

**TOWN OF CALEDONIA
LOCAL LAW NO. ____ OF 2011**

**A LOCAL LAW "TO EFFECT A MORATORIUM ON AND PROHIBITION OF
NATURAL GAS AND PETROLEUM EXPLORATION AND EXTRACTION
ACTIVITIES, UNDERGROUND STORAGE OF NATURAL GAS, AND DISPOSAL OF
NATURAL GAS OR PETROLEUM EXTRACTION, EXPLORATION AND
PRODUCTION WASTES."**

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Caledonia, Livingston County, New York, as follows:

Section 1. Title

This Local Law shall be known as the "MORATORIUM ON AND PROHIBITION OF NATURAL GAS AND PETROLEUM EXPLORATION AND EXTRACTION ACTIVITIES, UNDERGROUND STORAGE OF NATURAL GAS, AND DISPOSAL OF NATURAL GAS OR PETROLEUM EXTRACTION, EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION WASTES."

Section 2. Authority and Intent; Findings; Purpose

A. Authority and Intent – This Local Law is intended to be consistent with and is adopted pursuant to the authority granted to the Town Board of the Town of Caledonia under the New York State Constitution, and the Laws of the State of New York, including but not limited to the following authorities: New York State Constitution Article IX, Section 2 (c)(ii)(6), (10); Municipal Home Rule Law § 10(1)(I); Municipal Home Rule Law § 10(1)(ii)(a)(6), (11), (12), and (14); Municipal Home Rule Law § 10(1)(ii)(d)(3); Municipal Home Rule Law § 10(2); Municipal Home Rule Law § 10(3); Municipal Home Rule Law § 10(4)(a), and (b); Statute of Local Governments §10(1), (6), and (7); Town Law § 64 (17-a), (20-b), and (23); Town Law § 130(5), (6), (7), (8), (11), (14), (15), and (23); Town Law §135; Town Law Article 16 (Zoning & Planning) inclusive; Environmental Conservation Law § 17-1101, §27-0711; and New York State Law, Public Health Law § 228 (2), and (3).

This Law is a police power and land use regulation. This Law is intended and is hereby declared to address pressing matters of local concern, and it is declared that it is not the intention of the Town to address matters of statewide concern, current controversies or the high publicity of the matters herein described. This Local Law is intended to act as and is hereby declared to exercise the permissive "incidental control" of a zoning law and land use law that is concerned with the broad area of land use planning and the physical use of land and property within the Town, including the physical externalities associated with certain land uses, such as negative impacts on roadways, road maintenance and repair and traffic congestion and other deleterious impacts on a community.

Radiation – The spontaneous emission of particles (alpha, beta, neutrons) or photons (gamma) from the nucleus of unstable atoms as a result of radioactive decay.

Subsurface – Below the surface of the earth, or of a body of water, as the context may require.

Town – The Town of Caledonia, Livingston County, New York.

Transmission Line – A pipeline that transports oil, gas, or water to end users as a public utility and which is subject to regulation either by: (a) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's jurisdiction under section 1(b) of the Natural Gas Act, or (b) as a "Major utility transmission facility" under the Public Service Law of New York, Article 7, §120(2)(b).

Underground Injection – Subsurface emplacement of Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction, Exploration or Production Wastes by or into an Injection Well.

Underground Natural Gas and Storage – Subsurface storage, including in depleted gas or oil reservoirs and salt caverns, of natural gas that has been transferred from its original location for the primary purpose of load balancing the production of natural gas. Includes compression and dehydration facilities, and pipelines.

Section 4. Moratorium and Prohibition.

- A. From and after the date of this Local Law, no application for a permit, zoning permit, special permit, zoning variance, building permit, operating permit, site plan approval, subdivision approval, certificate of occupancy, certificate of compliance temporary certificate, or other Town-level approval shall be accepted, processed, approved, approved conditionally, or issued for the construction, establishment, or use or operation of any land, body of water, building, or other structure located within the Town for any of the following: (I) any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Exploration Activities; (ii) any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities; or (iii) any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Support Activities.
- B.
 - 1. From and after the date of this Local Law, no Person shall use, cause, or permit to be used, any land, body of water, building, or other structure located within the Town for any of the following: (I) any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Exploration Activities; (ii) any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities; or (iii) any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Support Activities.
 - 2. The prohibitions set forth above in Clause 1. of this Section 4.B. are not intended, and shall not be construed, to: (a) prevent or prohibit the

transmission of natural gas through utility pipes, lines, or related appurtenances for the limited purpose of supplying natural gas utility services to residents of or buildings located in the Town; or (b) prevent or prohibit the incidental or normal sale, storage or use of lubricating oil, heating oil, gasoline, diesel fuel, kerosene, or propane in connection with legal Agriculture, residential, business, commercial, and other uses within the Town, so long as such uses do not involve any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Exploration Activities, Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities, or Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Support Activities.

- C. This moratorium and prohibition shall be in effect beginning on the effective date of this Local Law and shall expire on the earlier of (i) that date which is twelve (12) months after said effective date; or (ii) the effective date of a Town Board resolution affirmatively stating the Town Board has determined that the need for this moratorium and prohibition no longer exists.
- D. This moratorium and prohibition shall apply to all real property within the Town.
- E. Under no circumstances shall the failure of the Town Board of the Town, the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town, the Planning Board of the Town, or the Code Enforcement Officer for the Town to take any action upon any application for a permit, zoning permit, special permit, zoning variance, building permit, operating permit, site plan approval, subdivision approval, certificate of occupancy, certificate of compliance, temporary certificate, or other Town-level approval constitute an approval by default or an approval by virtue of expiration of time to respond to such application.

Section 5. Penalties.

- A. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Local Law shall be an unclassified misdemeanor as contemplated by Article 10 and Section 80.05 of the New York State Penal Law, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punishable by a fine of not more than One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500) or imprisonment for not more than 10 days, or both for the first offense. Any subsequent offense within a three-month period shall be punishable by a fine of not more than Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) or imprisonment for a period of not more than 30 days, or both. For purposes of this Clause A., each day that a violation of this Local Law exists shall constitute a separate and distinct offense.
- B. Compliance with this Local Law may also be compelled and violations restrained by order or by injunction of a court of competent jurisdiction, in an action brought on behalf of the Town by the Town Board.

- C. In the event the Town is required to take legal action to enforce this Local Law, the violator will be responsible for any and all necessary costs incurred by the Town relative thereto, including attorney's fees, and such amount shall be determined and assessed by the court. If such expense is not paid in full within 30 days from the date it is determined and assessed by the Court, such expense shall be charged to the propert(ies) within the Town on which the violation occurred, by including such expense in the next annual Town tax levy against such property, and such expense shall be a lien upon such property until paid.

Section 6. 'Grandfathering' of Legal, Pre-existing Non-Conforming Use

Notwithstanding any provision hereof the contrary, any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities that are being conducted in the Town as of the effective date of this Local Law shall be subject to the following:

- A. 1. Where, as of the effective date of this Local Law, substantive Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities are occurring in the Town, and those activities are in all respects being conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, including without limitation all permits required to be issued by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ("DEC") and all other regulating agencies, then and only then such Activity shall be considered a pre-existing, non-conforming use and shall be allowed to continue, subject, however, to the provisions of Clauses B. and C. of this Section 6.
2. Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities that are being conducted in the Town as of the effective date of this Local Law and which do not qualify for treatment under the preceding Clause A.1. of this Section 6 shall not be grandfathered, and shall in all respects be prohibited as contemplated by Section 4 hereof.
- B. Upon the depletion of any well which is allowed to remain in operation after the effective date of this Local Law by virtue of Clause A.1. of this Section 6, or upon any other substantive cessation of Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities (otherwise grandfathered by virtue of Clause A.1. of this Section 6) for a period of more than twelve (12) months, then and in such event the non-conforming use status of such Activity shall terminate, and thereafter such Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities shall in all respects be prohibited as contemplated by Section 4 hereof.
- C. Notwithstanding any provision hereof to the contrary, the pre-existing, non-conforming status conferred and recognized by Clause A.1. of this Section 6 is not intended, and shall not be construed, to authorize or grandfather any Natural Gas and/or Petroleum Extraction Activities extending beyond whatever well bore is

authorized in any DEC permit in existence as of the effective date of this Local Law. Any expansion or attempted or purported expansion shall not be grandfathered under Clause A.1. of this Section 6, and instead shall in all respects be prohibited as contemplated by Section 4 hereof.

Section 7. Invalidity of any Conflicting Approvals or Permits.

No permit or approval issued by any local or state agency, department, commission or board shall be deemed valid within the Town of Caledonia when or to the extent that such permit or approval purports to allow or permit any activity that would violate the prohibitions set forth at Section 4 of this Local Law.

Section 8. Hardship Use Variance.

The Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town is hereby authorized to accept and review (after public notice and hearing and in accordance with the requirements of law and of this Local Law) requests for a hardship use variance from application of the provisions of this Local Law by persons aggrieved hereby.

No such use variance shall be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals without a showing by the applicant that applicable zoning regulations and restrictions have caused unnecessary hardship.

- A. Unnecessary Hardship. In order to prove such unnecessary hardship the applicant is required to demonstrate to the Zoning Board of Appeals that, with respect to every permitted use under the zoning regulations for the particular district where the property is located, each of the following four criteria is satisfied: (i) the applicant cannot realize a reasonable return on the entire parcel of property, and such lack of return is substantial as demonstrated by competent financial evidence; (ii) the alleged hardship relating to the property in question is unique, and does not apply to a substantial portion of the district or neighborhood; (iii) the requested use variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the rural, hamlet, or other neighborhood; and (iv) the alleged hardship has not been self-created.
- B. Reasonable Rate of Return. In evaluating whether the applicant can realize a reasonable rate of return, the Zoning Board of Appeals must examine whether the entire original or expanded property holdings of the applicant are incapable of producing a reasonable rate of return (and not just the site of the proposed development project). No use variance shall be granted unless, in addition to satisfying all other applicable provisions of law and this Law, the Zoning Board of Appeals finds that the applicant has clearly demonstrated, by detailed "dollars and cents" proof, the inability to obtain a reasonable return for the entire parcel (and not just the site of the proposed project) and for each and every permitted use in the district (including those uses permitted by special use permit).

- C. Unique Hardship. No use variance shall be granted unless, in addition to satisfying all other applicable provisions of law and this Law, the Zoning Board of Appeals finds that the entire parcel of which the project is a part possesses unique characteristics that distinguish it from other properties in the area.
- D. Essential Character of the Neighborhood. In making the determination of whether the proposed development project will alter the essential character of the neighborhood, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall take into account factors that are of vital importance to the citizens of the Town including without limitation: (i) the rural residential and agricultural character of the Town, (ii) its irreplaceable recreation and tourism sites, (iii) the extent of hazard to life, limb or property may result from the proposed development project, (iv) health impacts, (v) the social and economic impacts of traffic congestion, noise, dust, odors, emissions, solid waste generation and other nuisances, (vi) the impact on property values, and (vii) whether the applicant will engage in a type of development that will result in degradation to the air quality, water quality, and environment of the Town. In order to find that the proposed development project does not alter the essential character of the neighborhood, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall interpret the public interest in said essential character of the neighborhood to require, at a minimum, that the project will not do any of the following: (a) pose a threat to the public safety, including public health, water quality or air quality, (b) cause an extraordinary public expense, or (c) create a nuisance.
- E. Self-Created Hardship. The Zoning Board of Appeals may find that the applicant suffers from a self-created hardship in the event that the Board finds that (i) the applicant's inability to obtain a reasonable return on the property as a whole results from having paid too much or from a poor investment decision; (ii) the applicant previously divided the property and is left with only a portion which suffers from some unique condition for which relief is sought and which did not apply to the parcel as a whole; or (iii) when the applicant purchased the property, he or she knew or should have known the property was subject to the zoning restrictions.

In the event the Zoning Board of Appeals grants a hardship use variance from the provisions of this Local Law to the applicant, the applicant shall be required to comply with all provisions of the Town's then applicable zoning laws and other laws and regulations, together with any amendments to such law or regulations which may be enacted during the term of this Local Law. Any hardship use variance that is granted shall grant only the minimum variance that the Board of Appeals deems necessary and adequate to address the unnecessary hardship proven by the applicant, and at the same time preserve and protect the character of the neighborhood and the health, safety and welfare of the community.

Section 9. Severability.

If any word, phrase, sentence, part, section, subsection, or other portion of this Local Law, or the application thereof to any person or to any circumstance, is adjudged or declared invalid or unenforceable by a court or other tribunal of competent jurisdiction, then, and in such event, such judgment or declaration shall be confined in its interpretation and operation only to the provision of this Local Law that is directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment or declaration is rendered, and such judgment or declaration of invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect or impair the validity or enforceability of the remainder of this Local Law or the application hereof to any other persons or circumstances. If necessary as to such person or circumstances, such invalid or unenforceable provision shall be and be deemed severed herefrom, and the Town Board of the Town hereby declares that it would have enacted this Local Law, or the remainder thereof, even if, as to particular provisions and persons or circumstances, a portion hereof is severed or declared invalid or unenforceable.

Section 10. Superseding Intent and Effect.

During the time this Local Law is in effect, it is the specific intent of the Town Board, pursuant to Municipal Home Rule Law § 10(1)(ii)(d)(3) and §22, to supercede: (a) any inconsistent provisions set forth in Town Law § 265-a; § 267; § 267-a, § 267-b, § 268; § 274-a, § 274-b; § 276, § 277, § 278, and § 279; (b) any other inconsistent provisions set forth in Article 16 of the Town Law; (c) any inconsistent provisions of the Zoning Code of the Town of Caledonia; and (d) any inconsistent provisions of any and all other local ordinances, local laws or local resolutions of the Town of Caledonia.

Section 11. Effective Date.

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the New York Department of State.