**Remarks by Geoff Welch of The Ramapo River Committee delivered at the proposed Sterling Forest Resort Casino DEIS Hearing in Tuxedo on Dec. 8, 2014**

 **The environment impacts of the proposed Parking Garage is not adequately assessed in the DEIS. This structure is certainly not architecturally inspired by any garage in Tuxedo Park! It is a massive, 11 floors structure, over 1,100 feet long --giving us a total of over 2, 800,000 square feet of interior space, according to the Genting site plan. All this proposed to be crammed into a narrow valley, Surrounded by Sterling Forest State Park.**

**Yet the DEIS says: “The largest proposed structure is the Resorts World Grand Hotel… The approximate extent of the building space to be heated or cooled would be 1,501,609”. “As part of the Host Community Agreement, the Town of Tuxedo will require RW to construct a parking garage, which pursuant to the exclusion from the Master Cap …would NOT BE COUNTED as part of the Resort’s commercial space.”**

**Image the large Shadows the building will cast on the State Park forest, which on the west, appears to be one single line of new planted trees away. This garage structure is unacceptably huge, obtrusive and incompatible within this forest setting. In other words, it is an unsuitable land use.**

**The site plan treats the Indian Kill as a decorative landscape feature with large ponds, walkways with nearby parking lots; whereas, natural highlands conditions would consist of wetlands and forest along the stream corridor. Without the shade of trees, water temperature increases in the Indian Kill and oxygen levels decrease impacting the aquatic ecosystem. Water quality in the Indian Kill Reservoir –1/3 of a mile or so downstream – would be far better served by riparian buffer restoration, than parking lots, massive buildings and heavy traffic. Daily increased traffic will impact both water and air quality.**

 **The Town of Tuxedo must bear some of the responsibility for allowing the major wetland damage that occurred in the 1950s at this site when wetlands were torn apart by heavy equipment and the Sterling Gardens were created, with lots of exotic plants species.**

**The Indian Kill reservoir should have its source water protected. There is also not as much water in the Indian Kill reservoir as the town thinks. With the increased storm intensity that the Northeast region of the United States is experiencing, and the two year, 7 days-a-week, 12 hours-a-day construction schedule for this project the reservoir will be at great risk from polluted, stormwater runoff.**

**In the DEIS the Town must address the option of acquisition of the property for preservation as open space, with gradual wetland restoration.**