

Town of Schroepfel
Town Board Meeting
June 10th 2025

Present: Town Supervisor JoAnn Nazarian, Town Board Members Zachary Gelling, Thomas Millert, Matthew Notaro, Justin Hart and Town Clerk Darlene Owens.

At 6:00 p.m. Nazarian called the meeting to order with the Pledge Allegiance.

SEQR Motion:

Gelling made a **Motion** that all actions taken tonight are excluded, exempt or Type II actions for the purpose of the State Environmental Quality Review Law unless otherwise stated, seconded by Millert. All ayes; Gelling, Millert, Notaro, Hart and Nazarian.

Public Hearing: 6:01 p.m. - Huntley Road Zone Change

Nazarian read the rules for Public Hearings. Tonight's Public Hearing is for a zone change from R2 to Industrial for the Parcel Lot 314.00-01-27.08 on Huntley Rd. The Board adopted a resolution for the Public Hearing on May 13, 2025. The Public Notice was posted on May 24, 2025 and the Affidavit of Publication was received on May 28, 2025. Nazarian made the **motion** to open the Public Hearing on the Huntley Road zone change at 6:03 p.m.; seconded by Gelling. All ayes: Gelling, Millert, Notaro, Hart, Nazarian.

Jeffrey Slater addressed the Board. He lives on Huntley Rd and has been there for 15 years. Heard about this recent proposed change. He has some significant concerns over the proposed trash business. Some parcels around them as industrial and had talked when they first moved in. Had the feeling that more than likely we would see more residential properties pop up on Huntley Rd. From being on the school board and that prospective, we have seen some of the things that are mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan which reference the diminishing students into the district and one of the things that what we've heard often on the board and other people is are we working with the Town at all to try to get population back up. I don't think we have been, so that is probably something we can do better. But to take a section of land that is 40+ acres if they buy other property that is around them to make a glorified parking lot for garbage trucks and dumpsters, does not seem to me beneficial for the community. Our area has seen development at the end of our road (house); other end another beautiful home being built. So that section of land to me feels like it would be better developed as residential. I know some of the things mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan talk about how to bring more people into the community and things and it seems to reference the key might be all commercial. I disagree. I wasn't part of the Comprehensive Plan; I did do the survey. An acquaintance just bought property up on Pendergast Rd and they were ecstatic to be able to get into this community being a perfect location and struggled to find residential housing. Making the proposed plan a large parking for trash and dumpsters, I would be curious what the impact would be for traffic on the road because it's already a problem due to Barrett being there. Bought our property in the winter time and didn't know how much traffic would be there when they are open. Traffic study, and runoff, especially that it is all woods now. Took a picture yesterday of deer in our yard and you would be taking what is woods in the center of the property. When you're looking at enhancing a community, I just don't see necessarily business in that specific area, let alone that type of business, really adding anything to the Town. Nazarian asked for any questions for Mr Slater, and there were none.

Another resident (Alicia) who is building the house on Huntley Rd (across from former OTB). She knows that they would be dumping off their garbage, but if trucks are running late and cannot drop off their garbage before they close, the trucks would be sitting in the parking lot.

Nazarian explained the function of the Town Board. We've done zone changes in the past and we have two questions that we have to ask ourselves. Is it legal? Yes, the Board does have the authority to do zone changes. Secondly, is it in keeping with the zoning in the area. This is a unique area because on one side of the street you have residential. This particular parcel is currently residential and it is in between two residential properties. Across the street (closest to Rt 481) is industrial; a bit of a conundrum. The Town Board does not have the authority to tell someone what they can and cannot do with their private property. This is also a unique area because it is part of a Brownfield Opportunity area and it is part of a study. We received a grant last year to study this area to see what is currently there. When we were submitting the paperwork, I went parcel-by-parcel and looked and collected the data so I know that there is residential, industrial, major commercial, and we do have a beautiful waterfront area that we

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would very much like to utilize. So that study is 1) going to determine what is there and 2) determine what the best use is for this section of our Town. As the Town Board, I did consult with our Town attorney to see if this is something we could wait on and decide after the study, and his suggestion very clearly was for us to do our due diligence and complete the study before making any decision. That is where we are at right now. Nazarian offered the floor for comments/opinion.

Steve Morgan, owner of the subject property, spoke and said he has a sanitation business with other property around it and he has no intention of moving his business to Huntley Rd or using it as a storage yard for dumpsters. So that is not his intention. Another person asked what he was going to do with it and he replied at this point it should be used all for industrial land.

Another resident asked if it was taken into consideration if she would have to change their zone. Their house is industrial, but is it against the law to change it. Some industrial parcels are actually residential. Most of them are, and I think that should be taken into consideration, not just what is on paper. Nazarian said again what is unique about this section, is there are a lot of uses that do not coincide with what the properties are zoned for. For example, all along the river, there are houses, but that is zoned major commercial. It is part of and why it is so critical that we determine the direction and want to share with you that this study, that residents can participate. We have a committee that we are forming. If anyone would like to join the committee and have input, they are welcome to do that. It is the direction that the community wants to go, not the Town Board. In the Comprehensive Plan, 70% of the people that were surveyed wanted growth and development. So that is why that is the direction we are headed; it is not the Town Board.

Mr Slater noted that in the Comprehensive Plan, that was residential/commercial improvements, no separation, so if 90% of the people wanted to see housing, there is no way for them to differentiate that. Nazarian said we would be updating our Plan again. Resident asked if there would be a public session or something; he would be very interested in being on that committee.

Another resident asked if it is our intention to build 50 houses. Nazarian said we have no intention at all; it's not up to us. It is what the residents want. That area has been approved for a water district, and we are working on that right now. She described SOCRIS (sewer line being proposed on the County Trail to connect to wastewater treatment plant in Oswego). Gelling said we are working toward the commercial/residential; doing the infrastructure with the water and pushing for sewer; doing the rezoning; updating our code book.

He is saying now is the opposite of what he heard bringing dumpsters in; so would he put that in writing? Nazarian said we are not allowed to debate with others about the purpose. And this Public Hearing is to not ask Mr Morgan a bunch of questions; just to give your testimony and allow us to make a decision. It comes down to the two questions above. Is it legal, and it is, and is it in keeping with the zoning in the area, which is being reviewed.

A person asked, how long until the finding, estimated time frame for the process. Nazarian said we just submitted the paperwork to sign the contract. Maybe another two months. Whole study will probably take a year to 18 months (before a zoning change would be officially entertained).

Nazarian made a **motion** to close the Public Hearing at 6:18 pm. All ayes: Gelling, Millert, Notaro, Hart, Nazarian.

Privilege of the Floor

Linda Landers: We have two homes on our property, one through seven; one house hasn't been lived in over 20 years. No water, no sewer; was hoping the engineer would be here so that we could have help with that. They never came through our yard and over to that house. We would like it removed and taken off our taxes. She talked to Codes, went to the grievance, went to Oswego. Nazarian said she got the emails and reached out to the Town attorney and to the engineer. When the district goes in, there is a dept service that is established that included your grinder pump. So it's already been paid for way in the beginning. The EDU is on the tax bills. If we remove one of the EDUs off of your tax bill, that is going to be made up by everybody else in the water district, increasing theirs.

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The grinder pump costs were paid to the contractor, and residents are paying for debt/loan. So that is where we are at. Ms Landers said she had asked/begged for them not to put it at this house. The electrician acknowledged there is no electric meter (National Grid removed everything). Nazarian said we need to figure out how much everyone's EDU would go up. The debt is already there and everybody in that district voted on an EDU amount. It was presented to the public that the EDU would be approximately \$850 and everyone had an opportunity to come in and vote on that amount. Question is, does the Town Board now have the authority to increase that EDU? Our attorney is figuring that out and we will respond to Ms Landers when he replies.

Nazarian made a **motion** to allow her to use a rubber stamp for signing checks, seconded by Notaro. All ayes: Gelling, Millert, Notaro, Hart, Nazarian.

Another resident who lives on Huntley Rd asked when will we know if we are getting water and how much it will cost. Nazarian explained that she and Justin Hart just had a meeting with the engineer today. 75% of the drawings are complete. Then they need to submit them for agency review (DOH, CSX, etc.), who will advise changes or accept them. From there, we need to get funding and we have \$1 million in grant funding from US Department of Rural Development. We also have a guaranteed \$1.7 million in loans at 1.7% interest rate because it was pre-COVID. NY Grant season is open now and we are going to start applying for those grants. We have to get the EDU down below a certain threshold because NYS comptroller will not allow us to charge an exorbitant rate, so until we get funding to get that EDU down to about \$585/year, we don't move forward. Vacant lots are charged half an EDU. Once grant funding is in place, it goes out for construction bid. We are probably about 6 months out -- next spring, so hopefully shovels in the ground next summer.

Nazarian made the **motion** to close the meeting at 6:26 pm, seconded by Hart. All ayes: Gelling, Millert, Notaro, Hart, Nazarian.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene M. Owens
Town Clerk