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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DUTCHESS DISABILITY RIGHTS ORGANIZATION ACKNOWLEDGES TIVOLI FOR LANDMARK ZONING AMENDMENT

Poughkeepsie – Taconic Resources for Independence, Inc. (TRI), Dutchess County’s leading disability advocacy organization, will be holding a **press conference on November 14** to acknowledge Village of Tivoli Mayor, Joel Griffith for his leadership in implementing a first of its kind zoning amendment to promote compliance with the ADA within Tivoli buildings, sites and facilities. **County Executive Sue Serino** along with several public officials and local advocates will be present to provide their remarks. **The event will take place at the TRI office at 82 Washington Street in Poughkeepsie at 1:30.**

The Site Plan Approval of Tivoli’s Village Code was formally adopted in August and charges the Tivoli Planning Board to perform assessments of all site plan applications of public accommodation for ADA compliance consideration. Proposals for changes in use, new buildings or alterations that result in extending area or height shall be referred to the Village Engineer and/or Code Enforcement Official to ensure they meet Uniform Code requirements for accessibility for individuals with disabilities to the maximum extent possible.

“The Village of Tivoli is proud to assert the importance of inclusivity for people of all abilities in our community. We have both a legal and a moral responsibility to promote compliance with the ADA. While Tivoli, like many communities, still has a long way to go, by codifying this assertion and assuming that responsibility, we are both broadcasting our belief and institutionalizing a mechanic for positive change,” says Mayor Griffith.

“People with disabilities continue to face numerous accessibility barriers on a daily basis and feel excluded from being able to fully access places of public accommodation in their communities,” says TRI Executive Director Lisa Tarricone. “The creation and passage of Tivoli’s Site Plan Approval under the leadership of Mayor Joel Griffith promotes the message of inclusion – not exclusion – to not only residents of Tivoli with disabilities, but also serves as a model to every municipality across the county.”

Dutchess Disability Advocacy Partnership (DDAP) - a grassroots ADA advocacy component of TRI – offers technical assistance to Dutchess towns and villages to increase access to retail stores, restaurants, municipal entities and other places of public accommodation. DDAP co-chair John Rossi says “DDAP has begun taking a close look at the zoning codes of every municipality in the County and it is our intention to pursue similar legislative amendments mirroring the Tivoli amendment.”

Taconic Resources for Independence, Inc. (TRI) was founded in 1986 and is Dutchess County’s leading disability advocacy organization, dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities to lead self-directed lives. TRI works within the community to provide disability awareness and advocacy for the removal of barriers.

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