Gmail

PZ Clerk <pzclerk@townofnewlebanonny.gov>

Tilden Commons proposal

1 message

Tennessee Jones [redacted] Mon, Aug 17, 2026 at 2:26 PM
To: pzclerk@townofnewlebanon.com

Hello,

I am a resident of Rensselaer County with many ties to the people and community of New Lebanon. For the past several months, I have been hearing distress from New Lebanon residents regarding the Tilden Commons proposal due to potential threat the development poses to contamination of drinking water for existing residents. As currently proposed, this development is illegal, and requires waivers from NY DOH to gain permission to build on a lot that doesn't allow for enough room between the development's septic and nearby wells to meet public health and safety regulations.

Originally the Tilden Commons was a more modest project of 28 units. It has since ballooned to a 41 unit building that does not properly fit its 3.2 acre lot. The project is too big, and its proponents are attempting to push it through far too fast. If the development truly is "safe" despite not meeting public health and safety regulations for proximity of its septic systems to existing residents drinking water, this cannot be fully determined by a 72-hour test. Residents who own homes or live near the area should not be expected to take the word of engineers hired by developers to declare the "safety" of the project. At minimum, independent testing is necessary. Nearby residents have a fundamental right to safe drinking water. More time and care is needed to consider the long-term effects of a development this size.

I also understand an affordable grocery store is part of this proposal. Certainly, New Lebanon would benefit from a truly affordable grocery story. Considering one of the primary investors in the Tilden Commons opened a privatized grocery store that I cannot afford to stop at (my income is higher than that of 56% of people living in New Lebanon), I very much doubt the proposed grocery store will be "affordable" for the majority of people in New Lebanon.

I ask the Board to deny the Tilden Project as submitted. If the Board is unwilling to deny it outright, I ask that it require the site be downsized to a unit count the parcel can support without a variance, and that it condition any approval on binding, funded protections for neighboring property owners — including monitoring, remedy, and compensation — if drinking water is contaminated or reduced, or if flooding increases as a result of this project.

I also ask for multiple mitigations on traffic and light pollution, including minimal security lighting at night and to restrict delivery operations to light traffic hours and store opening hours so it does not have a greater impact on this residential neighborhood.

Thank you,

Tennessee Jones