

**From:** Marcia Westra <mlwestra@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 4, 2020 1:30 PM  
**To:** zoningboard@townofnewburgh.org  
**Subject:** Second response to Mr Rivera's application for a variance to sell firearms in the Rockwood Drive neighborhood

Hi - I just read the minutes from last Monday's meeting and am going to address, once more my concern and opposition to the request to operate a small firearms business in the neighborhood.

While I recognize Mr Rivera's extensive training background in firearms and service to our country, NYC, and perhaps neighborhood, I find all that to be irrelevant to me. That's great, but what I'm concerned about is a change to the neighborhood. Whether there would be an increased danger to us - or not - there are so many here on these 4 little streets (with 2 side streets) that oppose this, it wouldn't be fair for you to approve it. It is dividing us as a community and that is really so very negative. As others have said, the bonding and safe and only residential feel of this neighborhood is what we want to preserve. It is coded that way and we deserve to keep it that way - as it was intended.

Mr Rivera talks about cops being the main ones who might come at this point. To that I say, all cops aren't good cops. There seems to be an assumption that all is safe for us if someone is a cop. Being in the mental health field, I happen to have heard stories otherwise - plus you read them in the paper - look at all the press on Mt Vernon. For those that come unhinged, or do illegal things, or use their guns on their families, while they are encouraged to seek counseling help for themselves, they very, very often will not do so because their file will then be 'flagged' and so they fail to get the help they need. I've worked in NYC for around 35 years so I know.

He also spoke of moving into a commercial space as his business grew. Why not wait and do it at a later time - or put out the money now as many others have had to do? When you work for agencies in the City or the federal government, you get a pension from each. Everybody knows that is why they can - and do - retire and go on to other jobs - because they can afford to. That certainly is not the case for me - I work for myself and have to save every penny I can to retire with some sort of middle class existence. In addition, he's lived here for so long, I can't imagine he hasn't paid off his house. The prices were so very much lower long, long ago. So regarding the issue of monies, I feel like 'cry me the blues'. We also don't know if he would act on those stated intentions. It's easy to say that to you, but there is nothing that makes him follow through. It may just serve him financially to keep it right where it is - in our residential neighborhood.

Teaching safe gun handling classes? Go ahead. Do it off site. I don't believe you have to sell the guns in order to do that.

So I just say again - not in my neighborhood. If you want one next door to you personally, go ahead, but hear our voices. There are many of us and they are loud and clear.

Sincerely,  
Marcia Westra, LCSW

Marcia Westra  
mlwestra@verizon.net