TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

INTRODUCTORY LOCAL LAW NO. __ OF 2020

A LOCAL LAW ENTITLED “A LOCAL LAW ESTABLISHING A SIX-MONTH MORATORIUM PROHIBITING THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WAREHOUSES AND DISTRIBUTION CENTERS IN THE TOWN OF MONTGOMERY”

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Montgomery, County of Orange, State of New York as follows:

Section 1. Title.

This Local Law shall be referred to as “A LOCAL LAW ESTABLISHING A SIX-MONTH MORATORIUM PROHIBITING THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WAREHOUSES AND DISTRIBUTION CENTERS IN THE TOWN OF MONTGOMERY”.

Section 2. Definitions.


“Plan” means the Town of Montgomery Comprehensive Master Plan.

“Town” means the Town of Montgomery.

“Town Board” means the Town Board of the Town of Montgomery.

“Town Clerk” means the Town Clerk of the Town of Montgomery.

“Land Use Approvals” means site plan approvals, subdivision plats, special use permits, and variances.

“Warehouse” is defined in the Town of Montgomery Code Section 30-20 and shall also include: i) “Flex Space, Multi-Tenant or Multi-Use Buildings”, ii) “Non-Nuisance Industry”, and iii) “Non-Nuisance Industry, Limited”, as said terms are defined in Town of Montgomery Code Section 30-20.

“Distribution Center” means a facility used for receipt, temporary storage, and redistribution of goods. A distribution center may be attached to or accessory to an office, industrial building or use, warehouse or commercial use. The term “Distribution Center” shall also include: i) “Flex Space, Multi-Tenant or Multi-Use Buildings”, ii) “Non-Nuisance Industry”, and iii) “Non-Nuisance Industry, Limited”, as said terms are defined in Town of Montgomery Code Section 30-20.

Section 3. Legislative Findings, Purpose and Intent.

The Town Board hereby finds that many economic and social impacts and trends have
changed since the Town’s last review of its Comprehensive Plan in 2010. Therefore, the Town Board hereby finds that there is a critical and compelling need, in the public interest as set forth herein, to impose a Moratorium on the review and approval of applications for the construction and development of warehouses and distribution centers in the Town.

The Town Board recognizes the impact that warehouse or distribution center development, or potential warehouse or distribution center development, in the Town may have on the health, safety and general welfare of the Town, its inhabitants and visitors, and upon existing uses, public services, traffic and the environment in general. These circumstances require that the Town Board review and update the Town’s Plan in order to, inter alia, ensure that existing and future warehouses and distribution centers are located in the appropriate zoning districts within the Town. Pending adoption of the aforesaid updated Plan, and any updated zoning regulations that result as a consequence thereof, it is necessary for the Town Board to take reasonable temporary measures to prohibit the review and approval of any land use applications relating to the construction and development of all warehouses and distribution centers in all districts within the Town in order to protect the public interest and welfare.

The Town Board has begun the process of: (i) retaining the services of a planning and consulting firm; and (ii) creating a Plan Committee to provide guidance and recommendations regarding updating the Plan, and to amend all required provisions in the Town Code and related land use regulations in a manner that is consistent with the most appropriate Plan, as may be amended, to encourage lawful, smart, and sustainable development in the Town.

Pursuant to the statutory powers vested in the Town to regulate and control land use and to protect the health, safety and welfare of its residents, the Town Board of the Town of Montgomery hereby declares a six-month moratorium on the submission and processing of any applications of land use approvals, including site plan approvals, subdivision plats, special use permits, and variances (hereinafter “Land Use Approvals”) for all Warehouses and Distribution Centers within the Town pending the Town Board’s completion and adoption of an update to the Comprehensive Plan and applicable zoning regulations.

Section 4. Scope of Controls

A. During the effective period of this Local Law:

1. No permits shall be issued for the permitting, construction and/or installation of Warehouses or Distribution Centers in any districts within the Town without the approval of the Town Board of the Town of Montgomery, which approval will not be considered except in the event of proven hardship.

2. The Town Planning Board shall not accept any application, grant any approval to, or continue the review of a subdivision plat, site plan, special use permit or other permit that includes the permitting, construction and/or development of a Warehouse or Distribution Center in any districts within the Town or would have as a result of the enlargement, relocation, or modification of an existing Warehouse or Distribution Center.

3. The Town Zoning Board of Appeals shall not accept any application or grant any approval for a variance or other permit that would have as a result the permitting, construction and development of a Warehouse or Distribution Center in any
districts within the Town.

4. The Town of Montgomery Building Department shall not accept any building permit application or grant any Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Compliance for any Warehouse or Distribution Center.

Section 5. Specific Exemptions.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following are hereby exempt from the moratorium and may proceed with the usual permitting and licensing procedures as are currently provided by the Town Code.

A. Any Warehouse or Distribution Center project that has received a Negative Declaration (Notice of Determination of Non-Significance) from the lead agency charged with reviewing the proposed project pursuant to Title 6, Chapter VI, Part 617 of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Regulations (“SEQR”) or if said lead agency has accepted a fully completed Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) for review in the event that a Positive Declaration pursuant to the SEQR regulations has been issued.

B. Any proposed warehouse or distribution center having a maximum cumulative gross area of forty thousand (40,000) square feet and no more than three (3) truck docks per parent parcel.

C. Any proposed warehouse or distribution center that has received final project approval from the Town Planning Board prior to the effective date of this Local Law, provided that the property owner and/or applicant has received a lawful extension which has not expired.

Section 6. Term.

The moratorium imposed by this Local Law shall be in effect for six months from the effective date of this Local Law.

Section 7. Hardship.

A. Should any owner of property affected by this Local Law suffer an unnecessary and extraordinary hardship due to the enactment and application of this Local Law, then the owner of said property may apply to the Town Board of the Town of Montgomery in writing for a variance from strict compliance with this Local Law upon submission of proof of such unnecessary hardship. For the purposes of this Local Law, unnecessary or extraordinary hardship shall not be:

a. the mere concern that regulations may be changed or adopted, or that the Plan may be amended; or

b. the mere delay in being permitted to make an application or waiting for a decision on the application for a variance, special permit, site plan, subdivision, or other permit during the period of the moratorium imposed by this Local Law.
B. An application for an exception based upon unnecessary or extraordinary hardship shall be filed with the Town Clerk no earlier than the effective date of this Local Law, including a fee of one thousand and $00/100 Dollars ($1,000.00) for each tax map parcel claimed to be subject to unnecessary or extraordinary hardship, by the landowner or the applicant upon the consent of the landowner. The application shall provide a recitation of the specific facts that are alleged to support the claim of unnecessary or extraordinary hardship and shall contain such other information and/or documentation as the Town Board, shall prescribe as necessary for the Town Board to be fully informed with respect to the application.

C. Procedure. Upon submission of a written application to the Town Clerk by the property owner seeking a variance of this Local Law, the Town Board shall, within forty-five (45) days of receipt of a completed application, schedule a Public Hearing on said application upon five (5) days' written notice in the official newspaper of the Town of Montgomery. At said Public Hearing, the property owner and any other parties wishing to present evidence with regard to the application shall have an opportunity to be heard, and the Town Board shall, within thirty (30) days of the close of said Public Hearing, render its decision either granting, denying, granting in part or denying in part, the application for a variation from the strict requirements of this Local Law. If the Town Board determines that a property owner will suffer an unnecessary or extraordinary hardship if this Local Law is strictly applied to a particular property, then the Town Board shall vary the application to this Local Law to the minimum extent necessary to provide the property owner relief from strict compliance with this Local Law.

D. Standard of Review. In reviewing an application for an exception based upon a claim of unnecessary or extraordinary hardship, the Town Board shall consider the following criteria:

a. The extent to which the proposed development activity would cause significant environmental harm, adversely impact surrounding natural resource areas, public health, comfort or safety concerns and/or have a negative impact upon the Town.

b. Whether the moratorium will expose a property owner or applicant to substantial monetary liability to a third person or would leave the property owner or applicant completely unable, after a thorough review of alternative solutions, to have a reasonable alternative used of the property.

Section 8. Penalties.

Any person, firm or entity that shall construct and/or develop a Warehouse or Distribution Center in any district within the Town or would have as a result the enlargement, relocation, or modification of an existing Warehouse or Distribution Center in violation of the provisions of this Local Law or shall otherwise violate any of the provisions of this Local Law shall be subject to:

A. Such penalties as may otherwise be provided by applicable local laws,
ordinances, rules, regulations of the Town for violations; and

B. A fine not to exceed $2,500.00 per day from the date that any action is taken in contravention of this local law or imprisonment for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) days, or both such fine and imprisonment, together with any other civil remedies available at law; and

C. Injunctive relief in favor of the Town to cease any and all such actions which conflict with this Local Law and, if necessary, to remove any construction that may have taken place in violation of this Local Law.

Any application accepted or approval granted in violation of this Local Law shall be null and void.


This Local Law shall supersede the Town of Montgomery Zoning Code in its entirety, the applicable sections of Article 16 of the Town Law, including, but not necessarily limited to Sections 130, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 268, 269, 274-a, 274-b, 276, 277 and 278 and Executive Law Section 381 to the extent inconsistent with the same and to the extent permitted by the New York State Constitution, the Municipal Home Rule Law or any other statute determined to be in conflict with the provisions hereof.

Section 10. Severability.

If any part or provision of this Local Law or the application thereof to any person or circumstance be adjudged invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to the part or provision or application directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered and shall not affect or impair the validity of the remainder of this Local Law or the application thereof to other persons or circumstances, and the Town Board of the Town of Montgomery hereby declares that it would have passed this Local Law or the remainder thereof had such invalid application or invalid provision been apparent.

Section 11. Repeal.

All ordinances, local laws and parts thereof inconsistent with this Local Law are hereby repealed.

Section 12. Effective Date.

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing in the office of the New York State Secretary of State in accordance with section 27 of the Municipal Home Rule Law.