



## **Friday Fast Facts**

**November 4, 2022**

### **Farrell Fritz Long Island Land Use and Zoning Blog**

In an effort to increase our value to our clients and prospects, Abstracts, Incorporated is pleased to announce that it has received permission from the Law Firm of Farrell Fritz to republish its Blog entitled "Long Island Land Use and Zoning".

## **Is a Freeze in the Forecast for Riverhead's Industrial Development?**

By Philip A. Butler on October 31, 2022

POSTED IN MORATORIUM, TOWN OF RIVERHEAD, UNCATEGORIZED

Long Island has seen a tremendous influx of investment in new industrial projects over the last two years, particularly in the self-storage, warehousing and distribution sectors. These projects promise to bring much needed, state-of-the-art facilities to Long Island's towns, which industry leaders describe as a long-underserved market. Of equal importance to Long Island's future is the tax revenue and jobs these projects will generate. However, as these new facilities come online, some local officials are starting to assess the downside of industrial growth and are looking to hit the pause button. On the Island's east end, an initiative is currently underway that may result in a moratorium on industrial development in Calverton, the Town of Riverhead's industrial hub.

Calverton sits at the tail end of the Long Island Expressway. It is home to the former 2,900-acre military base turned industrial park known as the "Enterprise Park at Calverton" (or EPCAL) and several other industrial zoning districts that comprise the Town's industrial center. In recent years, Calverton's proximity to the Long Island Expressway, and other major roadways, and its stock of available undeveloped land have attracted strong interest from local and national industrial developers alike. Applications for several projects have already been filed with the Town that, if approved, would bring nearly 1.3 million square feet of new industrial space to the area. This does not include the 600-acre redevelopment of EPCAL that is awaiting the culmination of the Town's sale of the property to Calverton Aviation & Technology. These figures have some Town residents worried.

Earlier this month, the Town's Planning Board commissioned a draft law calling for a moratorium on industrial development in Calverton. The draft specifically names several pending applications, but also calls for a complete freeze on the

processing, review and approval of all new industrial projects within the hamlet. A copy of the draft law can be accessed here: <https://www.lilanduseandzoning.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/128/2022/10/Calverton-Industrial-Moratorium-DRAFT-Local-Law-10.26.2022.pdf>.

The proponents of the moratorium are concerned that so much industrial development in Calverton will irreversibly change the area's rural character and overburden the existing road network. Concerns over groundwater quality, environmental justice, and other environmental factors are also at the forefront of the discussion.

However, as this matter moves forward, several key aspects of the proposed moratorium are still unknown. The most recent draft of the law does not say how long the freeze on applications for industrial projects would last. It also does not identify any exceptions to the moratorium or any procedure for seeking relief from the moratorium based on hardship. As drafted, the moratorium would even apply to development projects within the Calverton Camelot industrial subdivision at EPCAL, which the Town approved more than a decade ago and the realization of redevelopment of the former Grumman site that has been planned since 1998.

Undoubtedly, the Town Board's response to the moratorium question will have a profound impact on parties on both sides of this debate. The influence of Riverhead's decision on this issue could also spill over into other Long Island towns that are experiencing a similar renewed interest in industrial development.

We will be watching and reporting on this matter with great interest as it unfolds. If the moratorium is adopted, the forecast for industrial development in Riverhead could be chilly.

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