

Developer Of Proposed ‘Logistics Center’ On Middle Road Invites Neighbors To Meeting

Denise Civiletti | February 25, 2022

A developer proposing to build a logistics center on a 37-acre site on Middle Road in Calverton has invited nearby property owners to a “neighborhood open house” next month to discuss its proposal.

NorthPoint Development, a national development company headquartered in the Kansas City, Missouri metro area, purchased the site at 1743 Middle Road on Dec. 30 for \$6.95 million.



The company is hosting a meeting March 3 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Residence Inn on Route 58 to introduce itself to nearby property owners and discuss their proposed development. The invitation is extended as a first step in “a genuine effort to be a good neighbor,” according to the letter, signed by a NorthPoint development manager and a community development director.

“Our goal is to make an investment at the Town of Riverhead and the local community can take pride in together,” wrote the company officials in an undated letter that arrived in local mailboxes this week.

The developer has not yet filed a site plan application with the town planning department.

In response to an inquiry, a company spokesperson on Feb. 8 told RiverheadLOCAL she could not yet provide information about plans for the site.

“I’d be happy to provide more specifics on the project once it is finalized — I should have an update in a month or so,” NorthPoint Content Marketing Manager Natasha Rickel said in an email in response to a reporter’s voicemail message. She has not yet replied to an email inquiry made yesterday afternoon.

A listing for the property published by Town & Country Real Estate, is currently advertising “AAA Industrial Warehouse space consisting of 640,000 square feet of Prime space with a minimum of 30-foot ceilings.”

The listing states the property is “located directly at the entrance to the Long Island Expressway.” It goes on to say, “There is no other warehouse project with direct access to the LIE anywhere out east. Your space will be located at the gateway to the Hamptons and the North Fork of Long Island plus all points west.”

Listing agent Bradford King said yesterday he represents one of the owners but is not authorized to speak to a reporter about details of the plan.

The site, which is presently wooded, abuts state land on its southern boundary that surrounds the westbound L.I. Expressway on-ramp accessed from Route 58.

The site is located in the Industrial A zoning use district. Warehouses are a permitted use as of right in the district. NorthPoint is currently partnered with Winter Bros. Waste Systems on a \$400 million project in Yaphank, where the Missouri developer is planning to build a 2.5 million-square-foot distribution warehouse/logistics center on a 271-acre site. The facility, which has direct rail access, will be leased to third-party tenants, according to NorthPoint's application for economic incentives filed with the Brookhaven Industrial Development Agency. The Brookhaven IDA approved the application in December.

According to an economic impact assessment filed with the Brookhaven IDA, the proposed Yaphank development will create 1,821 construction jobs generating \$124.4 million in wages. When fully occupied, the facility will create between 1,477 and 1,846 permanent jobs, generating between \$77.3 million and \$96.6 million in annual wages, according to the assessment, prepared for NorthPoint by MRB Group, an engineering, architecture and municipal services firm.

Greater Calverton Civic Association President Toqui Terchun said the civic group is concerned about the number of industrial developments being proposed in Calverton while the town is undertaking an update to its 2003 comprehensive plan.

"We're inundated in Calverton and it's not stopping," Terchun said. "And we're in the midst of a comp plan update that the completion of keeps getting pushed back," she said. The projected completion date for the plan, is now spring of 2023.

"This is exactly what we were worried about," Terchun said.

The Calverton civic group had asked the town board to adopt a moratorium new industrial development in Calverton until the comp plan update is completed.

"The update will more likely than not result in zoning changes, because our township is trying to shape its future for the next 10 years," Terchun said. "It only seems fair to tap the brake while the study is being done."

There is a lot of industrial zoning in Calverton, in areas surrounding the former Northrop Grumman manufacturing site. The U.S. Navy transferred the 2,900-acre site to the town for economic development in 1998. Most of the land within the fenced site is zoned for industry. The town is in a \$40 million contract to sell 1,644 acres to a Triple Five Group company.

The industrial zoning surrounding the former Naval weapons plant made sense when Grumman was manufacturing fighter jets there, Terchun said. But she questions whether the amount of industrial zoning surrounding the site makes sense today, when the town is trying to sell the land within the site for industrial development.

"It seems there is a glut of new applications," she said.

There is proposed warehouse space on a site at the corner of Manor Road and Middle Country Road, Terchun noted, as well as a 131-acre industrial subdivision on a parcel next to the Splish Splash water park and the 412,629-square-foot industrial development proposed by HK Ventures on a 30-acre site on Middle Country Road next to the Tractor Supply store.

"At what point does it become too much? And aren't these the questions the comp plan are supposed to be answering?" Terchun asked.