

Linda Zappala

From: Bobby Navarro [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 3, 2025 5:51 PM
To: Linda Zappala
Cc: bholdridge@townofchester.org; Antonio Ardisana; Thomas Becker; Robert Courtenay; Larry Dysinger
Subject: Please include attached letter as public comment – Proposed Camp Monroe Conversion
Attachments: Camp Monroe.pdf

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Dear Ms. Zappala,

I am writing to respectfully request that the **attached letter** be accepted and included in the **official public comment record** regarding any proposed zoning or code amendments that would permit the conversion of **Camp Monroe** (a pre-existing, nonconforming seasonal camp) into a year-round religious institution and/or school.

My letter outlines several fact-based concerns, including:

- Consistency with the **Agricultural Residential (AR-3)** zoning district and the Town's Comprehensive Plan,
- **Well-water and septic** capacity issues and groundwater protection,
- **Traffic and safety** conditions on Camp Monroe Rd and Trout Brook Rd,
- **Noise, lighting, and neighborhood character** impacts,
- **Town-wide precedent** and cumulative effects of a zoning change applicable beyond this parcel, and
- The need for a **SEQRA environmental review** prior to any action.

Please confirm receipt of my submission and its inclusion in the public record. If additional steps are required to ensure my comments are properly logged, I would appreciate your guidance.

Thank you for your time and for ensuring a fair and transparent review process.

Respectfully,
Robert R. Navarro
18 Pike Court
Monroe, NY 10950
[REDACTED]

Robert R Navarro
18 Pike Court
Monroe, NY 10950
[REDACTED]

November 2, 2025

Linda Zappala, Town Clerk
Town of Chester
1786 Kings Highway
Chester, NY 10918

RE: Opposition to Zoning or Code Changes Allowing Year-Round Use of Camp Monroe

Dear Town Clerk and Members of the Town Board,

I am writing as a resident who lives near Camp Monroe to express my strong opposition to any proposed zoning or code amendments that would allow the conversion of this pre-existing, nonconforming seasonal camp into a year-round school or religious institution.

Camp Monroe is located within the Agricultural Residential (AR-3) zone and currently operates as a grandfathered seasonal camp. While I respect the owner's right to continue those seasonal operations, expanding this use to a permanent, year-round institution would fundamentally alter the nature of the neighborhood and exceed what this zoning district was ever intended to allow.

Sticking to the facts: The current owners purchased this property knowing it was designated and operated as a seasonal camp. No one is suggesting that they cannot continue that traditional use. However, it appears that the property may have been used for other purposes outside of the approved camp operations—possibly resulting in a violation. Rather than addressing that through compliance, the owners now appear to be seeking zoning changes that would retroactively legalize those expanded uses. If the Town changes the code or zoning language to accommodate this one property, it will apply townwide. That precedent could allow similar conversions elsewhere, producing cumulative and far-reaching impacts across multiple neighborhoods.

Infrastructure and environmental concerns: Residents in this area, including myself, rely on private wells and septic systems, not municipal water or sewer. A year-round institutional facility would dramatically increase water demand, wastewater generation, and stormwater runoff, potentially overburdening the local aquifer and threatening groundwater quality. A full environmental impact review (EIS) under SEQRA should be required before any zoning or code changes are approved.

Traffic and safety: The roads surrounding Camp Monroe, such as Trout Brook Road and Camp Monroe Road, are rural and narrow. They were not designed for the level of traffic that would accompany a year-round school or religious campus. Increased bus, delivery, and commuter traffic would pose safety risks for local residents and for emergency response access.

Noise, light, and neighborhood character: The current seasonal camp use naturally limits activity to summer months. A year-round facility would bring constant traffic, noise, lighting, and daily operations, permanently changing the quiet, residential nature of this community.

Property values and quality of life: Such a conversion could reduce property values, deter future homebuyers, and degrade the rural appeal that has long defined this part of Monroe and Chester.

Zoning integrity and fairness: The AR-3 zoning district exists to protect low-density residential and agricultural uses. Allowing a single property owner to expand or redefine their use undermines the integrity and fairness of the Town's zoning laws and comprehensive plan. Decisions made to avoid a potential legal challenge should not come at the expense of the long-term stability of the Town's land-use policies.

Public awareness and transparency: Many residents were unaware of the recent hearing or its implications. Given the scope of these proposed changes, the Town should hold additional public hearings, provide broader notice, and ensure the community has a full understanding of the potential impacts before any vote is taken.

Conclusion: I respectfully urge the Town of Chester to maintain Camp Monroe's current seasonal camp designation and deny any zoning or code amendments that would permit its conversion to a year-round institutional use. The Town must consider not only the immediate impacts on this site but also the precedent and cumulative consequences for all similar properties within the same zoning district.

Thank you for your attention and for considering these comments within the public comment period.

Respectfully,
Robert R Navarro
18 Pike Court
Monroe, NY 10950
