

The Town Board of the Town of Ossining (Town Board) has undertaken a discussion of potential beekeeping legislation for the Town of Ossining. BAC understands that the Town Board is looking towards the Village of Ossining Chapter 75, NY provisions on beekeeping as it evaluates changes to the Town code. This discussion was on a recent Town Board Work Session and, as BAC understands these processes, may take a few months for the Town Board to make a final decision. BAC is requesting a use variance. BAC is requesting a temporary variance which would allow BAC to keep its beehives while the Town Board considers changes to zoning and until a final decision is made by the Town Board on this issue. The issuance of a temporary variance will help BAC avoid what may be substantial unnecessary expense in moving and relocating the bees and then in just a few months bringing the bees back to BAC's premises. Further, BAC has been advised by our professional beekeeper that moving the bees now would be complicated and potentially harmful to the bees as they are in the middle of finishing up honey production and starting to store food for the winter.

Core to BAC's mission is the belief that when artists of all ages and levels of experience gather to explore and create art it enhances our perception and perspectives of the world. Through shared experiences we do our part to enhance and make more beautiful the world of art and the wider world around us. We have seen this when the renowned Bill T Jones watched young, local children in their dance class.

At BAC, we see the establishment of our bee hives to be both a literal embodiment of this belief that "cross-pollination" of art experiences makes art and our community a better place ,and an important tool in ensuring our grounds, gardens, and fruit trees grow, thrive and create beauty on our grounds.

"Pollination is a valuable service provided by both managed bees (primarily honeybees, *Apis mellifera*) and wild, native bees. Bee pollination is essential for the production of fruits, nuts, vegetables, spices, stimulants (such as coffee), and edible oils (such as sunflower and canola)." Cornell CALS, Pollination is a valuable ecosystem service

BAC has made a significant investment in the establishment of the beehives. Necessary and appropriate equipment has been purchased and trained professionals have been hired to oversee and tend to the bees. Further, as a non-profit, the BAC must continuously develop plans to raise funds in support of our programs, scholarships and free community events. BAC honey is part of our overall fundraising plan.

BAC sits on a 25-acre tract of land surrounded by single family homes on 1 acre and half acre single lots. None of these properties are used for philanthropic activity. Further, the variance will not alter the essential character of the district or neighborhood. The presence of the hives is largely invisible from neighboring lots except perhaps through the trees from the backyard of one neighbor. In fact, given the important pollination behaviors of bees, the presence of our hives will only serve to beautify our property and in turn, the neighborhood.

Consistent with BAC's original site plans, and our agreement to restore the orchard that once ran through our property and adjoining properties without the use of pesticides, the use of bees is an important element of an organic orchard plan.