



Good news!
**We don't need to sacrifice the precious, green,
Borough-owned land next to home plate at Memorial Park!**

In June, hundreds of residents signed a petition and stormed a Planning Board meeting, protesting a plan to sacrifice the Borough-owned, wooded lot at 58 North Passaic, next to Memorial Park - and build 206 apartments on Main Street - without having weighed alternatives that would be better for Chatham Borough!

Though the Planning Board went on to approve the ill-conceived scheme anyway, that meeting did yield some good news:

It is NOT too late for the Mayor & Council to seek a better outcome!

Starting January first, the Borough can propose substitute sites, according to Borough Professional Planner Kendra Lelie.*

Now is the time for the Mayor & Council to try to identify suitable alternatives, so the Borough will be ready to present them in January.

The question is: What steps are the Mayor & Council taking to identify alternatives to developing 58 North Passaic? Find out!

- Bring friends to the Borough Council meeting, Monday, 8 September, 7:30 pm, Borough Hall, 54 Fairmount Ave. (North entrance; elevator to the upper level.)
- Email your elected representatives that you want to see options.

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- Sign the petition here: <https://chnng.it/GN4yhK8sGT>
- For details, sources, and news, see ChathamChoice.org

** Sworn testimony of Chatham Borough Planner Kendra Lelie at the 18 June 2025 Planning Board Hearing on the new Housing Element of the Borough's revised Master Plan, starting at 1:12:20, https://chathamborough.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=393*

Q: Planning Board Member William Heap: Kendra, let's say the Plan is adopted. It is approved. And somewhere down the line, somehow, magically, another piece of land appears. Is there room after approval for a little bit of horse trading?

A: Chatham Borough Planner Kendra Lelie: So, after the approval from the Court, it is not uncommon that things happen, things change... Maybe something better comes up - and a better opportunity comes up. So yes, it's a possibility.

Please ignore the following material in brackets. It will not be included unless needed:

[What are the terms of the agreement with the developer of 58 North Passaic? Would the Borough provide the real estate for free, as it has at Post Office Plaza/Bowers Lane (\$1 per year for 45 years)? Crickets.

How does the value of the real estate donated to the developer compare with the value of potential substitute parcels?

Will the Borough be responsible for construction costs, while the developer reaps all the benefits of running the apartment project without having to pay taxes, as with the deal this Council cut for the project at Bowers Lane/Post Office Plaza.

Did the Borough seek or consider any other offers for 58 North Passaic, or just go with the first developer that came along?

If there were other offers, what were they? Why did you reject each one?

What alternative sites did you consider?

Was there no other Borough-owned site of sufficient size but smaller market value?

Was there any other site (Borough-owned or privately owned) that might have produced a better financial deal for the Borough?

Was even one of the above factors taken into consideration in evaluating the choice of 58 North Passaic?]