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Fwd: Tilden ProjectNEW LEBANON
PLANNING/ZONING CLERK

1 message

Elizabeth Brutsch <nlpb.brutsch@gmail.com>

Fri, Jul 25, 2025 at 10:58 AM

To: PZ Clerk <pzclerk@townofnewlebanon.com>

Public comment received. We will need to combine this (text and photos.) Are you able to black out people's email addresses in a PDF?

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Melissa Francoeur** <mfrancoeur2001@baypath.edu>

Date: Wed, Jul 23, 2025 at 6:09 PM

Subject: Tilden Project

To: <nlpb.brutsch@gmail.com>

I am a resident of New Lebanon, residing at [601 Route 20](#). I am writing today to address the New Lebanon Planning Board regarding the proposed Tilden Project. I attended the July 16, 2025, planning board meeting and have reviewed documents accessed through the Town of New Lebanon website regarding this project and have several concerns.

The developers of the Tilden Project are proposing a mixed-use building to include 41 affordable housing units and a grocery store. This project has an appeal however, I believe that the location for this project presents certain risks to the surrounding neighborhood and to the New Lebanon community.

Wastewater

The engineer who spoke at the meeting on the 16th expects the building to generate 11,000± gallons of wastewater per day. They will pipe sanitized wastewater across Route 20 and dump it into a ditch between Jimmy D's and the Triple Nickel property. As this ditch fills, the water will flow into the Wynomanock Creek.

As part of the SEQR, the Applicant submitted a completed Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF). This form identifies any potential project impacts on the environment. I would ask, what qualifications are there that qualify the applicant to make judgement on how to answer the questions on this form? Who is considered the "applicant"-the developer or the Town of New Lebanon?

Part 2 question 4 asks about impacts to groundwater. Item (d) asks if the proposed action may include or require wastewater discharged to groundwater. This question was answered no, or small impact may occur by the applicant which directly contradicts what was said during the meeting.

Part 2 question 5 asks about the impact of flooding. Item (e) asks if the proposed action may change flood water flows that contribute to flooding. This question was also answered no, or small impact may occur by the applicant.

At the end of the completed FEAF there is a summary where the applicant in 2(d) states "As such, there is no potential for a significant adverse environmental impact related to wastewater".

I believe that the dumping of wastewater from this project has the potential to affect many of the neighboring properties that sit along the south side of Route 20. The surrounding area is already swampy and wet; in fact, part of my property appears to be part of what is considered Shaker Swamp (picture of map attached). I am attaching a map showing the area that includes the tributary, the Wynomanock Creek, and several of its branches (2nd picture of map attached). Discharging into a creek system will cause wastewater to spread throughout the connected waterways. Therefore, discharging into a main channel upstream of a junction will probably affect branches downstream.

I am also attaching to this email several pictures (6) and videos (2) of my backyard taken on three separate occasions (9/13/22, 12/18/23 and 3/23/24). Prior to these pictures, the ground was only wet from sometimes normal, repeated (several days) of rainfall or thaw. The pictures attached represent what my backyard looks like after a large amount of rainfall in one period occurs. During one event, my basement took on water and flooded. I had to actually move my sump pump pit to the corner of my house closest to this area to be prepared for any other event similar to this past one. In the map that I attached, you can see the main Wynomanock Creek labeled, and you will see a branch that runs behind several properties year-round and meets back up with Wynomanock Creek further downstream. According to an article published by Lauren Street, a branch of this type is called a perennial stream. "Groundwater is the primary source of water for perennial streams though they are also fed by stormwater from intermittent and ephemeral streams".

My concern is that because the surrounding area is already wet, with the addition of approximately 11,000 gallons of wastewater generated daily potentially being discharged out into the surrounding area and into Wynomanock Creek we risk flooding, drainage and leaching problems and erosion of the neighboring area. I respectfully ask that the Town of New Lebanon Planning Board give serious thought to the proposal before them. Allowing Tilden Project to discharge wastewater into the Wynomanock Creek poses an unknown risk to the taxpayers living along Route 20. The Planning Board is being asked to make an important decision based on data found in the SEQR. Inconsistencies are apparent between the form, meeting discussions, and the residents' lived experiences. How can the board decide based on inaccurate data? These errors seem significant given the current water table in the area and the flooding potential from the creek. What discussions, if any, have occurred concerning the impact on neighboring properties and potential damage? What will happen if the Tilden Project moves forward and our properties are now under water, unusable, and potential damage to our homes occur?

Property Taxes

During the July 16th planning board meeting, a member brought up the question of property taxes. The applicant's representative stated that Tilden Project would likely not pay taxes based upon the full value of the property when completed. The representative went on to state that they would be forming a Housing Development Fund company, which makes it eligible to negotiate with the Town of New Lebanon for a PILOT program. The purpose of a PILOT program is to encourage development or help a community recoup revenue that was lost due to tax exemptions. The premise seems to be that some revenue is better than none. In a small town, over time, this may constrain funding for schools, roads and other expenses that taxes pay for. An influx of up to 41 new families will require more school services, emergency services and increased road use. The cost of services might exceed PILOT program revenue, requiring higher taxes on other taxpayers to cover the difference. Has the New Lebanon Planning Board found comparable projects, similar in nature, that moved forward in other rural areas and analyzed the results?

This is an incredibly unfair burden to potentially place on existing taxpayers. The proposed tenants of the project will not be charged property taxes to enjoy New Lebanon, and all it has to offer. Meanwhile, my neighbors and I pay taxes that are assessed on full market value, and we are facing an increase in school tax. Not only is this unfair, but this will cause friction between existing long time residents, who feel it is unfair, and the developers and families who are receiving a break!

Property Values

Another concern is property values. People move to New Lebanon because of its rural appeal. Having a 12,000 square foot grocery store coupled with the potential for an additional 150 new residents on a 3 acre plot with increased traffic on an already congested and busy Route 20 has the potential to lower the immediate area's property value. Should we choose to sell at some point, this has the potential to affect the selling price. Is the town prepared to address lower property values in this area? Will property taxes be lowered?

I apologize for the length of this email, but I felt that it was important to speak up. I hope that the Planning Board crosses their T's and dots their I's with this proposed project. I do not support this project as it is being proposed. I believe there are a lot of unknown environmental risks and risks to the other New Lebanon taxpayers. The size of the project seems large for the parcel of land it will sit on. It is being presented as affordable housing for families, but where will the children play safely? In a parking lot? We live in a relatively quiet area with minimal crime; unfortunately, that likely will change with the addition of lower income tenants.

Respectfully,

Melissa Francoeur

601 State Route 20
New Lebanon, Ny 12125




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4 attachments



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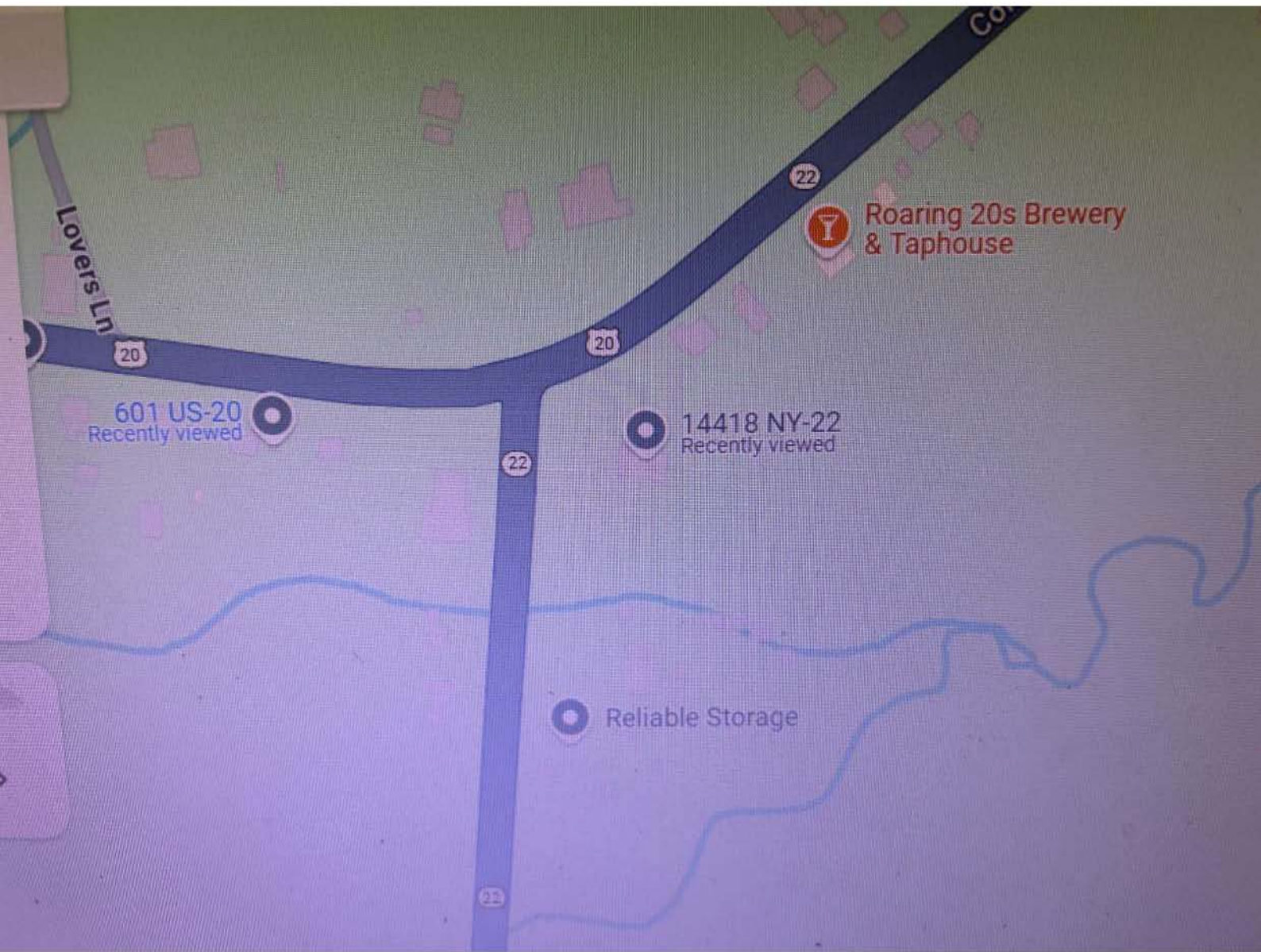
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Lovers Ln

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601 US-20
Recently viewed

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14418 NY-22
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22

Roaring 20s Brewery
& Taphouse

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Reliable Storage

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