

AMAZON DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE

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Current plans show truck traffic entering the facility through a gated driveway near the intersection of Packard and Lockport roads, near Broda Machine Co.

Employees, meanwhile, would enter the facility from Lockport Road. Three entrances, according to the plan, would lead to the five-story facility that will rise more than 100 feet at its tallest point.

These entrances, representatives said, would feature a widened Lockport Road and traffic signals, required to help usher in a large number of employees coming from each direction.

How many? Amazon said the facility would employ about 1,000 people. And they'd combine to staff the facility in two different shifts.

It will result in significantly increased traffic flow, if approved, company officials acknowledged.

Councilman Richard A. Sirianni spoke the longest and asked the most questions during the work session Wednesday, both praising

the benefits he sees as possibilities with the project, and questioning the traffic impacts.

Sirianni said there weren't enough financial positives for town residents who wouldn't be positively impacted by the facility's creation discussed leading up to Wednesday's session.

Amazon's Facility in a Nutshell

What the Town of Niagara is considering in the latest step to bring the Amazon distribution center to the town, is the site plan proposal and any necessary variances needed to make the project possible.

Currently, Amazon's project would see the facility built on a 216-acre parcel of land currently being used in farming.

Michael Finan, associate principal for engineering firm Langan, told councilmen the acreage includes a flood plain across much of the southwestern portion of the property, which would likely remain untouched. Current plans

show a gas line running through the area, but Finan said an effort is being made to relocate that to avoid a costly permit.

Though the property in question is not exactly a square, it is roughly bordered by Lockport Road to the north, Tuscarora Road to the east, Halsey Road to the west and the air reserve station to the south.

Amazon's facility would be built closer to Lockport Road.

If built, the facility would have 55 loading docks, 414 trailer parking stalls, 469 total trailer locations and 1,755 car parking stalls - including 16 motorcycle parking spaces - for vehicles.

Other features will be a water tank, stormwater management basins and improvements, accessory site driveways, lighting, landscaping and signage, according to details provided by Langan in a State Environmental Quality Review assessment.

Finan said stormwater runoff typically flows from north to

south on the property now. The project wouldn't change this natural flow, he added.

Inside the facility, there will be five floors, officials said. Much of the space will be devoted to storing products shipped into the facility, including sorting equipment. It would serve as a first-mile fulfillment center, according to Maura Kennedy, economic development manager for Amazon.

So, Kennedy said, there won't be any blue, Amazon-branded trucks leaving the facility for delivery. Instead, products would be received, sorted and stored. After purchase, a product may be then shipped to a fulfillment center, where it would then be boxed and loaded onto the now-familiar delivery vehicles.

An Alternative Idea

Sirianni prefaced his question to Amazon officials with a statement about not being afraid to ask questions, even if the answers seem obvious.

He then questioned whether it

could be possible to get an exit and entrance built on Lockport Road from Interstate 190 to help alleviate what is expected to be heavy truck traffic on Packard Road.

Those trucks, Amazon officials said, would be coming from the highway and going toward the same highway upon departing the facility.

At certain times of the day, it could be a nightmare, he feared.

The answer he received: It's not part of the plan right now, and would require a number of additional approvals from extra entities, including the New York State Thruway Authority, which owns the interstate.

But, the Amazon officials said, it's something that could be considered as a long-term option if traffic is adversely affected once the facility is up and running.

That would take roughly 18 to 24 months from its approval.

Town officials are set to meet at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Niagara Town Hall, 7105 Lockport Road.

NT Neighborhood Watch

David 'Bozo' Matecki is 2022 Dyngus Day Parade grand marshal

The North Tonawanda Neighborhood Watch announced this year's Dyngus Day parade will be led by grand marshal David "Bozo" Matecki. While discussing potential candidates, the committee said it was important to "find an individual who truly encapsulates the spirit of Dyngus Day. After a great deal of deliberation, there was really only one person who fit the bill, and his name is 'Bozo.'"

Born July 26, 1937, at DeGraff Memorial Hospital, "Bozo" is a lifelong resident of the Lumber City. Growing up on Sixth Avenue, he and his six siblings were raised by his Polish-American parents and grandparents. Family has always played an integral part in "Bozo's" life, and it certainly still does. Along with his wife of almost 60 years, Judy, "Bozo" (as his many close friends call him) resides only a few blocks from his childhood home. He has three children, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren - with one more on the way.

"Bozo" attended Our Lady of Czestochowa Church (OLC) primary school until transferring to North Tonawanda High. There, he and close friend, Edy Johns, would go on to become sectional champions in men's doubles tennis.

After 50 years of employment



David "Bozo" Matecki (Submitted photo)

at Glidden Tools, "Bozo" is now happily retired and enjoys spending much of his time with family and friends, attending sporting events around the country with the Gratwick Athletic Club, and working part-time at Deerwood Golf Course.

If you're looking for "Bozo" and can't find him at home with family or hosing down carts at the golf course, you will likely find him at the Third Ward Social Club, one of the last remaining Polish American hangouts in the area. Joining the club in 1955 - only eight years after its establishment - "Bozo" is currently one of the longest-standing members (and undoubtedly one of the most loved).

Parade organizers said, "The fact that he is so well-liked should come as no surprise, and can be corroborated by anyone that knows, or has met 'Bozo' even once - and there are many. With his friendly, loving, easy-going demeanor and ability to strike a conversation with anyone, anywhere, he's simply a hard person not to want to be around."

When asked to give some insight on what life was like, growing up on the Avenues, "Bozo" said life was good, and it was a simpler time. His family never owned a car, as the bus went everywhere. They were able to do all their shopping on Oliver Street, as well as attend church at OLC and socialize at bars like

Topolski's where they would frequently go to dance.

Organizers added, "One of the reasons for starting our Dyngus Day celebration was to bring attention and life back to an area that holds immense cultural significance in our city. We believe 'Bozo' perfectly represents the history and culture of the community, and are excited to have him leading this year's parade."

The NT Neighborhood

Watch's second annual Dyngus Day Parade will be held Monday, April 18. The parade begins at 5 p.m. An after-party with live music, food and drinks will be hosted by Sweeney Hose Fire Co. at Heritage Park.

Groups or organizations that wish to march in the parade can sign-up at www.NTwatch.org.

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IN THE NEWS

Easter Bunny meet-and-greet in NT

The Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas and North Tonawanda Neighborhood Watch have partnered up to offer a special meet-and-greet with the Easter Bunny. He is shown at right.

This pre-Easter happening event will take place from 4-6 p.m. Friday, April 15, at the chamber office, 254 Sweeney St., North Tonawanda.

Residents are welcome to stop by and say hello. For more information, call 716-692-5120.

Lewiston Kiwanis Easter egg hunt

The Kiwanis Club of Lewiston announced its first John Coulter Memorial Easter Egg Hunt would take place at noon, Saturday at Kiwanis Park. This event is open to children in the following age groups: 0-3, 4-5, 6-8 and 9-11.

Visitors are asked to start assembling after 11 a.m. Children will search for eggs and candy on the field while their parents watch on the sidelines. They are welcome to gather as much candy as they can. A prize of one egg per child will be offered.



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