

Woodland Civic Association, Inc.



March 30, 2026

Mr. John O'Farrell
Superintendent, Half Hollow Hills School District
Fran Greenspan Administration Center
525 Half Hollow Road
Dix Hills, NY 11746

Dear Mr. O'Farrell,

I was present to hear you speak at the meeting held at Huntington Town Hall in regard to the tax impacts on our district from the Melville Overlay. I hope your plan to collect funds from the developer for every child not covered by PILOT payments is implemented.

I am skeptical that the estimate of school age children that would live in the new apartments is low. In a meeting held at the firehouse a couple of years ago, Supervisor Smyth quoted numbers from a hypothetical analysis done by Stony Brook University that estimated 1 student from every 10 apartments, obviously a gross understatement. Back in 2017, Eric Geringswald, the former school board president, wrote to Rich Schaffer to show that the actual number of students from existing apartments in the district was approximately 1 student from every 3 apartments.

While your attention is focused on the Melville Overlay, the Town of Babylon is quietly moving ahead with an overlay in East Farmingdale that is potentially much larger than the one in Melville. At this time there will be a pause to evaluate the impact of the first 400 units built in Melville, but nearly 900 units are already planned in Farmingdale.

Part of the Farmingdale overlay will involve the Half Hollow Hills schools if parcels north of the railroad tracks are developed. Despite public declarations by Rich Schaffer that the "sweet spot" for the number of units is 1,400, information on the town website tells a different story. The 'Theoretical Buildout Scenario' shows 1.882 potential units, with the possibility of up to 815 on the north side of the tracks.

Once the zoning is changed, it is inevitable that the property will eventually be developed as housing. We are questioning why the overlay needs to be 113 acres if the number of units is actually 1,400, as we have been told. There should only be another approximately 500 units to be built, unless we are all being deliberately misled.

We are asking that you get involved with the Town of Babylon in these initial stages, before the re-zoning is passed. The Half Hollow Hills school district is currently not involved in the first

phase of this construction, but if it is allowed to be as large as the town apparently plans, there will be a tax impact to the district. The town does have an IDA and they are not shy about granting tax abatements, especially as some of the town council members are also on the IDA board. The school district stands to lose out on the funds necessary to educate new students, and the Town of Babylon will probably not negotiate as easily as the Town of Huntington will.

My civic association, Woodland Civic Association, Inc., is within the Half Hollow Hills school district and we are proud of the education that our children receive. We don't want those resources stretched to educate children that are not being paid for – all the kids will suffer with reduced services.

Please reach out now to the Town of Babylon to ask that they stick to their initial limit of 1,400 units, which is already too many. Comments regarding the Draft Scoping Document can be submitted until April 8, 2026. A copy was sent incorrectly addressed to Dr. Harrigan, so I hope you have seen it. Contact information is:

Greg Gaxiola, Environmental Analyst
Town of Babylon, Dept. of Environmental Control
281 Phelps Lane
North Babylon, NY 11703

Thank you for your help with both overlay proposals.



Nancy Cypser
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