

Thomaston residents give input on 57-unit complex

BY KARINA KOVAC

Great Neck Plaza has taken another step in its proposal for a 57-unit apartment complex at 15 Barstow Road aka 26 Linden Place. In a move to address potential concerns from neighboring villages, the Plaza held a special meeting July 27 to hear concerns from the Village of Thomaston about the possible development.

The purpose of the special meeting was to hear residents' concerns

and internally discuss a response to a letter sent from the Village of Great Neck Plaza to the Village of Thomaston asking for neighborly input on the 57-unit apartment complex.

The complex would be a four-story, mixed-use building with 57 residential units and retail space.

Mayor Steve Weinberg of Thomaston said that although the Plaza asked for comments and whether the village wants to be the lead agency, which the village does not, the village hasn't been provided

with any material other than the letter asking for their input.

"We only have this letter and what was attached," said Weinberg, "I don't have the entire application. We don't have the entire proposal. I don't know if it's even available at the Plaza. Obviously, the Plaza is going to have many requirements and many hearings that it is going to have to go through in order to consider whatever that application is."

Wendy Halpern, a resident of

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Thomaston, voiced strong opposition to the apartment complex. "To be honest," she told the board at the meeting, "I don't see how it benefits in any way for the Village of Thompson. In fact, I think it only has extreme detrimental impacts to us. And then even as a greater concern, I don't even see how that kind of building would benefit Great Neck as a whole."

Her concerns primarily revolved around the potential increase in the school population, which is already facing overcrowding issues. She also worried about added congestion on the LIRR train, as some residents in Thomaston might choose to live there for easier access to public transportation. Halpern expressed concerns about the impact on traffic, emphasizing that traveling less than a mile takes 30 minutes now. The scarcity of grocery shopping options in the area and overcrowding at existing stores compounded her worries.

Halpern also refuted the developers' argument that the new residents would boost business in Great Neck. She pointed out that despite the surge in new developments in the area, more and more stores have been closing down, raising doubts about the validity of this claim.

Weinberg weighed in on the mat-

ter, emphasizing that while the village has expressed concerns, it cannot speak for all residents of Thomaston or other neighboring villages which might be negatively affected by the proposed development.

"The village does not have standing to be the spokesperson for residents," he said, "either in the village or neighboring villages who may be adversely impacted by this development. So, one concern that I have, and I think this board has is we don't want to give any individual the false sense of security."

Instead, he encouraged concerned residents to take matters into their own hands by communicating directly with Great Neck Plaza and participating in their meetings to make their voices heard, as these avenues hold more power for influencing the outcome.

"I want to stress whatever letter the village sends, the village sending that letter is not a substitution for you, each and everyone of you who wish to speak, to go and speak. Just because you said something here doesn't mean it was said there."

The board did tell the public they would send out a 311 village alert to notify residents of the next Plaza meeting, which will be held Aug. 16.



Great Neck Plaza has asked the complex.