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**Sent:** Wednesday, November 11, 2020 12:27 PM

**To:** PublicComment <[PublicComment@mynewcastle.org](mailto:PublicComment@mynewcastle.org)>; TownBoard <[townboard@mynewcastle.org](mailto:townboard@mynewcastle.org)>

**Cc:** Dorit Straus <[dorit29@gmail.com](mailto:dorit29@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Please find attached my oral comment at the 11/10/20 public hearing

*Dora Straus (7 Breckenridge Rd, Chappaqua) – Second Oral Public Comment*

I have already spoken and written about my concern that the form based code will have on our schools, among multiple other concerns. As I study the form based code further, I am now concerned about losing key stores in the Walgreens area – Old Stone Trattoria, Hilltop Wines, the dry cleaner, the Chase bank branch, and the Walgreens itself. All of those stores are located in a one story building with a relatively large parking lot. A developer will find this location very attractive. A developer could easily come in, buy up that one level strip and raze it in order to build way bigger. Look what what happened to the Try and Buy store that we all loved in Pleasantville. It was located in a one-story building with other stores along Washington Avenue. A developer came in, bought the small buildings, razed them, and built a much taller building. Try and Buy was lost forever. It is easy to see how Old Stone will be displaced; the small dry cleaner will be displaced; Hilltop Wines will be displaced; the small Chase branch will be displaced; Walgreens itself, the town’s last remaining pharmacy, will be displaced.

My family frequents Old Stone several times a week and relies heavily on all its neighboring stores. These are thriving business that serve our community every day. They are not vacant! The thought that the Town is willing to allow this area to be razed for opportunistic development troubles me greatly. Old Stone has become a staple for me, as it has for many others. Hilltop Wines has been in Chappaqua since 1966! These merchants deserve to be protected. They won’t be able to afford the higher rents that will be demanded of them after a larger, new construction.

Why would the Town Board consider a zoning code that would force these small businesses out? I urge you to please remove the lot that houses Walgreens and these other small businesses from the re-zoning proposal. Many of us rely on all of these stores in our daily lives. I do not want to see these small business owners displaced.

I was very disturbed to see the Town’s latest video featuring a local merchant who claims that the form based code will be “really great” for the downtown merchants. Really? This merchant owns her building, has had it listed for sale in the recent past, and may love to sell it to a developer who will tear it down and build a new building in its place. But what about all our other local merchants who *rent* their small stores from landlords? When those landlords sell, the small merchants will be gone. I found this video misleading and not telling the whole truth about how the form based code will operate in reality.

***Again, I ask the Board to consider a different way to revitalize the downtown, one that does not involve a wholesale rezoning that only incentivizes developers to tear down existing structures and build large apartment buildings in their place.***