

Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project

First Year Progress Report



May 2013

A Personal Message

From New York State Senator Lee M. Zeldin

The release of the 1st Edition of the Proposal Book on April 29, 2012, was an important step forward for the **Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project**. The proposals found in its pages contained practical and attainable solutions to the critical challenges facing our community. I am pleased to report that during the last 12 months, we have witnessed important victories in enacting our goals. This progress is undoubtedly the result of the cooperative action between our community's public officials and committed civic leaders in attaining support and investments for these important proposals.

As a Tri-Hamlet resident, I am grateful for the dedication of our fellow Tri-Hamlet Community elected officials and all of the other leaders involved during this successful first year of the **Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project**.

I see a future that is bright for the Tri-Hamlet. I have the utmost confidence that our shared efforts will ensure our continued success and growth as a community.

Sincerely,



Senator Lee M. Zeldin

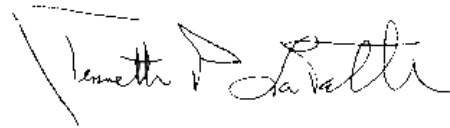
STATEMENTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

The nexus between infrastructure investment and economic development is clear and should be encouraged at all levels of government. Our roadways, rail and transit facilities, water infrastructure and coastal resources are fundamental to the long-term economic viability of our communities and small businesses. As a member of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee in the House of Representatives, I support efforts to increase funding for infrastructure improvements and I will continue to advocate for additional investments in the Tri-Hamlet area. During my tenure in Congress I have worked hard to address the needs of the Tri-Hamlet area with projects including the Forge River, Mastic roadway improvements and an evacuation study of the William Floyd Peninsula. I look forward to continuing to work with my fellow elected officials and members of the community to create the quality of life that we all deserve.



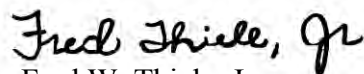
Tim Bishop
United States Congressman

The Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project is proof of what can be accomplished when communities work together. Lasting community change means improving lives by identifying the root cause of problems and then working together to create solutions. The future is bright for the Tri-Hamlet region.



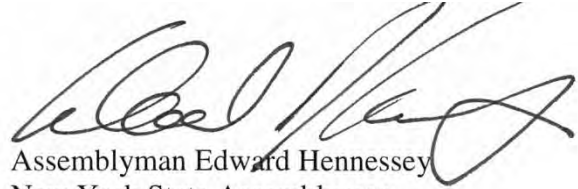
Ken LaValle
New York State Senator

The Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project is, in essence, a blueprint for the future of the Tri-Hamlet area. A blueprint for enhancing and improving the assets that already exist. The projects and initiatives included in this plan are ones which are sound and have been vetted at length by various work groups and stakeholders. The overwhelming support and involvement from the community in this initiative is a testament to Senator Zeldin's dedication and understanding of the community's needs. I must commend Senator Zeldin for spearheading this grassroots effort and look forward to seeing these projects through to implementation.



Fred W. Thiele, Jr.
New York State Assemblyman

From colonial times to the present day, the Tri-Hamlet area has been a special place on Long Island. I am proud to have partnered with Senator Zeldin and the rest my Tri-Hamlet elected officials on the Tri-Hamlet Project. I look forward to working to implement this comprehensive Project.



Assemblyman Edward Hennessey
New York State Assemblyman

The Tri-Hamlet community is located on the beautiful South Shore and is made up of a diverse population of working class citizens. The potential for our area is endless, but we face many challenges that must be overcome in order to realize this potential. It is going to take all levels of government working together in a bi-partisan fashion to meet these lofty goals. Whether it be the improvement of our quality of life, enhanced public safety, economic development or simply a better perception for our communities, the Tri-Hamlet Project is a step in the right direction and has brought all stakeholders to the table. I look forward to seeing our ambitious plan come to fruition and am committed to working with my colleagues and constituents to see that it does.



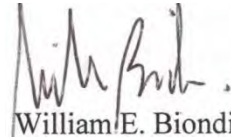
Kate Browning
Suffolk County Legislator

Some of the most important issues affecting our communities deal directly with the resident's quality of life. These issues include but are not limited to the maintenance of our roads and parks but also, the maintenance of individual properties in our neighborhoods. For far too long absentee landlords have been allowed to maintain properties well below acceptable community standards. The hallmark of our efforts in combating suburban slumlords is to include the input of concerned residents to gather tips and information in our investigations. We also work cooperatively with every level of government to assist in investigating possible fraud and abuse of taxpayer funded subsidies.



Dan Panico
Brookhaven Deputy Supervisor/Councilman

The Village of Mastic Beach is on the Mastic Peninsula extending into Moriches Bay. Our village is an extraordinary community with amazing waterfront views of great beauty, historical sites, and wonderful people. The Village Trustees and myself looks forwards to working with our fellow elected officials and our neighboring communities towards the enhancement of the Mastic Peninsula.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William E. Biondi".

William E. Biondi

Mayor

Village of Mastic Beach

Recovering from Superstorm Sandy

The Tri-Hamlet Community Rallies in the Face of Adversity

On October 29, 2012, the Tri-Hamlet Community experienced its strongest storm in decades. Superstorm Sandy devastated Long Island, with our community being among the hardest hit. Our neighbors and loved ones were flooded out of their homes, left wondering how and when they can return. But in the face of adversity, this community did not come undone—instead, we rallied together to help out our neighbors in need and picked ourselves up by the bootstraps and began to rebuild.

We all rose to the challenge together as we weathered the storm and started to recover. Our efforts in the storm's immediate aftermath brought the arrival of National Guard and Army Reserve Troops and vehicles, New York State Police units, Suffolk County and Town emergency response units, and the American Red Cross, among others.

As we still recover, we now look to rebuild. The recovery will not happen overnight but with our continued collaboration and hard work, the Tri-Hamlet Community will be stronger and more resilient than ever.

This project was founded before the devastating storm; however, it was by members of this community who have lived through storms before and are no strangers to difficult times. Perhaps the silver-lining of Superstorm Sandy, is the proof that the residents of this community and members of this Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project can come together and will in times of need.



Photo Credit: NOAA National Hurricane Center/Reuters

PROLOGUE

The “Tri-Hamlet” Community, with a combined population of over 55,000, is comprised of the Villages of Shirley, Mastic, and Mastic Beach.

The majority of its residents live on the Mastic Peninsula, bordered by the waterways of the Forge River on the east, Carmen’s River on the west, and the Narrows connecting the Great South Bay and Moriches Bay on the south.

Across the Narrows is Smith Point County Park with the Fire Island National Seashore and Wilderness extending to the west. Many beautiful natural vistas of water, land, and sky are visible throughout the “Tri-Hamlet” Community.

The community is rich in Revolutionary War history with the William Floyd Estate, the grave of an early Revolutionary War General, and the site of the only American military victory during the war on Long Island. The “Tri-Hamlet” is also home to the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, and the only shrine to Saint Jude in the New York Metropolitan area.

Founded in 1832, the William Floyd School District is a source of pride and unity, and employs many “Tri-Hamlet” residents.

There are countless treasures throughout the community, but there are also many challenges. The “**Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project**” Proposal Book was first issued on April 29, 2012. This project represents the combined efforts of elected officials and community leaders who formed the following Work Groups:

- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Real Estate
- Quality of Life
- Public Safety
- Marketing

After a year of hard work, there has been important progress made on the initial proposals.

Section I

INFRASTRUCTURE

Work Group Chairperson: *Michael Leonardi*

Work Group Members: *Ray Keenan*
Larry Tellefsen
Ed DeGennaro

Development of a comprehensive infrastructure improvement plan is one of the greatest challenges facing the Tri-Hamlet area. Household density (more than 55,000 people living in almost 17,000 households) is creating an ever-increasing burden on the infrastructure and environment of our community.

The initial task of the Infrastructure Work Group was to identify infrastructure problems affecting the community. Their assignment was to “be creative” and provide real solutions to our community’s infrastructure challenges.

Infrastructure Work Group Proposals

Proposal #1 – Create Diversified Sewer District Authority
Time Frame for Proposal Completion – 36 to 48 months

Proposal #2 – Modernize Business District Sewer System
Time Frame for Proposal Completion – 72 months

Proposal #3 – Improve On-Site Sewage Treatment
Time Frame for Proposal Completion – 36 to 48 months

Proposal #4 – Construct Residential STEP Sewer System
Time Frame for Proposal Completion – more than 10 years

Proposal #5 – Construct Permanent Long Island Railroad Crossing
Time Frame for Proposal Completion – more than 60 months

Proposal #6 – Promote Alternative Routes to Montauk Highway
Time Frame for Proposal Completion – 12 – 24 months

Progress on Proposal Implementation

The 6 proposals developed by the Infrastructure Work Group were designed to address the waste water management and traffic congestion challenges of the community. The objective of the first four proposals was to develop sewer infrastructure on the Mastic Peninsula. The technological advances in the field of waste water management and an increased focus by various levels of government on developing solutions have resulted in a sharper focus on these proposals with important progress made towards accomplishing our ultimate objective.

Suffolk County, through the efforts of County Legislator Kate Browning, is in the planning and engineering stage of creating the Mastic and Shirley Sewer District, which will encompass the Montauk Highway Business District and residential area along Mastic Road in the Forge River water shed. The 2012 Suffolk County Capital Budget contained \$900,000 for this stage of the district's development, which is near completion. There is another \$1,000,000 for the design stage of the project under consideration for inclusion in the 2013 Suffolk County Capital budget.

The Village of Mastic Beach has started efforts to establish a village sewer district. The district would initially cover the Neighborhood Road Business District. However, it will be constructed to allow for expansion. The village has begun the process of selecting a consultant for planning, engineering, and designing of the district.

Senator Zeldin, working with Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine and Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Dan Panico, was able to secure \$1,300,000 for the Mastic Shirley Sewer District project and \$500,000 for the Village of Mastic Beach project.

The second infrastructure proposal (Business District Sewer System) discussed the importance of implementing sewer systems in the community's business districts. Since both of the aforementioned planned sewer districts would include significant sections of the community's business districts, there has been important progress made towards the successful completion of this proposal as well.

The third and fourth proposals focused on providing sewers for residential properties. Current septic systems are unable to reduce the amount of nitrogen entering the ground water and eventually the surrounding recreational waterways. There are economic hurdles to providing sewers to residential properties. The technological advancements in the development of onsite single unit residential and cluster residential waste water systems provide new hope for finding practical solutions for the waste water challenges of residential properties. The authority of the aforementioned sewer districts would include the development of waste water systems for residential properties. The Infrastructure Work Group plans on reconvening for further discussion on waste water management solutions for residential properties.

The fifth infrastructure proposal discusses the necessity for an additional crossing of the Long Island Railroad tracks on the Mastic Peninsula. Discussions continue with Long Island Railroad officials on the feasibility of a crossing at Hawthorne Avenue in Mastic. Long Island Railroad officials have participated in talks with regards to constructing a permanent grade crossing for emergency use only with hard gates at this location. The next step is securing a cost estimate from the New York State Department of Transportation.

The final infrastructure proposal calls for the promotion of alternative routes to Montauk Highway in Shirley and Mastic. The proposal suggested the development of a plan to encourage increased use of the Sunrise Highway North Service Road. The idea has been submitted to the New York State Department of Transportation and Suffolk County Department of Public Works for consideration.

Section II

Economic Development

Work Group Chairperson: *Vincent Pascale*

Work Group Members: *Ed DeGennaro*
Rob Deshler
Ray Kennan
Mike Lubrano
John Sicignano
Larry Tellefsen
Beth Wahl

One of the primary obstacles to the future growth of the Tri-Hamlet Community is its low commercial property tax base.

Residential property owners must pay the majority of taxes responsible for funding education and other local government services.

This creates a sense of urgency to produce an economic development plan for business and job growth to improve the tax base and create jobs. The Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project Economic Development Work Group considered many possible economic development opportunities before focusing on the Smith Point County Marina.

The Smith Point County Marina has been a topic of discussion within the community for many decades because it comprises a significant tract of land currently exempt from property taxes.

Development of the marina would provide business opportunities for the entire area, particularly along William Floyd Parkway, and add significantly to the community's property tax base.

The Work Group members thoroughly researched past development efforts, and respected the restrictions of wetlands and sensitivities of surrounding neighborhoods, before submitting their "Smith Point Marina Project" proposal.

Increased economic development of the Tri-Hamlet Community, providing relief to residential property taxpayers, requires an ongoing effort by all public officials, business and community leaders, and residents to attract and/or develop new business opportunities.

The "Smith Point County Marina" Project is a perfect starting point to achieve that goal.

Economic Development Work Group Proposal

Proposal - Smith Point County Marina Project

Time Frame for proposal Completion: 60 months

Progress on Proposal Implementation

The Economic Development Work Group considered many different economic development opportunities before focusing on the Suffolk County owned Smith Point County Marina property.

The location of this property, on the north shore of the Narrows as it connects with the Great South Bay and Carmen's River, makes it a perfect waterfront development site.

Development ideas include:

- * Restaurants (and/or catering hall)
- * Docks for recreational boaters
- * Walking trails and fishing pier with waterfront access for residents and visitors

The economic boost for the community would come from construction jobs and employment opportunities created by businesses drawn to this great waterfront site. The marina would also assist the larger tourism driven business plan by drawing visitors to the Mastic Peninsula.

Suffolk County Parks Department will be issuing a Request for Statements of Interest (RFSI) in May.



Section III

Real Estate

Work Group Chairperson: *Tony Liberti*

Work Group Members: *Joe Asaro* *Natalie Lewis*
Marilyn Bonsignore *Pat Matthews*
Sara Carmichael *John Sicignano*
Bob Deshler *Al Walter*
Tinamarie Hughes *Robert Wisdom*

The Tri-Hamlet Community's real estate market faces many challenges caused by local housing conditions:

- Overcrowded housing units
- Inadequate infrastructure to support existing neighborhoods
- Small commercial property tax base- causing high residential rates

These issues have driven down property values throughout our community. To provide solutions, the Real Estate Work Group discussed a wide range of issues.

Besides their two proposals cited in this Section, several of their ideas are included in proposals from other work groups, including the sewer and LIRR grade crossing proposals of the Infrastructure Work Group, the Smith Point Marina proposal of the Economic Development Work Group, and the "See Something- Say Something" proposal of the Quality of Life Work Group.

The appearance of our Tri-Hamlet Community is critical to how we feel about ourselves, and how visitors view us. Besides repairing roads, local government must assist with controlling litter, preventing graffiti, and maintaining the landscaping of public property, among other responsibilities.

For our community beautification efforts to be successful, we need the support of all residents working in cooperation with local government, businesses, and community organizations.

The Tri-Hamlet Community's diverse real estate market offers great opportunities for everyone:

- First time home buyers
- Growing families needing additional space
- People seeking affordable waterfront property

Smith Point County Park is located within minutes from all neighborhoods. Situated on the Mastic Peninsula, the community is surrounded by beautiful scenic waterways and possesses many great marinas.

Our goal is to make everyone proud to be a "Tri-Hamlet Community" resident!

Real Estate Work Group Proposals

Proposal #1: Improved Highway Signage

Time Frame for Completion: 13 to 36 months

Proposal #2: Promote community pride, and increase commercial and residential property values, by keeping all roads repaired, landscaped, and litter free

Time Frame for Proposal Completion: Ongoing

Proposal #3: Tri-Hamlet Community Gateway Entrance

Time Frame for Proposal Completion: Under 12 Months

Progress on Proposal Implementation

The improvement of highway signage to promote tourist attractions is a primary focus of Real Estate Proposal #1. The inclusion of the William Floyd Estate and Wertheim Wildlife Refuge in the New York State Department of Transportation Attraction Sign program would raise awareness of this presence in the Tri-Hamlet Community as well as improve the image of the area.

Both of these attractions have applications pending with the New York State Department of Transportation for inclusion in this program. Senator Zeldin worked with Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine and Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Dan Panico to successfully secure \$50,000 in grants for trailblazing signs in support of these applications and general highway sign improvements.

The Real Estate Work Group's second Proposal, "Beautify the Tri-Hamlet Community", calls for ongoing efforts to secure funding for community beautification projects. Senator Zeldin worked with Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine and Councilman Dan Panico to successfully secure \$150,000 of grant funding for beautification projects at Bayview Park and Legion Fields in Mastic Beach as well Airport Fields in Shirley.

The third proposal calls for the creation of a gateway to the Tri-Hamlet Community. Suffolk County Department of Public Works, through the efforts of Legislator Browning, will be redesigning the southeast corner of William Floyd Parkway and Montauk Highway to serve as a community town square with the statue of William Floyd and a gateway to the community.

Section IV

Quality of Life

Work Group Chairperson: *Honorable Dan Panico- Town of Brookhaven Councilman*

Work Group

Members:

<i>Joe Asaro</i>	<i>John Doyle</i>	<i>Katherine Palma</i>
<i>John Bivona</i>	<i>Delores Murphy-Gallagher</i>	<i>Kerri Rosalia</i>
<i>Joe Carabott</i>	<i>Evelyn Green</i>	<i>Cheryl Rowehl</i>
<i>Frank Cappiello</i>	<i>Glenn Hollins</i>	<i>Thomas Scarpantonio</i>
<i>Gail Cappiello</i>	<i>Ray Hopp</i>	<i>Linda Sulfaro</i>
<i>April Cappola</i>	<i>Philip King</i>	<i>William Toranzo</i>
<i>Lori Anne Casdia</i>	<i>Debbie Metz</i>	<i>Robert Wisdom</i>
<i>Kevin Collins</i>	<i>Paul Okler</i>	<i>Victor Zeleny</i>

Quality of life issues are among the Tri-Hamlet Community's greatest challenges. Housing violations, which are primarily under the jurisdiction of the Town of Brookhaven and Village of Mastic Beach, are at the heart of our community's quality of life concerns.

Our community bears the burden of implementing placement policies for sex offenders, parolees, sober houses, Department of Social Services recipients, and other various government programs. Solutions to these critical challenges require awareness and cooperation between government officials and the community.

This Work Group's proposal calls for the watchful diligence of all community residents concerning violations of law or actions that negatively impact our community's quality of life. By reporting these occurrences, appropriate government officials can address the problems.

Various levels of government must continue providing effective legislative solutions to our quality of life issues.

Senator Ken LaValle has introduced legislation to tighten residency restrictions for sex offenders, and to designate "unreasonable noise" as criminal disorderly conduct.

Senator Zeldin and the rest of the local state legislative delegation have introduced legislation to improve the regulation of sober houses. We encourage all State, County, Town, and Village public officials to constantly explore initiatives to improve our community's quality of life.

Quality of Life Work Group Proposals

Proposal #1: "See Something – Say Something" Project
Time Frame for Proposal Completion: Ongoing

Proposal #2: Developing Effective Sober Housing Programs
Time Frame for Proposal Completion: 24 to 36 months

Progress on Proposal Implementation

The two proposals presented by the Quality of Life Work Group have experienced significant advancement. The first proposal, Councilman Dan Panico's "See Something- Say Something" Project, has helped the various levels of government successfully address a wide range of quality of life issues.

The second proposal called for developing effective sober housing programs. Legislation has been introduced in Albany to certify Suffolk's sober living homes through New York State. This legislation would amend the general business law, mental hygiene law, and social service law in relation to Suffolk's sober living homes.

There are far too many sober living home operators in Suffolk County who fail to provide the atmosphere necessary for residents to be successful. While there certainly are some well-run sober living homes that truly aim to assist those in recovery, many of these homes are often overcrowded, drug and alcohol infested, unsanitary, and incompetently managed. These inadequately managed homes are poor neighbors and negatively impact the quality of life for entire neighborhoods.

This comprehensive legislation is designed to ensure that appropriate living standards are being maintained through the establishment and enforcement of proper regulations pertaining to their operation. Upon passage, this legislation will ensure sober living homes provide better environments of recovery for their residences and become better neighbors in our communities.



Announcing the Suffolk Healthy Sober Home Act on April 4, 2013

Section V

Public Safety

Work Group Chairperson: *Honorable Kate Browning – Suffolk County Legislator*

Work Group Members:

<i>Bill Biondi</i>	<i>Debbie Metz</i>
<i>April Cappola</i>	<i>Delores Murphy-Gallagher</i>
<i>Joseph Carabott</i>	<i>Kerri Rosalia</i>
<i>Eric Fischer</i>	<i>William Toranzo</i>
<i>Glenn Hollins</i>	<i>Robert Wisdom</i>
<i>Ray Hopp</i>	

The Public Safety Work Group reviewed these challenging and important areas:

- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Rescue and Emergency Services
- Probation Regulations
- Drug Related Issues

Heroin has become easily available and very affordable. This increase in drug activity, particularly among our youth, makes the proposals of the Public Safety Work Group even more urgent.

Many young adults are becoming addicted to prescription drugs, sometimes after just routine dental or outpatient surgery. The violent pharmacy robberies of the not too distant past exemplify the deadly consequences of this prescription drug epidemic.

The Public Safety Work Group submitted two proposals.

In addition to addressing drugs and other criminal activity, the Work Group offered solutions to our everyday quality of life issues. Legislator Browning and her Work Group should be commended for the aggressive timelines of their proposals.

Public Safety Work Group Proposals

Proposal #1: Neighborhood Community Watches
Time Frame for Proposal Completion: Under 12 months

Proposal #2: Reduce the Number of Pan Handlers
Time Frame for Proposal Completion: Under 12 months

Progress on Proposal Implementation

The Public Safety Work Group put forth two proposals for the improvement of the community's public safety. The first proposal called for the Suffolk County Police Department and Legislator Browning to work with community residents to create neighborhood watches.

During the last year, there have been 7 neighborhood watches started in the Tri-Hamlet community with 11 more groups in the formative stages.

The other Public Safety Work Group proposal called for the reduction of pan handlers in the Tri-Hamlet Community. Legislator Browning has worked with the Suffolk Police Department to increase efforts to enforce current penal code laws regarding loitering. This proposal's completion will require an ongoing effort to develop constitutional and enforceable strategies and laws to address the problems caused by loitering.



The William Floyd Estate
Photo Credit: Alexi Knock

Section VI

Marketing

Work Group Chairperson: *Robert Vecchio*

<u>Work Group Members:</u>	<i>Frank Cappiello</i>	<i>Catherine Meinhold</i>
	<i>Al Ehresman</i>	<i>Helene Purdoski</i>
	<i>Ray Keenan</i>	<i>Benny Schiraldi</i>
	<i>Mike Lubrano</i>	<i>Beth Wahl</i>

The home of William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, graces our Tri-Hamlet Community. It was here that Americans experienced their only victory of the Revolutionary War on Long Island and where Corporal Churchill's bravery gave birth to the Purple Heart.

The Tri-Hamlet Community is situated on a peninsula with some of Long Island's most beautiful waterfront vistas. William Floyd Parkway is the gateway to Smith Point County Park and Fire Island National Seashore. Its residents are hardworking people, who take great pride in their hometown.

Since we cannot bring our community's treasures to the people, we developed a plan to bring the people to our treasures. These plans include:

- Establishing "Tri-Hamlet Community Celebration Day"
- Improving our community's image using social media, internet, and traditional media
- Developing Facebook pages for the Tri-Hamlet Community Celebration Day and other community events
- Launching a "Tri-Hamlet" website to provide community notices and information
- Establishing the "Tri-Hamlet Patch" - an outline newspaper for our community

This Work Group's mission has been to enhance the image of our Tri-Hamlet Community by promoting its treasures. The goal is to market our great historical sites, outstanding recreational waterways, and establish a reputation that reflects the best traditions of our community.

Marketing Work Group Proposals

Proposal #1: Tri-Hamlet Community Celebration Day
Time Frame for Proposal Completion: 12 months

Proposal #2: Marketing Development Plan
Time Frame for Proposal Completion: Ongoing

Progress on Proposal Implementation

The Marketing Work Group's mission was to enhance the image of the Tri-Hamlet Community by promoting its treasures and attractions. The primary proposal of the Work Group was the establishment of an annual Tri-Hamlet Community Celebration Day. The purpose of this event was the introduction of the treasures and attractions to the Tri-Hamlet Community and then to people across Long Island and beyond.

The 1st Annual Tri-Hamlet Community Day Celebration was successfully held on Saturday, June 9, 2012. The event attracted more than 1,000 people to the William Floyd Estate, Manor of St. George, Mastic Beach Village Square, Grave of Revolutionary War Hero General Nathaniel Woodhull, and Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge. These visitors came away from the day with a true appreciation for the special nature of these attractions and the Tri-Hamlet Community. The hard work of the organizational committee resulted in a most successful and enjoyable event and firm foundation for future Community Celebration Days.

The Work Group is busy planning the 2nd Annual Tri-Hamlet Community Day, scheduled for Saturday, June 1, 2013. The Work Group expects to showcase these treasures to even larger crowds, including greater numbers from outside the Tri-Hamlet Community.

The second proposal of the Work Group began with the creation of a Tri-Hamlet Community Facebook Page. The establishment of Tri-Hamlet News, which publicizes only positive news, has also helped improve the image of the community. Additionally, over the past year, positive news coverage of our area has been secured on News12, Channel 7 Eyewitness News, Newsday, Long Island Advance and South Shore Press. Some samples have been included with this update.

Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project Work Group Members Receive Legislative Recognition from the New York State Senate



Mastic Beach, N.Y. – Senator Zeldin honored the Work Group Members of the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project on Saturday, March 2, 2013, at William Floyd HS with a Resolution from the New York State Senate recognizing their hard work.

Newsday: New Revitalizing Grants for Three Hamlets

March 2, 2013

By SCOTT EIDLER scott.eidler@newsday.com



Photo credit: Newsday / Ed Betz | Senator Lee Zeldin and Brookhaven lawmakers announced new grants they say are key to revitalizing the Shirley, Mastic, and Mastic Beach communities. Flanking Zeldin are, left, Legs. Kate Browning, Brookhaven Town councilman Dan Panico and Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine. (March 2, 2013)

Brookhaven lawmakers announced Saturday new state grants they say will be key to revitalizing the Shirley, Mastic and Mastic Beach communities.

State Sen. Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley), who helped launch the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project last year with local lawmakers, said during a community forum at William Floyd High School that the three communities would get \$2 million in new funding: \$1.3 million toward the construction of a sewage treatment plant at Brookhaven Calabro Airport in Shirley, \$500,000 for a Nitrex nitrogen removal system for the village of Mastic Beach, and \$50,000 toward road attraction signs to be placed along Sunrise Highway and the Long Island Expressway, for example.

Three grants of \$50,000 each will fund capital improvements for Legion Fields and Bayview Park, both in Mastic Beach, and Airport Field in Shirley.

Lawmakers said there is no sewage treatment plant in the tri-hamlet community, which has meant that many businesses operating with cesspools have been stifled by health codes and must seat fewer customers than preferred.

"It's been hard for a lot of the businesses along main streets," Brookhaven Supervisor Edward P. Romaine said.

The construction of a new sewage treatment plant is still a ways off. It requires more funding, said Zeldin, who called the \$1.3 million an important first step.

"This community is coming out of the starting gate in regards to obtaining sewer infrastructure," Zeldin said. "It has been talked about for decades but never made a reality."

Zeldin said he hopes the sewage treatment plant, in the early design stage, will allow full connectivity for businesses and residents within its reach.

Bob Vecchio, board president of the William Floyd School District, said the plant will attract more commercial businesses, which is particularly important since area development is lacking. Last year, lawmakers issued a report detailing key improvements needed to change the area's reputation as "undesirable." A sewage treatment plant was among the recommendations.

Vecchio said the community "has been rebuilding slowly but surely" for several years.

But the new funding has the community poised for a comeback, officials said. "The stars are aligned in a way they haven't been for decades," Zeldin said.

LI ADVANCE: A Stellar Tri-Hamlet Community Day

June 14, 2012

The estimate, said Beth Wahl, president of the William Floyd Community Summit, is that well over 1,000 people headed for the Tri-Hamlet Community Day event, the brainchild of New York State Sen. Lee Zeldin, a William Floyd alumnus. “They loved the historical places,” Wahl said. “At the Manor of St. George with the Huntington Militia, they fired muskets and cannons and had wooden muskets for the kids. And people were waiting on line in the drizzle waiting to get in the house. I heard at the William Floyd Estate, things went really well, and at Wertheim.” Kids loved the passports, which were stamped at each locale. “They were holding them as they came off the buses,” Wahl said. The event, which included Mastic Beach Village’s Main Street, will become an annual event.

Newsday: Shirley, Mastics Celebrate History Saturday

June 7, 2012

By DEON J. HAMPTON



Photo credit: Colleen Harrington | Tucked into a Mastic Beach neighborhood is the William Floyd Estate, a sprawling, 613-acre plot that was once a colonial plantation. Eight generations of Floyds lived in the house, including William Floyd, who scrawled his signature on the Declaration of Independence. Here, you can see the house's exterior. (July 28, 2010)

Step back in time Saturday and have a glimpse of early America during a precarious time as the inaugural Tri-Hamlet Community Celebration revisits the Revolutionary War.

Event organizers hope to offer an insightful and historical perspective on the eight-year war between America and Great Britain between 1775 and 1783.

In the Village of Mastic Beach, visitors can tour the national landmark estate of William Floyd, the first delegate from New York to sign the Declaration of Independence.

Those interested can also check out a classic 1950s-style car show and frequent a variety of food vendors.

Visitors also can experience the early roots of America and colonial life in the Manor of St. George in Shirley, where the American Army achieved its only victory on Long Island during the war.

“You get a feeling that you’re stepping back in time. You have to go there to experience it,” said Brookhaven Town Councilman Dan Panico. “It gives a history and window of opportunity to view the county through a revolutionary perspective over 200 years ago.”

In addition, Pine Barrens Discovery Day will take place at the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, through which Carmans River makes its way to Great South Bay.

The celebration was born from the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project, an area revitalization push led by state Sen. Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley), with contributions from local elected officials and community outreach groups.

All events and transportation are free; buses will shuttle between all sites from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. leaving from William Paca Middle School. Parking at the sites is limited.

Newsday: Marina Revamp Key to Revitalizing Hamlets

May 22, 2012

By SOPHIA CHANG sophia.chang@newsday.com



Photo credit: James Carbone | Senator Lee Zeldin at the Smith Point Marina in Shirley. (May 18, 2012)

Building an upscale restaurant and other amenities at the Smith Point County Marina could be the linchpin in a plan to revitalize the Shirley, Mastic and Mastic Beach area, according to a report issued by the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project.

The project was launched last year by state Sen. Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley) and other elected officials to identify areas for improvement in the three communities.

The effort is also intended to bolster the reputation of the area, which suffer "the misconception that our community is an undesirable place to live and/or visit," according to the report.

Civic leaders, state and county politicians and other residents examined target issues of infrastructure, economic development, real estate, quality of life, public safety and marketing, and issued their findings in a report this month.

The future of the county-owned marina is a centerpiece of the report, which recommends that the county sell or privatize the marina to generate income.

"This is a great piece of property," Zeldin said during a recent visit to the marina, near Smith Point County Park on Fire Island.

The site is no more than a handful of benches surrounding a boat ramp next to a parking lot.

"I certainly envision a full-service marina, a restaurant, a snack stand, a playground," he said. "It would be an attraction that would help the Tri-Hamlet region."

The idea is gaining momentum, Zeldin said. Suffolk Legis. Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) sponsored a bill this month to ask the county to issue a request for expressions of interest to developers by the end of the year.

Privatizing the marina doesn't necessarily mean the county has to sell the land, Browning said. "It could be a contract with the developer," she said. "It would bring in more business, more boat slips."

A similar idea in 2009 generated no interest, but both Zeldin and Browning said the economic climate has improved. "There's a renewed energy," Zeldin said.

The report also recommended promoting local tourist spots, forming more neighborhood watch groups, and building more sewers for residential and commercial areas.

There's a lot of work to do, but the community is eager to have a plan and a vision, said John Sicignano, president of Mastic Park Civic Association and project contributor.

"At least we have some sort of road map to go by, to bring the community where it wants to be," Sicignano said.

One suggestion from the report is already a reality: the first Tri-Hamlet Community Celebration Day is scheduled for June 9. The daylong event will feature four historic and natural highlights of the villages: the William Floyd Estate, Manor of St. George, the Wertheim Wildlife Refuge and downtown Mastic Beach.

"We want to use this to improve the reputation of our community in Suffolk County," Zeldin said.

Newsday: Community Day debuts in Mastic Beach

June 9, 2012

By Alexi Knock



Photo credit: Alexi Knock | Diana and James Davies greet guests at the William Floyd Estate dressed as William and Julia Floyd during Tri-Hamlet Community Day in Mastic Beach. (June 9, 2012)

Members of the Ancient and Honorable Huntington Militia dressed in colonial costumes and fired their guns in a salute outside the Manor of St. George in Mastic Beach to kick off Tri-Hamlet Community Day on Saturday.

More than 1,000 people were transported in buses to the manor, William Floyd Estate, downtown Mastic Beach Village, the Woodhull Family Cemetery and Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge in Shirley for a day full of free historical and educational activities.

“We’re trying to highlight some of the treasures of our community,” said state Sen. Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley), who helped organize the event through the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project, an initiative started last summer by elected officials and other civic leaders to bring more attention to the historical aspects of the area. “This neighborhood is rich in tradition and we want to entice people to come visit us.”

At the Manor of St. George, the Huntington Militia taught visitors about the food, weapons and clothing used during the Revolutionary War. The yard of the manor along the Carmans River is where the Battle of Fort St. George took place on Nov. 23, 1780.

“I’ve lived here for a number of years and I didn’t know this was here,” said Miguel Rivera of Mastic Beach. “It’s nice to get a sense of the history of this place and I’m getting to meet my neighbors.”

A 10-minute drive from the manor took visitors to downtown Mastic Beach Village, where a car show of about 20 vehicles from the 1950s was on display. The car show included food from village vendors as well as live music.

“People need to see the diamonds in the rough of this area,” said Mike Lubrano, vice president of the Mastic Peninsula Historical Society and member of the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project. “We were looking for ways to cross-promote sites -- that way the history buffs can see the car show and the car guys can see the wildlife refuge.”

At the William Floyd Estate, visitors toured the home where Floyd and his wife lived. James and Diana Davies of Mastic Beach were dressed as William Floyd and his wife, Julia, and took photos with guests.

“We’ve been dressing up as the Floyds for years and now it’s kind of our thing,” said Diana Davies.

At the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, visitors could go on a trail hike or meet some of the birds and creatures of Long Island.

“This is an event where everyone can appreciate something,” said Lubrano.

Newsday: Mastic, Shirley Residents Try to Make a Difference

December 11, 2011

By Desiree Keegan



Photo credit: Desiree Keegan | Sen. Lee Zeldin and fellow New York officials listen to the comments made by members of the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project during a recent meeting at the Mastic Beach Fire Department. From left to right: Zeldin; Assemb. Dean Murray; Jeff Kito, a representative for Sen. Kenneth P. Lavalley; Eric Fisher, a representative for Suffolk Legis. Kate Browning; and John Doyle, a representative for Town of Brookhaven Councilman Dan Panico. (Nov. 21, 2011)

Red light cameras at busy intersections. Panic buttons in pharmacies. A new sewage system.

These are some of the ideas proposed during a recent community meeting held by members of the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project, an initiative started by State Sen. Lee Zeldin to help improve the Shirley, Mastic and Mastic Beach area.

“Getting a plan accomplished is something the town hasn’t seen before,” said Zeldin, a Shirley resident. “It would be great for our entire community to show how we can get together a plan and put an entire community behind it.”

The group consists of six subcommittees focusing on infrastructure, real estate, economic development, quality of life, public safety and marketing.

Eric Fisher, a representative for Legis. Kate Browning, who heads the public safety committee, suggested the installation of red light cameras at major intersections such as William Floyd Parkway and Montauk Highway.

Shirley resident Tony Liberti, a real estate agent for Century 21, is head of the real estate subcommittee.

“We need to highlight the historic and natural points of the Shirley, Mastic area,” Liberti said, “and we need to keep the place landscaped and litter free.”

Larry Tellefsen, of Mastic Beach, who works with the infrastructure sub-committee, brought up the need for a sewage system. The solution to this problem, he said, is the building of jetties to replace the expensive dredging projects.

“It’s not a question of when we do it,” said Tellefsen. “We have to do it now.”

Shirley resident Bob Vecchio, who is also the William Floyd School District board president, heads the marketing subcommittee.

“We need to improve our relations with the media,” said Vecchio. “I want to also try to establish an online news source like a Patch.com.”

To promote the Tri-Hamlet Renaissance Project, Vecchio is creating an event centered around Flag Day, in which the area’s historic places such as the Manor of St. George, the William Floyd Estate and Southaven Park will be highlighted. He also plans to host reenactments of the American Revolution and have a poster contest to get children engaged in the event.

In January, the ideas and proposed solutions will be given to Zeldin, who will then package them into a final draft. Following a revision and comment period, the final draft will be distributed to elected officials and community members.

“It will be what we want to accomplish, and how we are going to accomplish it,” said Zeldin.

“We are all working together toward a common goal. We would like to announce a proposal in a way that allows us to send a message to New York officials. We are often a forgotten and overlooked community ... We need to stick together to improve it.”

A Collaborative Effort by:

