

June 22, 2026

Lysander Town Board
8220 Loop Road
Baldwinsville, New York 13027

Dear Supervisor Rode and Members of the Lysander Town Board:

I am respectfully writing and submitting this letter to be read publicly and be part of the Public Hearing on the zone change request by CNY CROPS for their property of 22.98 acres, parcel 017.-03-301 to go from its current Agriculture zone designation to a General Commercial or Business District or Neighborhood Residential Business District (NR-BD) zoning. I am unable to attend tonight's session as I had made plans to attend an educational conference out of town and I appreciate the opportunity to provide my comments in this letter.

I would respectfully request that the Town Board not grant this request for the zone change for the reasons as follows. Zoning designations are part of a municipality's overall land-use plan. They are a result of serious, careful work and much effort over quite a bit of time by quite a number of people responsible for creating such a land-use plan. They represent a comprehensive vision and overview, in this case, for the Town of Lysander. What makes a zoning map credible is precisely because it is adhered to seriously and consistently over time. Any proposed changes must always be considered in light of that prior work as well as also needing to apply the same level of rigor for evaluating why any changes ought to be considered. To not do this undermines the credibility of the existing plan and invites criticism of it being spot zoning or arbitrary in nature.

The area is currently zoned Agriculture for a reason and that reason is that this Town has rigorously sought to protect farmland and open space as integral components for the overall landscape and character of this community. We are proud of those folks in our community who continue to farm in recognition of not only the economic value of that activity but in showing a loyalty to how farming as a way of life defines, in part, what life in this Town was and is about. In addition are also the tracts of undeveloped land in the Agriculture zoning districts which are green spaces and wooded areas, all contributing to the character of Lysander which is strikingly different than so many of our neighboring towns which gave up or lost much of this important character. Interesting is that the tract of land under review contains both open land for farming and wooded areas. This approach and vision is thematically included in the Lysander Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). I am proud to have been a participant for the development of the last two plans adopted in 2015 and 2023. What defines the credibility of the CLUP is that it represents not only hard and detailed work, but it is a consensus document representing the views of so many people who produced it and which was voted on and ultimately adopted by the Town Board.

Zone change requests are certainly something every landowner has a right to ask for. Often, for example in the case of desiring to be able to use land zoned Agricultural for a small unobtrusive business, consideration could be given to changing a small portion of a particular property. Even that however must be done thoughtfully, always keeping in mind that the existing zoning was not done in a haphazard fashion, but rather was done methodically to accomplish what was cited above.

The request in front of the Board does none of that. It requests a blanket change for the entire piece of property and does so without providing a plan for what will then be developed or will occur on the property. If granted, it would represent an arbitrary approval and change for what existed as part of Lysander's master zoning plan. Making a change in this fashion goes counter to the thoughtful process outlined above for how the original zoning plan was created in the first place.

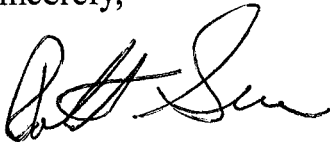
If this nearly 23 acres of land is desired by the Town to be considered for other uses other than what its existing agriculture zoning permits, the only place to consider such an idea is at the next round of the CLUP. Even then, I would hope that Lysander never loses sight of what makes its current vision unique which has been its commitment to balancing development - housing, business and commercial - with protection of farmland and open space. But if the various participants in a future CLUP think that a commercial district in that part of town is

of higher importance than what exists currently, that is in their purview to do, always keeping in mind that one has to believe a new direction is truly what most folks would want.

I urge you to not approve this request. But I also urge you to not table this motion but to vote on it tonight negatively. A negative vote is one of principle and it tells ourselves for the record that there is a more appropriate approach to do things that takes into account prior zoning decisions. Tabling it would leave the question unresolved. Voting against the idea doesn't take any opportunity in the future for what is described above in terms of reviewing the overall plan for that part of Lysander. But it does reinforce that one must have a concrete plan, always respecting the credibility of current zoning, for why changes are appropriate, without which, requests such as these should not be entertained.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Geraci". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Geraci" clearly distinguishable.

Robert Geraci
8873 Dinglehole Road
Baldwinsville, New York 13027