



PZ Clerk <pzclerk@townofnewlebanonny.gov>

SEQRA Hearing Public Comment - Tilden Commons LLC

1 message

Corey Stall [REDACTED]

Thu, Jun 4, 2026 at 10:26 AM

To: "pzclerk@townofnewlebanon.com" <pzclerk@townofnewlebanon.com>

Good morning Courtney, I plan to speak at the hearing tonight if given the opportunity. Here is what I have prepared, to assist with your record-keeping purposes. Thank you!

To whom it may concern,

As taxpayer and parent, I've been following this project closely since it was first announced. I'd like to comment on community character. It's important that we compare this project to the community that exists today and the community that existed historically, and not an idealized version of either.

The historical record shows that New Lebanon has never been exclusively rural or residential in character. It has long been home to agriculture, industry, commerce, housing, and transportation infrastructure. This very location was once the site of a substantial pharmaceutical manufacturing operation, complete with large industrial buildings, a railroad, and water tower that were prominent features of the landscape. Later on, it was occupied by retail shops, a restaurant, and even a circus. These are reminders of varied and expansive economic activity and development that have long been part of New Lebanon's identity.

Likewise, multifamily housing is not new to this community. Apartment buildings, mobile home parks, boarding houses, and large dormitories have all existed here for decades, some for centuries. Commercial, residential, and industrial activity along the Route 20 corridor is also well established. This is not an entirely new land use.

I would also note that population trends are relevant to understanding community character. New Lebanon has experienced years of aging population and school enrollment decline. While school finances are outside the scope of this review, children and families, schools and teachers, civic and volunteer organizations are all part of the character of a small town. A project that brings new residents and helps sustain those institutions is not altering community character, it preserves it.

Every generation of New Lebanon inherited a town that was changing. The Shakers changed it. The railroad changed it. Industry changed it. Highways and interstates changed it. The decline of industry changed it. The question at hand is not whether change will occur, but whether this particular change is compatible with the character and history of the community.

Looking at the record, I believe that it is.

This project redevelops a vacant and underutilized property rather than swallowing up fields and farmland. It is development where development has historically occurred. It incorporates modern wastewater treatment, modern fire protection systems, and environmental oversight that very few properties in the area have ever had. Its traffic, lighting, and building scale should be considered in the context of an established multi-use corridor that has long accommodated commercial, residential, and industrial activity.

Community character should not be defined solely by what remains after decades of decline, business closures, and the loss of historic buildings. It should also be informed by the pattern of development that helped create this community in the first place.

Tilden Commons is consistent with that pattern, and meets several of the Town's own Comprehensive Plan goals for more housing, retail grocery, and efficient land use. I do not believe this project presents an undue impact on community character.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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Corey Stall