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Letter to Clinton Town Board to be read at Public Hearing on Proposed Clinton Law on Cannabis Stores in Hamlets – June 3, 2026

TO: Town Board

FROM: Tom and Barbara Myers, Town Residents for 50 years and Participants in Its Master Plan Committee of 1991.

We urge you NOT to pass this proposed law! As elected officials to the Town Board in the Town of Clinton, you have taken an oath to uphold the laws of the Town, which include the Master Plan and Town of Clinton Zoning Law. A vote FOR this amendment to the Zoning Law is a Vote Against the intent of Clinton's Master Plan and directly in opposition to the current Zoning Law.

If you read the Master Plan, you see that surveys were made to determine what Community Values were, and are, important to our residents. Maintaining the "Rural Character" of the Town was most important. KEEP THE TOWN AS IT IS was the most common response to the community values survey. Minimal change was considered to be important, as most residents wanted to see the Town stay pretty much as it now is. The Historic values of the Hamlets were important. Limited Commercial Uses in the Hamlets were to be allowed, but any uses which might change the "Character" of the Hamlets were not to be allowed.

In legalizing Cannabis stores, even the State of New York recognizes the detrimental effects in certain areas, and has disallowed these near schools, churches, recreation parks, and so forth. A Cannabis store in one our Historic Hamlets is completely out of character with the nature of the Hamlet, and with its limited commercial uses as defined in Clinton's Master Plan. Please read the Master Plan before you Vote on this Proposed Law and see if you believe otherwise.

The Town of Clinton Zoning Law specifically states: "Any Use not Specified in (the Use Table) is Prohibited in All Districts. So, a Cannabis store is prohibited anywhere in the Town today. If there is an existing Cannabis store, it is illegal and should be removed at once, at the direction of the Town Board. The existence of an illegal use in not a reason to legalize it.

The Zoning Law District Regulation for Hamlets states: "...Compatibility with the existing historic and primarily residential character of the hamlets ...should be protected..."

Allowed businesses include grocery stores, restaurants, taverns/bars, nurseries, offices, and other specified uses. NOT allowed in Hamlets are convenience stores, car washes, drive-in businesses, junkyards, or auto body work.

One reason given for this Proposed Law is that in 2021 the Town Board voted to OPT-IN for possible Cannabis stores, rather than OPT- out. Well, this is a different Town Board, and it can NOW vote to OPT-OUT, just like our NEIGHBORS, Rhinebeck, Stanford, and others have done. It can re-consider and should change its mind.

Another reason for adopting the Proposed Law is that the Town would get about 3 % of revenue from future Cannabis Sales within the Town. Should we make a Deal with the Devil? There are certain things that may be Legal in New York State, but that doesn't make them right for our Town, and we don't have to go along with whatever is allowed elsewhere. Cannabis can still be obtained from other towns nearby where it is available. LET'S PRESERVE THE RURAL CHARACTER AND VOTE TO NOT ALLOW CANNABIS STORES IN CLINTON!

IN SUMMARY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS, THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE DON'T WANT CHANGE TO THE COMMUNITY VALUES SURVEYED IN THE MASTER PLAN, THE ZONING LAW WHICH YOU HAVE SWORN TO UPHOLD DOES NOT ALLOW THIS USE BECAUSE IT IS NOT IN CHARACTER WITH HAMLET USES, AND YOU SHOULD FOLLOW THE LEAD OF WHAT SOME NEIGHBORING TOWNS HAVE DONE – WE STRONGLY URGE YOU TO VOTE “NO” ON THIS PROPOSED LAW.