

Brookhaven Town Gives Greater Voice to Residents When Zone Changes Are Protested

posted on 5/22/2013 3:16:49 PM

May 21, 2013

Town to Require Five Votes on Applications Where Protest Petitions are Filed

Farmingville, NY - The Brookhaven Town Board this evening approved legislation that empowers residents concerned about zoning decisions being made in their neighborhoods, requiring five votes of the board to approve zoning changes where a protest petition has been filed.

Previously, Brookhaven Town required only a simple majority vote of the Town Board, or four votes, on amendments regarding changes of zone where there is a protest petition. Protest petitions can be filed by 20 percent of the adjacent property owners within 100 feet of a parcel's boundary where a zone change is requested, or by the owner of the property if the change of zone is on the Town Board's own motion. Under the newly amended code, such an application would require the votes of five board members, or a majority plus one, to meet approval.

"This legislation gives the people of our Town a stronger voice in how their community will look when zoning changes are proposed," said Supervisor Romaine. "The largest investment most of our residents make is in their homes. When legislation is proposed that can change the character of their neighborhood, they should have a greater voice when they have concerns about zoning changes. That's why I proposed this resolution - to raise the bar, requiring more than a simple majority of the board when they bring those concerns to the Town."

"As a former civic leader, I have been an advocate for this change. Having a large project calling for significant changes in your area can make residents feel powerless. This change gives the community and those near a project a voice, and places a greater burden on the board for approval when there is a protest petition," said Councilwoman Bonner.

"As a strong supporter of community-based planning, I'm proud to co-sponsor this amendment that requires a super-majority vote of the town board when citizens object to a potential change of zone," said Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Dan Panico.

The local law will be effective immediately upon filing with the New York Secretary of State.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor

One Independence Hill • Farmingville • NY 11738 • Phone (631) 451-6595 • Fax (631) 451-6258