



TOWN OF NORTH CASTLE

Town Hall - 15 Bedford Road

Armonk, New York 10504

northcastleny.com

Established 1736

Joseph A. Rende
Supervisor

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February 5, 2025

Clerk of the Board of Legislators
Vedat Gashi , Chair and
Board of Legislator Members
County Board of Legislators
8th Floor, Michaelian Office Bldg.
148 Martine Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

Re: Recertification of Westchester County Agricultural District Number One

The Town of North Castle has had a long agrarian history with farming being North Castle's principal industry prior to 1850. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, wealthy families from New York City began to purchase farms to create large summer estates. Since that time the farmland to residential conversion process has continued apace so that agricultural land now constitutes only a small fraction of total land acreage within the Town. Over the last one hundred years North Castle has had to address balancing the desire to preserve the Town's farming roots with the reality of the Town being a very desirable residential community.

The Town of North Castle, as a Hudson River Valley Greenway ***Compact Community***, has expressed its commitment to scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreation resources, including farmland protection and farmland economic development strategies. The Town encourages the protection of farmland and discourages its further conversion to residential uses by expressly permitting farm uses and horse breeding and boarding in almost every zoning district and within all residential zoning districts within the Town of North Castle.

The Town of North Castle is concerned, however, that if property were placed in the Agricultural District, the property owner may petition the NYS Dept of Agriculture and Markets to review our local Town Code in order to determine whether our existing regulations regarding farming and horse breeding are "unreasonably restrictive" for a farmer in the Agricultural District. If a determination were to be made that our laws are too onerous, it is possible that our local regulations will be found in violation of the Agriculture and Markets law, and we will need to exempt this class of use from

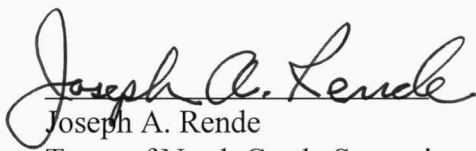
local land use control. The Town of North Castle feels that if such a determination were made that it would negatively impact the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of North Castle.

It is noted that Westchester County is very different from some of our more rural counties in other parts of New York State. In Westchester County, and North Castle in particular, it is likely that any farm use will be in close proximity to residential uses, commercial uses or environmentally sensitive areas. While the Town encourages farming within the community, the Town acknowledges a need to regulate the land use and environmental impacts a farm may have upon surrounding properties given the suburban nature of the Town of North Castle.

In addition, the Town recognizes the need to ensure that the development of land, including farmland, is environmentally sensitive. The majority of undeveloped land within the Town of North Castle is environmentally constrained by wetlands, floodplains or steep slopes. Since many farming operations require disturbance to sensitive areas, the Town must evaluate whether any proposed site disturbance would have negative impacts on our environment.

Based upon the above, the Town requests that North Castle continue to be excluded from Westchester County Agricultural District Number One.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Rende
Town of North Castle Supervisor



Adam R. Kaufman, AICP
Town of North Castle
Director of Planning

cc: Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board of West. County – [David Kvinge – 995-3780]
Town of North Castle Town Board