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Corland Standard

Local News

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Byrne proposes gas station

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CORTLANDVILLE

Byrne Dairy pitched to the Cortlandville Planning Board a plan to build a gas station and convenience store at the site of the old Willcox Tire on Tompkins Street Extension, but the town's zoning doesn't allow for a gas station over a sole-source aquifer that provides drinking water to 30,000 people.

The proposed store, at 260 Tompkins St., Ext. is in a B-2 district, so Christian Brunelle, the senior executive vice president of Byrne Dairy, made a

presentation Tuesday night to the board, seeking a land-use variance that would permit the store to locate there. It would be one of 59 convenience stores Byrne operates, including one on Groton Avenue in Cortland.

"The meeting is for the applicant to present their concepts to the Planning Board and get feedback," town Planning Officer Bruce Weber said. The board has not yet determined whether a gas station there would pose a risk to the aquifer.

After Brunelle made his presentation, Cortlandville resident Pam Jenkins handed the board a

petition signed by 12 town residents who are against the proposal. It states that spot zoning is illegal and the public made its opposition to gas station development clear at a public hearing for a proposed gas station law in April.

The station would be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and employ 25 people, or approximately 16 full-time equivalent employees. There would be 10 gas pumps and 33 parking spots. It would include a coffee bar and sell made-to-order sandwiches and salads.

The site has been owned by the Bank of Dryden for the past

three years.

Brunelle said two underground fiberglass tanks are proposed — 20,000 gallons for unleaded gas and a split 10,000-gallon tank for premium and diesel. They would feature triple walls, a company first, to reduce the risk of leaks into the aquifer.

Brunelle said Byrne Dairy would not build stores without gas stations since gas is profitable and a major part of their business plan.

"Gas is what gets customers in the parking lot," Brunelle said.

The Cortlandville Town Board

had been looking at opening the B-2 and B-3 business districts to gas station development. The proposed legislation, submitted in October 2015 by Town Attorney John Folmer, would redefine "gasoline stations" and "filling stations" as "retail petroleum sales facilities." That proposal has since been abandoned by the Town Board.

County officials have had concerns about building gas stations in areas directly above the aquifer.

Brunelle said the company has not yet determined the fate of the company's Groton Avenue store.

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Department annual capital grant, and the into solar purchase meeting

Both ideas endorsed by teens earlier in

In 2011, a \$30-million for the High