



Editorial Spotlight on fair-housing settlement planned

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Attorney James E. Johnson (left), the court-appointed monitor in Westchester's fair housing/False Claims Act case, will appear in an Editorial Spotlight interview 11 a.m. Wednesday on LoHud.com.

Over the next seven years, Westchester must build 750 units of affordable housing, most of them in overwhelmingly white communities that have long shunned or discouraged such housing. The obligation arises from a consent decree brokered last year by the Spano administration and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and approved by the U.S. District Court. HUD entered the case after the nonprofit Anti-Discrimination Center of New York, a fair housing group, successfully argued in a lawsuit that Westchester had failed to discharge its fair housing obligations, despite accepting millions of dollars in federal funds and pledging that it had.

Under the agreement, the county must affirmatively market the units in Westchester and nearby communities with large non-white populations, though the housing will be available to all income-eligible populations. Johnson recently told the federal court that the county's most recent plan for implementing terms of the consent decree "falls short of a true plan to comply with either the stipulation's specific terms or its overarching goal of building a more integrated Westchester."

One Response to "Editorial Spotlight on fair-housing settlement planned"

Jim Russell says:

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The phrase, "...its overarching goal of building a more integrated Westchester," does not appear in the settlement document. As Johnson's interpretation, it should have no bearing on the settlement. Before the County Board of Legislators voted for this disastrous settlement, they claimed that even if all of the selected housing applicants ended up being White, the terms of the settlement would be fulfilled. Now we see slippery Johnson, with his foot in the door, trying to change the agreement into one in which the result would have to be "a more integrated Westchester." The best solution is to elect a new Congress that will amend all housing laws to exclude any requirement to "affirmatively further fair housing."

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