

**PUBLIC HEARING
ON INCLUSION IN THE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT
HELD BY THE
PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
VIA AUDIO WEBINAR PURSUANT TO TEMPORARY EMERGENCY ORDERS**

Wednesday July 1, 2020 6:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 P.M. by Chairwoman Addonizio who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislators Montgomery, Gouldman, Nacerino, Albano, Jonke, Castellano, Sayegh, Sullivan and Chairwoman Addonizio were present. Also present was Legislative Counsel Firriolo.

Chairwoman Addonizio requested the Clerk to read the Public Notice:

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law of the State of New York, Section 303-b, that one or more requests have been received by the Putnam County Legislature for inclusion of predominately viable agricultural land within Putnam County's certified Agricultural District.

FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that the Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board has considered these requests for inclusion and reported that the parcels for inclusion would serve the public interest by assisting in maintaining a viable agricultural industry within the District.

FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that the parcels requested for inclusion are:

Town of Philipstown:

Horsemen's Trail Farm (David Vickery) – Tax Map #16.12.-1-5.2 (6.77 acres) Tax Map #16.12.-1-5.3 (4.8 acres) Total Acreage: 11.57

Town of Putnam Valley:

Valley View Farm – Cimarron Ranch (Alexander Kaspar) – Tax Map #72.-1-47 (25.18 acres) Tax Map #72.-1-50 (113.10 Acres) Total Acreage: 138.28

Town of Southeast:

Pro Brothers Farm (Christian Provetto & Kirsten Banga) – Tax Map #47.-3-27 (1.3 acres) Total Acreage: 1.3

Total acreage in petitions: 151.15

FURTHER NOTICE is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. to consider these requests for inclusion and the recommendations of the Putnam County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board. The Public Hearing will be held by audio conference pursuant to the Governor's Executive Orders during the current state of emergency. Persons may submit written testimony prior to the hearing by mail addressed to: Clerk of the Legislature, 40 Gleneida Ave., Carmel NY 10512, or by email to: putcoleg@putnamcountyny.gov. Persons wishing to testify during the hearing should register in advance for the audio conference by following the instructions on the Legislature's website (<http://www.putnamcountyny.com/legi/>).

BY ORDER OF THE PUTNAM COUNTY LEGISLATURE
Diane Schonfeld
Clerk

Chairwoman Addonizio read the procedure for making comments at the Public Hearing.

Chairwoman Addonizio read the following correspondence received for the public hearing: 1) Alexander Kaspar – Cimarron Ranch & Valley View Farm Putnam Valley – dated July 1, 2020. 2) Town of Putnam Valley Supervisor Sam Oliverio, Jr. – dated May 11, 2020 addressed to Lauri Taylor. 3) Town of Southeast Supervisor Tony Hay – dated July 1, 2020 – Pro Brothers Farm property.

Chairwoman Addonizio recognized Alexander Kaspar.

Alexander Kaspar requested to have Town of Putnam Valley Supervisor, Sam Oliverio, Jr. to speak first.

Supervisor Oliverio stated that when he was a Putnam County Legislator, in 2007 the Legislature put forth a ruling that any applications for the Agricultural District that have outstanding violations must be denied. He stated that based on that, the Town of Putnam Valley vehemently asks this board not to award Agricultural District status to Mr. Kaspar. He stated that the main reason is the 10-acre parcel that has polluted soil which Judge Andrew O'Rourke and Judge Victor Grossman have ordered to be remediated. He stated that once the bankruptcy is settled, the town will go back to court to have it remediated. He stated that this ground has been polluted for approximately 14 years. He stated that they were actually able to get a buyer for this property; Hudson Highlands. They offered \$1 million for the property with the understanding that they would remediate the property and pay off any debt on the property. However, Mr. Kaspar declared bankruptcy which derailed this purchase. He explained that when Mr. Kaspar stated that the town has opposed his selling of the property; it is absolutely incorrect. He stated that the town supported selling the property and even had a buyer. He stated that the town was in contract with the buyer to secure that property to make it pristine. He stated that the residents suffered for many years having trucks going up and down dumping construction debris and huge tree trunks on this once pristine property. He stated that stone walls and trees were taken down. He asks that the Legislature to deny this Agricultural District designation.

Alexander Kaspar from Putnam Valley stated that he never objected to any sale. He stated that the bankruptcy occurred before the sale and has nothing to do with the sale or anything else. It is a completely different matter of some money he was owed; a couple of million dollars that he is trying to get. He objected to the fact that he was never able to get any kind of permits to do anything. He explained that when his letter was read, there was information that was left unread which were two (2) references from the Putnam County Historical Society regarding historic barns. 1) That "no historic barns were ever listed in Putnam Valley, and 2) none were designated as such. He stated that he provided the email and phone number for Dan Richie, the Putnam County Historian. He stated that he spent time talking to him and getting this information in writing. He stated that it is a fact that there are no historic farms in Putnam Valley. He stated that, at one time, there might have been one (1) in Putnam County. He stated that he was on the Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board serving as Chair for more than three (3) years. He stated that he agrees with the Town of Southeast that 1.3 acres is actually the

smallest parcel in the New York State if it is allowed to be included. He believed it was way too small. He stated that his tax map parcel #72.-1-50 has no violations on it and never did. He stated that the Town of Putnam Valley attorney put it in writing in several places that approximately 4 to 5 acres of land has been disturbed and/or allegedly polluted. He stated that the Hudson Highland Land Trust was purchasing two (2) parcels and excluding parcel 72.-1-47 because of the alleged pollution. They were buying 72.-1-50 and 83-11, the big 239-acre parcel because there were no pollutants on it. He stated that it was in the contract of sale with Hudson Highland Land Trust. He stated that they were not able to purchase the property because they didn't have the money; they didn't receive the \$800,000 grant which they applied for; which is also on the record.

Mr. Dunford, stated that with regard to Pro Brothers Farm, Mr. Kaspar made an interesting comment pertaining to the 1.3 acre parcel. He stated that Supervisor Hay's letter makes a clear point that the zoning laws have been broken and his family has tried to get along with their neighbor and not complain about certain things, however this has gotten completely out of hand. He did not think anyone here, if they do a physical inspection, would like their neighbor to have going on what Pro Brothers Farm has going on at this point.

Chairwoman Addonizio asked if Kathleen Abels was on the line. There was no answer.

Chairwoman Addonizio asked if Christian Provetto was on the line. There was no answer.

Chairwoman Addonizio asked if Eric Gross would like to make a comment. There was no answer.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if Legislators had the opportunity to speak.

Chairwoman Addonizio explained that this was a Public Hearing. There was no opportunity for Legislators to comment at this hearing.

Legislator Montgomery asked when the public would be able to be engaged and involved in Legislative meetings. She believed there was plenty of technology available that would allow for public comment and for Legislators to speak. Legislator Montgomery questioned why the Legislators are on the webinar if not to speak.

Legislator Nacerino stated that the Legislators are listening.

Chairwoman Addonizio explained that the public hearing gives the Legislature the opportunity to listen to the public and that is the way the Legislature's public hearings have always been conducted. She stated that the Legislators will have the opportunity to discuss and vote on this item at the upcoming Full Legislative meeting.

There being no further comments, at 6:39 P.M., Chairwoman Addonizio made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Legislators Jonke and Albano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Schonfeld, Clerk.