

Supervisor – Brandon D. Holdridge

Town Board –

Thomas Becker
Giuseppe Cassara
Robert Courtenay
Stephen Diffley

Town Justices –

Janet M. Haislip
Sharon Worthy-Spiegel

TOWN OF CHESTER

1786 Kings Highway
Chester, NY 10918

Tel: (845) 469-7000

Fax: (845) 469-9242

www.chester-ny.gov

Town Clerk – Linda A. Zappala

Highway Superintendent – Vacant

Receiver of Taxes – Vincent A. Maniscalco

Assessor – John Schuler, III

Building Inspector – Andrew Contarino

Comptroller – Neil J. Meyer

Police Chief – Daniel J. Doellinger

July 7, 2026

Dear Supervisor Holdridge and Members of the Town Board:

This letter is in response to your request concerning the status of Camp Monroe with the Building Department. Our office, in coordination with the Town Attorney, Elizabeth Cassidy conducted an in-depth review of the Building Department's records as well as those of the Planning Board in response to various allegations that the property was being used in violation of the Town's zoning code. That review took place in March of 2025.

I can advise as follows:

1. Camp Monroe was generally established before the adoption of the Town of Chester Zoning Code and is considered to be a non-conforming pre-existing use of the property.
2. Our office has identified the following certificates of occupancy relative to the Camp (SBL – 15-1-27.42):

Date	ID	Description
9-10-1969	CO 961	Two story home and office
11-2-1986	BP 1257	Building Permit for Camp Office
5-6-1993	CO 1884	Addition
5-4-1998	CO 2386 and CO 2385	Buildings 81 and 55
5-16-2007	CO 2505	Oil Tank Removal and replacement
2-5-2015	CO 3652	2 Sheds
4-15-2019	C of C 4882	Demolition of building
10-7-2021	CO 8710	Dormitory Building

Our code does not require property owners to obtain certificates of occupancy for improvements constructed prior to the institution of the Town's Zoning Code (1974).

3. The Camp property was the subject of a subdivision approval granted by decision dated October 11, 2016. That subdivision approval did not authorize any construction or change of use.
4. Following my review and investigation, I issued a Notice of Apparent Violation dated March 25, 2025. A copy is enclosed. By application dated May 23, 2025, the owners of Camp

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Monroe, Congregation Heichal Torah Veavodah filed an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Pursuant to New York Town Law § 267-a (6), enforcement proceedings are automatically stayed upon the filing of an appeal to the ZBA. The appeal has been held in abeyance pending completion of the draft Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Amendments.

5. Our Code defines short term rentals as, “Offering any residential dwelling, or space therein, to persons in exchange for a fee or compensation, whether monetary or otherwise, for a period of less than 30 days, including, but not limited to, rentals provided by such companies as Airbnb and VRBO. Excluded from this definition are month-to-month tenancies, bed-and-breakfasts, and hotels and inns which have valid and approved site plans from the Town of Chester Planning Board.” See § 98-28.1. The property owner has argued that the use of the property is not a short-term rental as part of its appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals described in # 5 above. Ultimately, it is a determination for the Zoning Board of Appeals.

6. As a summer camp, Camp Monroe is subject to permitting and inspections by the Orange County Department of Health. The property is subject to a temporary residence permit, children’s camp permit and regulation of the water supply system which is considered public. That permitting is separate from the Town of Chester’s zoning controls. Our office does not maintain inspection reports prepared by Orange County.

7. The Camp is also subject to annual fire inspections pursuant to Chapter 50. As the Board is aware, prior to my tenure which started in 2024, the Building Department failed to conduct the required fire safety inspections. Our office has been working through the backlog of inspections for the past 18 months and will continue to do so. Camp Monroe is included in those efforts and is scheduled within the next week.

At present, there are no other pending violations with my office.

Should the Town Board have any further questions, please let me know.

Very Truly Yours,



Andrew Contarino

Town of Chester Building Inspector

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CODE ENFORCEMENT – NOTICE OF APPARENT VIOLATION

March 25, 2025

Congregation Heichal Torah
182 Ridge Avenue
Lakewood, NJ 08701

Address in Violation:

162 Trout Brook Rd
Chester, NY 10918
SBL: 15-1-27.42

Dear PROPERTY OWNER/OCCUPANT,

It has come to our attention that the property located at 162 Trout Brook Rd, Chester, NY 10918 appears to be being utilized as a short term rental and is further being used for year round occupancy.

Pursuant to the records of the Town, the authorized use of the property is as a seasonal summer camp as a pre-existing non-conforming use. The use of the property for anything other than a seasonal summer camp represents a change of use which requires a Certificate of Occupancy. See § 99-33, Certificate of Occupancy of the Town of Chester Code. Any change of use shall comply with all applicable zoning requirements including site plan approval prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

None of the structures on the property may be utilized as a short-term rental. See § 98-28.1 (E)(3) Only single-family and legal, owner-occupied two-family dwellings or a mixed-use structure with a valid certificate of occupancy may be used as a short-term rental property.

You are hereby requested to eliminate the violation by not using the premises for any use other than a seasonal summer camp or by filing the necessary plans with the Planning Board seeking authorization by May 1, 2025.

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If you believe that you are not in violation of the Zoning Law, please contact this office to review the matter. If further instances of short-term rental or use of premises outside of the summer season (generally June through October) are observed, our office will commence the appropriate enforcement actions.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your case, you can call our office at 845-469-7000 ext. 7

Very truly yours,



Code Enforcement Officer