

# We need facts, not assumptions, on battery plant

## Your Turn

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Guest columnist

I read two articles in the April 26 paper by Christine Ellison and Mary Ann Dorner, detailing the various calamities that may befall Endicott residents should a lithium ion battery incinerator plant owned by a South Korean company is allowed to start their operations in Endicott.

Apparently, there are 10 to 12 chemicals that may be released into the atmosphere and become air pollutants or contaminants capable of harming Endicott residents. They didn't specify the various organ systems these pollutants can injure.

I must confess that I do not know much about these batteries except that billions are sold in the U.S. and that they efficiently power my electronic gadgets. Since the letters contained many scary anecdotal scenarios without any factual backing, it behooves us to determine the true facts concerning these batteries; in other words, separate fact from fiction.

There is no one more qualified to do that in the world than professor Stanley Whittingham, of Binghamton University, who as you know was awarded the Nobel Prize for chemistry in 2019 and has done decades of seminal research in the field of developing lithium batteries. You should request him to write a commentary on the subject with particular reference to the



**A proposed battery recycling plant would be located in the Huron Campus in Endicott. FILE**

two aforementioned letters which contained alarming implications vis a vis the proposed incinerator.

Lastly, I want to make a general observation about this area where I have lived for 50 years. Whenever a company, be it local or otherwise, decides to invest here, building an incinerator, apartment complex, housing development, wind farm, Vestal-to-BU walkway or whatever, you can predict a group of "dedicat-

ed" protesters will show up raising objections, some relevant, but most of them self-serving and irrelevant.

I am glad those protesters were not active when Harpur College of Endicott moved to Vestal and became SUNY, because if we didn't have BU, this area would have become insolvent and degenerated into small ghost towns.

*Haridas Varma is an Apalachin resident.*