

March 13, 2026

Dear Members of the Village Council,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed housing development on 7th Street. While I understand the importance of expanding housing opportunities, this particular location raises significant environmental concerns that deserve careful consideration.

This 7th Street parcel is directly adjacent to the wooded "park" that we fought for three years to preserve, and appears to serve as an important natural habitat and ecological buffer. For as long as I can remember, 70+ years, this 4+ acreage (park) has been designated wetland by the Conservation Department. Development of the smaller parcel on 7th Street could lead to habitat disruption, increased runoff, and long-term impacts on local wildlife and water quality. Some of the wildlife I have directly observed are deer, brown river otters, a variety of birds including wild turkeys and eagles, foxes, raccoons and of course the ever present skunk. Last summer a black bear was videotaped running down North Shore Drive. Once these ecosystems are disturbed, they are often difficult or impossible to restore.

Additionally, preserving environmentally sensitive land provides lasting benefits to the broader community. Natural spaces support biodiversity, help manage flooding, maintain water quality and offer recreational and educational opportunities for residents. I would like to see that area reforested and returned to its natural state.

I urge you the members of the Village Council to reconsider this property for development and focus on the High Street property. This location is close to the school, learning center and town. The High Street along with the Township's affordable/attainable housing on the recycling property would together meet the immediate needs of Northport without putting sensitive natural areas at risk. Protecting these environments today will benefit both current residents and future generations.

Sincerely,

Mary Betzoldt
10540 North Shore Drive