regarding alleged poor environmental conditions on the island.

Tartaglione is behind the web site www.HEALtheHARBOR.com and Mr. Floatie, a "a seven foot turd that will soon be walking up and down on Purchase street greeting residents handing out Hershey bars and business cards, bringing attention to all the issues on Hen Island that have been ignored for years," according to Tartaglione.

Original Comment by Mike Johnson

It's a shame one individual, Ray Tartaglione, posing as someone who cares about Milton Harbor and Rye, NY, is continuing his childish, hurtful and untrue rants about Hen Islanders' and Mayor Otis' neglect of laws pertaining to the environment....This individual, who has summered on Hen Island, by the way, for the past 9 years, without mentioning anything about pollution or the City of Rye, transparently began his campaign when the shareholders of Kuder Island (Hen Island) voted him out as an officer as well as a board member....He now has disguised his hatred for the Hen Islanders with a lamb's clothing of "caring for the harbor"....It's painfully obvious to anyone who visits his Heal the Harbor website, he is only promoting his positions with regard to everything BUT the harbor....His website is littered with untruths....If you see his Mr. Floatie car parked on Milton Rd., and he's in it, ask him what his beef is....I guarantee you, after listening to him rant you'll come to realize what lots of others know about him....Perhaps you should go to ([NY Times Link](#)) and read the New York Times article, which contains an interview of Mr. Tartaglione, wherein he does nothing but promote the wonderfulness of Hen Island...The article was done in 2001, PRIOR to his removal from the Kuder Island Board of Directors....

I grew up in Rye, NY..My father, H. Clay Johnson, was once Mayor of Rye....It's a place I love...Hen Island is a place I've been going to for over 30 years...Read the NYT article and make your own decision about Mr. Tartaglione.....

- Mike Johnson

Response by Ray Tartaglione

In response to Mike Johnson's concerns and comments, my position and beliefs are these:

Mayor Otis. The Mayor is neglecting and covering up the present issues on Hen Island. Hen Island since inception has not been required to comply with any health, safety, building or environmental standards as set forth in the Rye City Code. Go to the Building Department and see if there are any electrical, plumbing or health department approvals on file. You will find only one electrical permit and that was issued in June before the electrical system was completely installed??? Last year, four Certificates of Occupancies were issued on Hen Island. Also last year, one resident was issued a violation for building a 20' high retaining wall without a permit along the shoreline, after a complaint was filed from a neighboring community. If you ask the building department about this violation, they will tell you they lost the paperwork. Just this summer, Mayor Otis, the Rye Zoning Board and the Building Department allowed a new home to be constructed on Hen Island without enforcing many of the codes, which are in place to protect the environment as well as the community. In this case, a C/O was issued even prior to the house being completed.

Mr. Plunkett, Rye's attorney, has instructed City officials not to respond to any of my concerns in writing or otherwise from the onset of my complaints. In a previous matter, Mr. Plunkett had instructed Dobbs Ferry village officials to not respond to my concerns. As a result of Mr. Plunkett's views, the village of Dobbs Ferry paid over \$2.5 million dollars in damages. Mr. Plunkett defended and lost the case. Nonetheless, his fees were paid. See The New York Times, December 24, 2006.

Mr. Plunkett is presently trying to convince the Dobbs Ferry Town Board to appeal the case and incur even more legal fees. Mr. Plunkett is also presently defending the City of Rye and the Rye Zoning Board in New York Supreme Court in, Tartaglione v. The Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Rye, Kuder Island Colony,

Inc., and Gary Ederer.

I have gone on record that I would be most pleased to dismiss the case if the City of Rye compels the home owner to install a compliant septic system and drill a well for potable water, as would be required anywhere else in Rye or Westchester County.

<http://healtheharbor.com/correspondence/edererconstplan.html>

Why would the City of Rye not want compliance?

Now to Mr. Johnson.

Just because the residents of Hen Island have been polluting and living unsafely for 60+ years doesn't mean it should be allowed to continue. It is simply a matter of bringing safe and sanitary conditions to the Island. To be clear, I am not asking for "individuals" to comply -- I am asking for ALL OF US to comply. We have a responsibility to ourselves, our children, our guests, the other residents of the Island, the people who use Milton Harbor, and the environment.

The New York Times interview Mr. Johnston references was conducted during a time when I was lead to believe by the Board of Directors that the water and sewage systems on Hen Island were compliant. I maintain my view that Hen Island is one of the most beautiful places in Westchester County and feel very fortunate to live along the shores of the Sound in Rye. I am, however, embarrassed by the lack of responsibility by some of my fellow Islanders. Why not have the systems tested in accordance with the request of the Long Island Soundkeeper? I believe your father would be ashamed of the way you are defending polluters.

With regard to your claim about my "untrue rants about Hen Island," I welcome anyone who would like to witness them first-hand to contact me ray@rjtauto.com and I will be happy to give them a personal tour of the Island. Let them reserve their judgment about the Island and me until they meet me and tour the Island.

This is no longer just a few Hen Island homeowners complaining. There are now thousands who are interested in this matter who are watching it very closely, due to the exposure received from the website at www.HEALtheHARBOR.com, commercials and news pieces on Channel 12, acknowledgment from others on YouTube (such as The Kid From Brooklyn), and others.

It is my hope that with the coming introduction of Mr. Floatie in and around Westchester and New York City that this will receive national attention.

As to your ad hominem attacks on me, they are false and do not deserve further response. I thank you, Mr. Johnston, for bringing these very serious issues to everyone's attention, and I, too, shall continue to do so.

Ray Tartaglione