

LETTER

Housing for Blacks and Hispanics in Westchester

Published: August 23, 2009

To the Editor:

Re “[Reactions Mixed to Settlement of Westchester Desegregation Suit](#)” (news article, Aug. 20):

It is gratifying that the Westchester Board of Legislators is ready to ratify a court settlement that will require creating hundreds of homes in overwhelmingly white suburbs and marketing them aggressively to black and Hispanic families.

It is even more heartening to hear that the county executive, Andrew J. Spano, has openly placed the focus for approval on “doing the right thing,” rather than rationalizing the action by weighing its \$50 million cost against a \$180 million penalty for refusal.

Despite receiving racially charged e-mail messages and telephone threats, Mr. Spano courageously and calmly took the opportunity also to debunk one of our worst social shibboleths — that affordable housing ruins neighborhoods. “Never has there been a decrease in property values in what we have built,” he said. Bravo, Mr. Spano.

Judith Calogero

New York, Aug. 20, 2009

The writer, chief executive of the New York Housing Conference, was New York State housing commissioner in the Pataki administration.