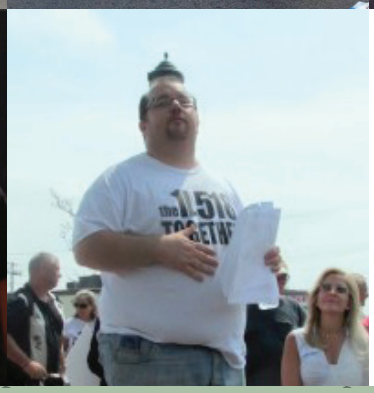
The 13th Annual Smart Growth Awards

Celebrating the people, projects and policies advancing Smart Growth on Long Island



VISION LONG ISLAND

Creating Smart Growth Communities.

Robert Fonti
Co-Chair
Vision Long Island

Eric Alexander
Director
Vision Long Island

Developing, Connecting and Engaging...I believe that is a key. It's what I've made it my personal mission to do.

In 1997, I met Ron Stein. We were classmates together in Long Island's premier community leadership and trusteeship program, Leadership Huntington. There, he gave me a crash course in Smart Growth, a community-based land use philosophy that brings diverse interests together to advance land use that is economically, environmentally and socially responsible.

The organization Ron was spearheading appealed to me in the same way that Leadership Huntington did. Leadership was about building informed networks of involved people. Ron's vision was about convening such people to find common ground and to develop a build environment that better served our diverse needs. I immediately recognized Vision as a way of taking action on all we were learning together at Leadership.

Ron soon honored me with an invitation to join the board of the new organization that would become Vision Long Island. Since 1998 I have been a part of Vision, working with its stellar teams to connect interests and to engage local citizens, governments and businesses in developing strong communities. I also now lead the class that Ron and I shared. I believe that, among many other things, the work I am doing at Leadership prepares community members to understand and effectively participate in Vision Long Island. It is a privilege to hold up Vision as a key example of community stewardship in action

I thank you for being here today, and joining us in favor of inclusive solution building, and high quality community development. I hope you have an enlightening experience, and will join me in spreading the word about what you learn. We must try to reach everyone who has an interest; develop our knowledge, engage in productive conversation and build strong connections. Working together, we can develop a brighter future for all.

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Co-Chair
Vision Long Island

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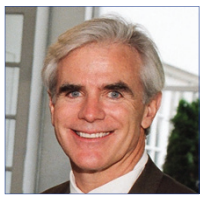

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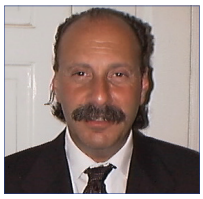

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Zyscovich Architects

Keith Samaroo
PS&S

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Howard Stein
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Joy Squires
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Edward Thompson
Molloy College

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Forbes Capretto Homes

Veronica Vanter-pool
Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Andrew Zucaro
Zucaro Construction

Vision Staff

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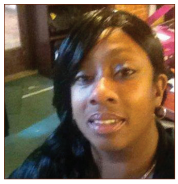

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VISION
LONG ISLAND
Creating Smart Growth Communities.

Leading Long Island's Smart Growth Movement

Mission

Vision joins with others to promote more livable, economically sustainable and environmentally responsible growth on Long Island through Smart Growth. Smart Growth focuses on infill, re-development and open space preservation. It supports mixed-use, mixed-income communities that are convenient, attractive, pedestrian-friendly and make affordable housing and public transportation desirable and realistic. A key objective is to strengthen communities from the start by actively involving local stakeholders in planning.

Implementing Smart Growth on Long Island

• Smart Growth Education and Training: Delivering nearly 1,900 presentations to government, business and community groups
• Smart Growth Advocacy and Policy Development: Ongoing advocacy in Albany and Washington in the areas of transportation, sewer infrastructure, green energy and economic development helping to shape more than 80 code, policy and regulatory changes. These efforts culminate in broadly supported "Blueprint for Smart Growth," informing planning regionwide
• SmartTalk - our e-newsletter reaches 25,000 Long Islanders weekly. Social media efforts include a presence on Facebook, Twitter, an iPhone/iPad app and YouTube channel
• Community Visioning and Charrette Planning: Work in 20 communities on visionings, charrettes & the advancement of community projects. Communities include: Hicksville, Riverhead, Huntington, Mastic/Shirley, Coram/Middle Island, Farmingdale, Bay Shore, Gordon Heights, Mastic Beach, Central Islip, Southampton and Lake Ronkonkoma/West Farmingville
• Design and Technical Assistance: Implementing downtown, commercial corridor and infill development plans. Key projects include transit-oriented development, public infrastructure and clean energy
• Convening Regional Leadership and Smart Growth: Hosting the Smart Growth Summit, Smart Growth Awards and special worksessions; Organizing the Smart Growth Working Group, Long Island Lobby Day Coalition & Long Island Business Council, Long Island Lobby Day, Long Island Complete Streets Coalition, and Friends of Long Island

Goals

• Securing redevelopment and infrastructure investments for Long Island's downtowns
• Comprehensive planning involving all stakeholders to yield consensus-based visions addressing long- and short-term needs of communities and the region as a whole
• Land use decisions that incorporate economic development considerations including the need for workforce housing, environmental concerns and a broad array of quality-of-life issues
• Compact development that is pedestrian-friendly, reduces automobile dependency and is focused around existing or newly designed transportation centers
• Zoning codes, land-use regulations and street design standards that enable and provide adequate incentives to facilitate Smart Growth development

Visions Across Long Island 2000-2014

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Accomplishments & Goals

2013 Accomplishments

1) Progress on Transit-Oriented Developments:

Approval of 650 more transit-oriented development units to bring a total of more than 7,800 units over the last seven years. Notable successes include projects in Farmingdale, Hicksville and Valley Stream.

2) Changing regulations and road designs to make our streets safer for all users:

Progress on this issue included funding for Complete Streets in Suffolk County, the passage of Complete Streets legislation in Nassau County and the City of Long Beach. Vision is also pushing for New York State to change high-accident roadways like Sunrise Highway in Nassau County towards safer roadway designs and proposed Federal legislation fo Complete Streets.

3) Investments in infrastructure pre- and post-Sandy:
Vision has been a leader in expanding public and private support for wastewater, transportation and energy infrastructure for our region. Most notable is the unprecedented Federal investment of $455 million in the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant that services 540,000 Nassau residents which is the largest infrastructure project in Long Island's history. In Suffolk County, unprecedented County funding has gone to upgrade downtown sewer systems in Northport, Babylon and Riverhead.

4) New constituencies and expanded public support for Smart Growth:
Vision has been successful in expanding the movement to include

our regions youth, seniors and small business in support for Smart Growth solutions. Local polls show an increase in support for Smart Growth projects thanks to our collective efforts.

5) Continued presence in Albany:

Vision is a founder and joint leader of the LI Lobby Coalition which brings over 75 organizations to Albany each year to ensure a Long Island voice for a joint small business, civic, environmental and transportation, human service and smart growth agenda. Once again we impacted the state budget and were also able to the Sandy Relief Act and solar legislation passed – our fifth and sixth major bills passed in less than four years. Due one of those laws, the NYS Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Act, public funding has been directed towards Smart Growth and infrastructure projects in many of our downtowns like the most recent round of Economic Development Council awards.

6) Premier leadership and events:
The Smart Growth Summit and Smart Growth Awards continue to be LI's premier planning events that bring our leaders together. This year was another one of record turnouts, excellent honorees, speakers and the development of new ideas and projects for our region.

2014 Goals

1) Priority Infrastructure investments:
Federal and State resources that will come to LI for infrastructure and rebuilding need to reach the communities they are intended with an emphasis on redesigning our neighborhoods to be more resilient.

2) Many of the downtown projects that can grow our economy are still awaiting approval:
Despite many victories in recent years, over 15,000 units of housing are being considered in over 20 pending Smart Growth projects across Long Island. Work will be needed to achieve local consensus toward approval and implementation.

3) Coordinated bottom up planning:
Local officials, small business leaders and community organizations need to continue to shape the decisions of our neighborhoods while planning collaboratively with the numerous regional authorities and plans forming. Vision has to continue to work in this area and bridge the gap between our communities and these varying regional plans.

Regional Infrastructure

Long Island Lobby Coalition

A contingent of 50 small business, union leaders, civics, environmentalists and post-Sandy rebuilding groups in Nassau and Suffolk made the trek to Albany in March to remind officials what's important to Long Island.

The sixth annual Long Island Lobby Day agenda covered many aspects of island life. Several sought a tax-deferred IRA for small businesses to protect against future recessions. Others pushed for Complete Streets infrastructure to make Long Island roads safer for everyone; more funding to improve public transit; home rule on speed limits; and a Transit Village Infrastructure Program to aid local municipalities in redevelopment. Some fought for wastewater improvements in Hempstead, Mastic/Shirley and at Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant. Others rallied for environmental causes like safe disposal of medications, off-shore wind power and clean water. Concerns about the heroin epidemic, caregiver safety and the future of the Sagamore Children's Psychiatric Center were championed by some. Others also sought better communication from insurance companies and NY Rising in the wake of Superstorm Sandy, as well as financial assistance for grassroots aid groups.

The day began with a meeting with Assemblymen Bob Sweeney, Steve Englebright (D-Setauket), Ed Hennessey (D-Medford), Chuck Lavine (D-Glen Cove), Michelle Schimel (D-Great Neck), Michael Fitzpatrick, (R-Smithtown) Ed Ra (R-Franklin Square), Al Graf (R-Holbrook), Joseph Saladino (R-Massapequa), Andrew Garbarino (R-Sayville), David McDonough (R-Merrick), Fred Theile Jr. (I-Sag Harbor) and Andrew Raia (R-East Northport). Participants found these elected officials sympathetic to their agenda.

Lavine said legislators were working on a plan with Senator Jack Martins (R-Mineola) to create a plan where merchants can invest without any tax penalty when they're creating new fulltime jobs.

The lobbyists then met with Senate Majority leader Dean Skelos (R-Rockville Centre), Senators Phil Boyle (R-Bay Shore), Kemp Hannon(R-Garden City), Carl Marcellino (R-Oyster Bay), Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley) and Martins. Martins expressed concern about mass transit between Long Island and Manhattan, especially if new Bronx trains squeeze out the LIRR.

Members of Governor Andrew Cuomo's staff also met with the Long Island contingent. Deputy Director of the state Division of Budget Cathy Durand, Cuomo's Senior Policy Advisor Mike Laskawy, Deputy Secretary for Civil Rights and Workforce Alphonso David, Executive Deputy Commissioner of DEC Marc Gerstman and Assistant Secretary for the Environment Anne Tarpinian ended the day.

It was recommended Friends of Long Island designate an official liaison to improve communication. They did not react to requests to fund their grassroots repair efforts.

Gerstman confirmed the governor was working with Nassau County officials to improve the Bay Park plant and is tuned into groundwater issues, like the situation in Mastic/Shirley.

Long Island Lobby Day participants also celebrated accomplishments from their first five years. Officials passed six bills championed by the group, including the Complete Streets Act, the Sewage Pollution Right to Know Act and the Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Act in 2010 to prioritize infrastructure projects.

2014 Lobby Day Agenda:

1) SMALL BUSINESS, JOBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
A. Tax-Deferred IRA Accounts for Small Business

2) TRANSPORTATION
A. Funding for Complete Streets Infrastructure
B. Strengthening Public Transit
C. Give Local Communities Home Rule Flexibility on Speed Limits
D. Transit Village Infrastructure Program

3) SEWAGE & INFRASTRUCTURE
A. Increase Sewer Funding through the EFC and Long Island Sewer Priorities: Bay Park STP, Msatic/Shirley and Hempstead

4) ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT
A. Safe Disposal of Pharmaceutical Drugs
B. Off-Shore Wind
B. Solar bILL
C. LI Clean Water

5) HUMAN SERVICES
A. Care Giving
B. Energy Advocate
C. Harm Reduction Public Health & Safety
D. Patient Handling
E. Sagamore Children's Psychiatric Center

6) POST SANDY RECOVERY
A. Sandy Relief Act
B. Homeowner Insurance
C. Expedited Recovery Payments through CDBG-DR
D. Community Capacity Building and Assistance for Recoveries

Regional Infrastructure

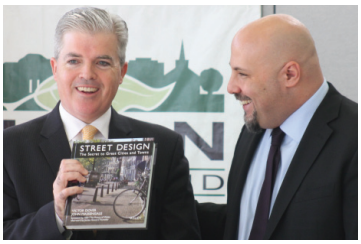
Complete Streets Summit

The second annual Complete Streets Summit, held at the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College in April, was a gathering of government leaders, planners, engineers, nonprofits and community stakeholders who support designing roadways for all.

West Islip resident and avid bicyclist Sandy Cutrone spoke about he life since she was struck by a van in Babylon Village last fall. Cutrone developed neck pain, vision problems and post-concussion symptoms that keep her from working. Her story went viral in February after Suffolk Legislator Tom Barraga criticized her for bicycling in Suffolk County.

Complete Streets, she added, could prevent similar accidents. That includes designated bike lanes and signage, better pedestrian crossings and arrow traffic lights to prevent turning left into traffic.

Complete Streets policy could also be a lifesaver, a change too late for Lavena Sipes. Back in 2009, the Smithtown resident watched a driver fatally smash into her 11-year-old daughter, Courtney. Since Courtney's death, the family created the Courtney Sipes Memorial Foundation to advocate for pedestrian safety and supports youth interest in music and arts.



Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone,the day's keynote speaker, said Complete Streets policies can boost the economy and stop the brain drain. He also mentioned his "Connect Long Island" plan to link existing east-west trains with new north-south options. Bellone was flanked by Suffolk Legislator Rob Calarco (D-Patchogue) and Nassau Legislator Laura Curran (D-Baldwin).

Great Neck Plaza Mayor Jean Celender said their village of 6,700 passed Complete Streets legislation in 2012. They've reduced speed limits, added bus shelters and increased access to all transit.

In Nassau County, Traffic Safety Coordinator Christopher Mistron focused on the three E's of planning – education, engineering and enforcement. Instead of EMS as the fourth E, Mistron said he wanted it to be encouragement.

Suffolk Bus Riders Association President Robert DeVito focused on education for drivers and bicyclists. He said spending money on bridging the disconnect between the two would go further than infrastructure projects.

Brookhaven Councilwoman Connie Kepert said Complete Streets policies have been a success since it passed in 2010. Kepert said she's finding some opposition to proposed transit-oriented development in North Bellport from neighbors to the south.

Led by VHB Director of Transportation Matthew Carmody, the second panel focused on the design and regulation to guide projects.

Babylon's Director of Downtown Revitalization Jonathan Keyes said the narrow roads and underground utilities of Wyandanch Rising may be "an engineer's headache," but widening roads for easier work would also lead to higher traffic speeds. Islip Planning and Development Commissioner Rich Zapolski is learning about Complete Streets. Islip approved a Complete Streets policy in 2010 and is part of the planned Heartland Town Square.

Southampton Transportation Director Tom Neely said the average accident in America costs $16,000, the director said his town sees about 2,000 accidents every year.

The Town of North Hempstead passed Complete Streets legislation in 2011. Planner Wes Sternberg said they used the policies when they put Prospect Avenue on "a diet." Once a four-lane road with limited but high-speed traffic, it was turned into a slower, two-lane road. They're also investigating solutions for Marion Street in Greenvale where Glen Cove Road and Northern Boulevard traffic speed through as a shortcut.

Wendel Companies Sr. Landscape Architect Dean Gowen examined Complete Streets through a project in Buffalo.

Greenman Pedersen Transportation Safety Director Frank Pearsen reflected on three decades with the state Department of Transportation, where he learned how controlling roads is more effective than just adding lanes.

Cutrone, Sipes and Alexander unveilied the Long Island Compete Streets Coalition at the Summit. The coalition is a group of chambers of commerce, civic associations, local governments, engineering and professional trade groups, transit advocates and members of the public who want safe streets for all.

Regional Infrastructure

Nassau County Complete Streets Legislation

The Complete Streets Legislation as proposed by Nassau County Executive, Edward Mangano, was passed by the County Legislature this Tuesday, August 6th.

Mangano stated that the purpose for this legislation is to "set forth standards and guidelines to help us better plan road projects to make Nassau's roads the safest they can be at all time for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike."

The induction of the Complete Streets Legislation will make road elements such as bicycle lanes, pedestrian signals, and crosswalks a priority in road construction. As a result of improved pedestrian infrastructure and safety standards, residents of Nassau County will feel more inclined to travel by foot or by bicycle than ever before.

Director of Vision Long Island, Eric Alexander, has made a point that this call to action may also work the other way around.

The Complete Streets Legislation will cater to Nassau County's trends of "regional aging, a decline in car ownership among young people, and an increase in staycations, with more people walking or biking on our streets," so the requirement for their safety is "long overdue."

"I was very pleased to finally vote on this legislation to do what 'should come naturally', meaning taking into account the feasibility of bicycle paths and walking paths and safety islands, to name a few safety issues. We have been asking for this for quite a while and, hopefully, it will now become a normal part of road construction in Nassau County," said Legislator Judy Jacobs.

Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton said, "Both Vision Long Island and Tri-State Transportation Campaign worked hard to get the word out on Complete Streets. I am so glad this is coming to fruition. It has been a major goal for me for a long time. In meetings with cycling and traffic safety advocates, I became convinced that Complete Streets is important for safety and to reduce traffic and pollution."

Nassau County Presiding Norma L. Gonsalves said, "The importance of pedestrian and driver safety cannot be understated. Both walkers and drivers must be alert when crossing an intersection. This program will help increase awareness of this topic and hopefully save lives."

Regardless of what the cause and effect is, Vision Long Island is in favor of Edward Mangano's Complete Streets Legislation as it correlates directly with our goal for walkable communities and smart growth.

Suffolk County Complete Streets Funding

More money will be allocated to create safer roads in Suffolk County moving forward.

The Suffolk County Legislature voted in favor of amending the 2015-2017 Capital Program June 3. That includes $250,000 annually for Complete Streets beginning next year.

"Today the Legislature supported my efforts to establish an annual fund for Complete Streets components to Suffolk County roadway projects. It is not only important to say that Suffolk County supports access for all users, but it's important that we support those ideals with funds to create bike lanes, curbing, sidewalks and signage. Safety for all Suffolk County residents, whether they drive a car, ride a bike or walk to their destination, is our highest priority and I thank my colleagues for their support," Legislator Rob Calarco (D-Patchogue) said.

County Executive Steve Bellone recommended a $410 million capital budget for 2015 - three times the 2014 spending - and a $789.1 million three-year capital program this spring. A bipartisan legislative working group added $22.3 million in amendments to the capital plan and $58 million to the three-year program.

Suffolk County passed and signed Complete Streets legislation in 2012. However, the current federal transportation bill - MAP-21 - cut dedicated walking and bicycling infrastructure investments by 30 percent. The New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) has planned to cut spending on walking and biking projects by 24 percent over the next four years, resulting in just 0.57 percent of regionally-allocated transportation dollars being spent on these projects.

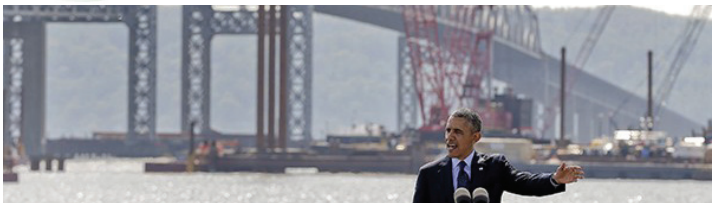
The federal and state transportation cuts put more pressure on local governments to fill in the gaps. Tri-State Transportation Campaign, AARP and Vision Long Island testified before the Suffolk County Legislature three weeks ago to amend the capital budget. Vision Assistant Director Tawaun Weber recommended no less than $1 million for four years; lawmakers responded with the lower amount.

"An investment in Complete Streets demonstrates Suffolk County is serious about developing a comprehensive plan for all users of our roadways," Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory (D-Amityville) said.

Investing in infrastructure like raised crosswalks, pedestrian safety islands, protected bike lanes and landscaped medians can force drivers to slow down and improve general safety on Suffolk County roads.

Regional Infrastructure

Federal Transportation Bill



The U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) unanimously approved legislation last month to reauthorize highway portions of the MAP-21 federal surface transportation bill passed two years ago. MAP-21 is set to expire Sept. 30.

If approved by the entire Senate and Congress as a whole, it would fund the highway program at current levels plus inflation for six years. Beginning with $40.3 billion this year, that would be increased to $40.9 billion this year through $45.1 billion in 2020. Included in that is a new National Freight Program beginning with $400 million in 2016 and up to $2 billion in 2020 and the Projects of National and Regional Significance Program at $400 million annually – a $100 million drop from 2013.

Funding for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) – a federal loan system for large-scale transportation projects created in 1998 – would be cut by $250 million down to $750 million annually. However, transit-oriented development would now be eligible for assistance. This was considered for MAP-21 but never made it into the final version.

There are some small but positive changes to bicycle and pedestrian funding. MAP-21 came up with a complicated system of divvying up funds between states and local governments. Half of the states' funding could be transferred to other programs without penalty, so instead of a small but dedicated fund for active transportation, that portion just a slush fund for states. Instead of having half the money to use as they like, states would have a third. Two-thirds would go directly to local governments, divided among jurisdictions proportionally to population. Bike and pedestrian funding would go up modestly at the same rate as highway funding in the bill.

Federal Pedestrian Safety & Safe Streets Acts

Long Island's roadways, some of which are the most dangerous in the Tri-State area, may receive federal funding for improvements toward pedestrian safety if Senator Kristen Gillibrand's (D-NY) legislation passes.

Her Pedestrian Safety Act of 2014 would permit funds for federal highway safety to go to improving walkability and pedestrian safety on Long Island roads.

Many of Long Island's roadways are impractical for pedestrians, with road crossings few and far between. In 2012, there were 39 pedestrian deaths in Nassau County alone, and nearly 1000 injuries, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Suffolk County did no better, with 41 fatalities and 559 injuries. Hempstead Turnpike in Nassau has been named as one of the most dangerous roads in the region and Jericho Turnpike in Suffolk has been deemed the region's most dangerous road for pedestrians.

Safer road crossing and more separation between pedestrians and motor vehicles could be funded with federal dollars. This can be achieved through design solutions such the pedestrian hybrid beacon, a type of crosswalk that allows crossing highways and roads without pedestrian intersections. Other methods include pedestrian sidewalks, crossing islands, and countdown signaling.

"Federal legislation aimed at pedestrian improvements will go a long way to addressing this safety epidemic facing Long Island roadways," Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander said.

Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) advocated for the Safe Streets Act. The Safe Streets Act of 2013, if approved, would require states receiving federal funds for transportation projects to implement policies ensuring the safety and accessibility for everyone. The goal is to keep pedestrians safe.

West Islip resident Sandy Cutrone was grateful to see progress. Struck by a van on Montauk Highway in Babylon Village last fall, Cutrone continues to battle neck pain, vision problems and post-concussion symptoms that have kept her from working.

"Kids are going to ride their bicycles to school. People are going to run," Cutrone said. "We ride our bicycles on the most dangerous roads in the state."

Regional Infrastructure

Nassau Inter-County Express Bus

In their first full year with a privatized bus system, Nassau County politicians considered addressing service cuts with additional taxpayer money.

Veolia Transportation took over the Nassau Inter-County Express (NICE) bus system in 2012, cutting $7.3 million in service. Mass transit advocates said restoring that funding would return 84,000 hours of service and add just a fraction of a percent to the county's budget.

Currently, Nassau County pays $2.6 million of the $113 million annual operating cost. But Democrats proposed spending an additional $4 million in the 2014 county budget last fall. The funding was considered as part of the back-and-forth between Democrat and Republican legislators.

Specifically, that $4 million could have returned 46,000 hours of service. Tri-State Transportation Campaign identified 10 routes in Republican districts significantly hurt by the cuts. That included the N73/74 from Hicksville to Wantagh, N15/33 in Long Beach, N27 in Garden City and N70/71/72 in Massapequa.

However, Republicans ultimately voted against a package of amendments that included the NICE funds. GOP legislators pledged to keep the conversation alive despite shooting it down for 2014. County Executive Ed Mangano also announced new vans to transport disabled riders at no cost to taxpayers.

The NICE busses, operated by Veolia Transportation, are tentatively funded for $2.6 million out of a $2.79 billion proposed budget for Nassau County in 2014. At the same time, the service is seeing fewer riders and more dissatisfaction from remaining riders.

Meanwhile, Veolia and County Executive Ed Mangano announced 28 vehicles in NICE's Able-Ride service are being replaced at no cost to taxpayes. All of the outgoing vehicles are seven years old.

"We are pleased to update the Able-Ride fleet and we're doing it in a way that will improve the experience for NICE's paratransit customers," Mangano said.

The acquisition carries a $1.2 million-price tag, although none of that comes from the county's coffers. Veolia will pay $780,000 for 18 of the vans, while the remaining 10 will be funded through a $435,000 Federal Transportation Administration grant.

Unlike the mini-busses dominating the 95-vehicle Able-Ride fleet, the new vehicles are Dodge vans modified to accommodate wheelchairs. Able to hold two customers in wheelchairs and two seated passengers, these new vans are smaller than their predecessors. Mangano and Veolia claim they will save on fuel, can ride on parkways and offer a more comfortable ride.

The first of these vans are expected to be delivered by November.

Suffolk County Transit

The New York Metropolitan Transit Council approved distribution of $3.96 million in federal funds to aid Suffolk County in expanding their Sunday bus service. The funding is matched with state money and will allow for expansion of Sunday bus service beyond the East End. NYMTC's funds will be used to expand bus services for three years.

A compromise was met by Bellone and Legis. Jay Schneiderman of Montauk last spring to expand the Sunday service countywide for a one-year trial period. This funding will now keep busses running seven days a week through 2016.

"This is a major step closer to a significant rollout of needed Sunday bus service throughout Suffolk County," Schneiderman said. The expanded Sunday service went into effect in January.

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone appealed to Cuomo via letter this past March, seeking an additional $10 million for the Suffolk County Transit (ST) agency. Currently, county taxpayers spend $29 million every year to keep busses going, with just $22 million from New York State. Nassau County, which spends $113 million, receives $57 million every year.

ST carries 22,000 passengers each weekday on more than two dozen routes. Eight lines were opened on Sunday back in December. Rather than operate in-house, the agency contracts its routes to three private companies.

Tri-State Transportation Campaign Associate Director Ryan Lynch said the state doesn't provide enough money. He joined Vision Long Island, Long Island Federation of Labor, Suffolk County Legislator Jay Schneiderman (I-Montauk), Brookhaven Councilwoman Connie Kepert (D-Middle Island), SILO, Long Island Business Council, NYPIRG and other advocates at a rally outside state offices.

If that extra funding had been approved, it would have been used to further expand Sunday service. A prior study identified 24 Suffolk communities desperately in need of extra weekend busses; only 10 were addressed in January.

But come last month, New York State officials added just $500,000 – enough to cover inflation costs.

Regional Infrastructure

Bay Park Sewer District

Upgrades and repairs after Superstorm Sandy devastated the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant make the job Long Island's single largest infrastructure project to date. Nassau County Chief Deputy County Executive Rob Walker told the Legislature back in March they were moving ahead with the $830 million job.

The plant serves 550,000 Nassau County residents and processes about 50 million gallons of sewage daily. Sandy crippled the plant last year with nine feet of saltwater flooding, knocking it completely out of service for two days. Millions of untreated and partially-treated sewage flowed through the plant and into local waters prior to emergency repairs.

Temporary measures kept the plant running again months later. Emergency generators power the plant for $1 million every month, generating noise and odor complaints from neighbors. More than $700 million was allocated from county and state coffers to fund repairs by the end of 2013, although upgrades were needed long before.

At the March hearing, they examined the timetable and requirements for the various phases connected to the revitalization. Walker said they would be seeking legislative approval for a $28-million contract to replace the electrical system and a $37-million plan to erect an 18-foot concrete flood wall by April. The entire project is scheduled to be finished in four years.

Presenters also touched on the funding, including the $830,383,784 in federal funds negotiated from FEMA and New York State. FEMA was to obligate that funding by the end of March. Meanwhile, Nassau County is short almost $52,000 for actual expenses and examining other sources of revenue and reimbursements.

Effluent - treated sewage - is currently released into Reynolds Channel, a bay that borders southern Nassau communities. The channel lacks water volume to safely handle all of the effluent. But with an additional $750 million in federal money, county officials, environmentalists, civic groups and others say they could safely filter more nitrogen and pipe the effluent into the Atlantic Ocean.

In February, Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano joined Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Operation SPLASH, Long Island Federation of Labor, Vision Long Island, residents and others rallied outside the Nassau County Legislature calling for an ocean outfall pipe.

Vision serves on the Sandy advisory committee and has lobbied for funding on County, State and Federal levels.

Mastic-Shirley Sewer District

Progress on sewers in Mastic/Shirley may finally be picking up.

Led by Suffolk County Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley), the Suffolk County Legislature voted in February for a wastewater treatment plant at Calabro Airport and $1 million to create a sewer district.

The project calls for construction of a plant capable of handling sewage for Main Street districts and other development. The proposed coverage area would run just west of the William Floyd Parkway to the Forge River along CR 80, and produce 300,000 gallons of waste daily. The Town of Brookhaven has verbally committed 20 acres of Calabro Airport for the wastewater treatment plant.

The $1 million brings the county's contributions to the Mastic/Shirley sewer project to $1.9 million. Officials also secured a $1.2 million state grant. Sewers were also part of the discussion at a hearing for $2.1 billion in federal funds earmarked for Superstorm Sandy later that month, with Mastic/Shirley supporters seeking a cut.

Mastic and Shirley residents participated in a "visioning" for Montauk Highway with Vision Long Island in 2003. Community members wanted walkable downtown areas with shops, restaurants and other community uses. This type of development is not possible without adequate wastewater infrastructure to protect ground and surface waters.

A 2013 feasibility study determined a sewer system would improve the health of the Forge River and economic development of the area.

The Mastic peninsula is a densely populated ares with old septic systems that don't meet even the standards for less densely populated areas. The lack of sewers is responsible for excessive nitrogen into the adjacent Forge River, and is the first target in Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone's war on polluted waterways.

This past year, Bellone unveiled a $1 billion plan which will take 12,000 South Shore homes off septic tanks and connect them to new sewer systems.

The plans calls for homes near Carlls River in North Babylon and Deer Park, Connetquot River in Oakdale, and Forge River in Mastic, Mastic Beach and Shirley to be sewered. County officials said density of development and proximity to rivers that flow into the bay were among the criteria. About 70 percent of nitrogen is believed to come from homes and three-quarters of Suffolk is unsewered.

Vision Long Island has been working with community, business and government leaders in Mastic and Shirley since 2001 to

Congratulations to Vision Long Island and all of the Smart Growth Award recipients on all of your hard work.

Journals printed by Minuteman Press

Minuteman Press
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191 Broadway • Hicksville, NY 11801
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Youth Leadership

LI Youth Summit at Dowling College

More than 350 high school students from 26 districts across Long Island participated in the 5th annual Long Island Youth Summit at Dowling College on April 4.

The Summit is a public-private partnership with Dowling College, the North Shore-LIJ Health System, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Vision Long Island and local school districts. Students worked with experts to address such issues as bullying, drug abuse, mental health and self-esteem, water, renewable energy, Sandy recovery, economic development and housing, race, class and leadership.

"Our goal is to engage students as early as possible in creative thinking about issues that affect Long Island," said Dr. Nathalia Rogers, director of the American Communities Institute at Dowling College.

Keynnote speaker Dr. Adam Aponte, director of North Shore-LIJ's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, touched on social inequalities illustrated through access to health care.

This year's slate of workshops were: Bullying, Cyber Bullying and Social Networking; Teens and Abuse of Prescription Drugs; Teen Mental Health, Self-Esteem and Well Being; Protection of Water and Open Space; Renewable Energy; Living on Long Island: Economic Development, Community, and Housing; Race, Class, Education and Economy; the Impact of Hurricane Sandy and Leadership.

The Environment Issues panels were moderated by Executive Director Adrienne Esposito and Maureen Dolan Murphy from the Citizens Campaign for the Environment, H2M Water President Dennis Kelleher, PSEG Manager John Keating, EmPower Solar Community Programs Manager Tara Bono and Northrop Grumman's Dr. Donald DiMarzio.

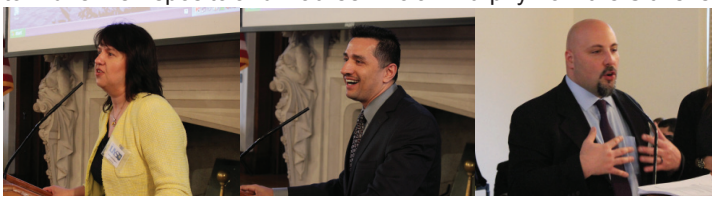
The Socio-Medical Issues panels were guided by Dr. Barbara Meyers, Dr. Alison Tebbett and Dr. Amanda Risen from the North Shore-LIJ Health System, Dr. Stephen Dewey from the North Shore-LIJ Health System, Denise Ingenito, LCSW, Director of Counseling at Dowling College, and Louis Medina, LCSW, from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

The Sandy workshop was moderated by Neighbors Supporting Neighbors Executive Director Kim Skillen, Friends of Long Island contractor Jon Siebert and Islip's Deputy Incident Commander for Emergency Response Joseph Badala.

Guided by Roel Resources President Ron Roel, Islip Councilman Steve Flotteron and D&F Development Group Principal Peter Florey, Levittown, Eastport-South Manor and Three Village School students participated in the Living on Long Island: Economic Development, Community and Housing workshop.

Students discussed Leadership with Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander, North Shore-LIJ's Berthe Erisnor and Governor Cuomo's Suffolk County representative Scott Martella.

The Race, Class, Education, and Economy workshop was moderated by Dr. Nathalia Rogers, Director of the American Communities Institute at Dowling College, and Diana Coleman from the Nassau County Economic Opportunity Commission.



Small Business Initiatives

Federal Small Business Savings Account

Nearly half of American small businesses were rejected for new lines of credit after the 2008 recession, and one-third were denied loans.

This uphill battle, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) said, is why he introduced legislation back in March to help businesses to support themselves. If passed, the Savings Accounts for a Variable Economy (SAVE) for Small Businesses Act would let small businesses invest 10 percent of their annual gross profits to later be used to pay employees.

"Our small businesses are the backbone of our economy and should have help preparing an economic rainy day fund. That's why I'm introducing legislation to incentivize businesses to create tax-deferred savings accounts that can be accessed tax-free during specific times of economic downturn. This is simply common sense and will provide a much-needed cushion for New York small businesses that create jobs and keep our economy moving forward," he said.

When the recession hit, Israel said many small business throughout America fell victim to a lack of the "two Cs" – customers and credit. Referencing a National Federation of Independent Business survey, 46 percent could not get new lines of credit and 35 percent could not get loans.

He credited the Long Island Business Council's Bob Fonti, Nathalia Rogers, who vetted this concept through a study she conducted as director of the American Communities Institute at Dowling College, Vision Long Island and the Long Island Federation of Labor for creating the solution.

The investment will deliver an economic boost in local businesses' time of need, Rogers said, so they can continue creating jobs.

Businesses with fewer than 50 employees would be able to invest in certain Treasury-approved investments. Those funds can be held in the account for eight years, at which point it must be withdrawn and taxed as regular business income. However, those withdraws can be tax-free if one of three conditions are met. The Department of Commerce can report two quarters of GDP decline, the Small Business Administration can specify a period during a time of need or the federal government can designate a disaster area like after Superstorm Sandy.

"Congressman Israel's legislation will help local businesses employ staff, make capital investments and grow our economy without a burden to the taxpayers," he said. "Vision Long Island was glad to partner with the Long Island Business Council, Dowling College, the Long Island Federation of Labor and local chambers to bring this concept forward to help our downtowns."

The legislation also won support from Long Island Federation of Labor President John Durso for supporting the middle class with jobs. "In times of economic downtown or hardship, it will strengthen a small business' ability to preserve jobs while also continuing to maintain the services that they provide. It will give a small business owner the ability to set aside a tax-deferred portion of his or her own money to create and preserve good, middle class full-time jobs," he said.

NYS Small Business Tax-Deferred Savings Account

State Senator Jack Martins (R-Garden City) this spring sponsored a bill to create tax-deferred savings accounts, commonly nicknamed small business IRAs. Assemblyman Charles Lavine (D-Glen Cove) is also a sponsor.

The idea came from Bob Fonti of the Long Island Business Council with Dr. Nathalia Rogers, a professor at Dowling College and director of their American Communities Institute vettign the concept with a study she conducted thanks to a $200,000 Small Business Administration grant.

If approved, the state bill would allow companies with up to 50 employees to create tax-deferred accounts. Those could be used to deposit and withdraw funds tax-free to create full-time jobs.

However, both plans received continued support from Long Island Business Council. Suffolk Chairman said it is essential small businesses have access to funds with troubling economic times more common. Nassau Chairman Richard Bivone said the money could protect future economic growth.

Long Island Business Council

Small Business Initiatives

The Long Island Business Council

The Nassau Coliseum, health insurance and sewers were the hot topics among Long Island business leaders gathered at The Sustainability Institute at Molloy College back in October 2013. More than 120 attended the Long Island Business Council (LIBC) to hear Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano and Suffolk County Legislator William Spencer speak.

The $229-million renovation plan for the Nassau Coliseum was at the top of Mangano's list when he arrived that morning. Unanimously approved by the Nassau County Legislature in September, the new project will provide family and sports entertainment with tenant Forest City Ratner paying rent, utility and construction costs. Bus Rapid Transit and bicycle lanes are being considered for the 77-acre Hub property, Mangano said, although funding has been a challenge for on-site structured parking. And with Nassau County used more frequently by the film industry,

Mangano also continued to ask the Legislature to fully fund Bay Park Sewage Plant repairs. He previously asked permission to borrow $977 million, but lawmakers could agree only on $262 million. Nine feet of water bombarded the plant during Superstorm Sandy, which Mangano said destroyed the electrical system of the already neglected plant. Obtaining parts through six states and setting up generators, the plant is running again, albeit temporarily.

In February, LIBC hosted New York Senator Dean Skelos (R-Rockville Centre) to speak about funding and jobs. The GOP Majority Leader began his discussion with jobs, identifying job creation as the top priority over his career. All community-level problems, like crime, connect to jobs. "You are the people who create jobs. It shouldn't be government creating the jobs. We shouldn't be getting in your way," Skelos said. "Our job is to make sure New York State is competitive with other states."

While the Long Island legislator does believe Albany is moving in the right direction, it still has a hard time shaking a bad reputation that includes so many late budgets and high taxes. He advocated carefully cutting taxes to support small businesses and keep spending under control.

Fortunately, Skelos added, the state government is now working together. He referenced new Long Island unemployment figures. The rate dropped from 7.1 percent in December 2012 to 5.1 percent this past December. However, the senator also said those figures might be skewed by a large number of service jobs and not high-paying jobs.

Skelos called Long Island "car-dependent" and said state funding is critical for maintaining road infrastructure. "These funds would be critical to improve our roads and transportation infrastructure," he said.

The infrastructure conversation carried over to the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant, which was knocked out of commission by Superstorm Sandy. He also backed calls for a $600 million ocean outflow pipe, which would dump effluent – treated sewage – into the Atlantic Ocean instead of Reynolds Channel.

The senator also suggested Long Island could use a shift in thinking. Reflecting on a situation nearly 20 years ago, Skelos and the MTA had $10 million to build a parking garage in Rockville Centre. The structure would have alleviated congestion and unique options were available, but the community shot it down. When asked how to halt the brain drain on Long Island, Skelos' response was affordable housing.

"We have to look at our downtown areas, not necessarily to elminate the suburban way of life we come here for but also facing reality that we need more afforable housing on Long Island. It can be rental housing. It can be done in such a way that it protects the community. But unless we do it, our young people would not be able to stay on Long Island," he said.

Scott Martella, Governor Andrew Cuomo's Suffolk County representative also discussed the Regional Economic Development Councils. Created three years ago, Long Island received $244 million; a fourth year is included in Cuomo's proposed budget.

Assistant Comptroller Joe Galante, who reports to New York Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, was the final speaker, although Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce President Louis Vasquez addressed crowd looking to network Latino businesses throughout Long Island.

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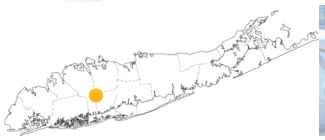
Downtown Revitalization

Nassau County



Farmingdale

A multimillion-dollar retail and housing development plan in downtown Farmingdale was approved by the Nassau County IDA, outlines the construction of a $38 million transit oriented, mixed-use development project located on South Front Street in Farmingdale. The plan is a past Smart Growth Award winner, with Vision Long Island creating the visioning plan in past years.

The developer of the project, Farmingdale based Bartone Properties, will receive 20 years worth of taxe breaks for the project and will instead will make payments over time, starting at $201,000 and escalating to approximately $1.9 million by the 20th year.

This project will consist of two separate complexes located near the LIRR Station in Farmingdale. The larger of the two will offer 115 apartments and 13,200 square feet of retail space and the second is will plan for an additional 39 apartments as well as 7,600 square feet devoted to retail space. Bartone Properties estimates that this development will create a minimum of 100 new construction jobs and 10 or more full-time jobs upon completion. Ten percent of the units will be set aside for affordable and workforce housing.

The goal of the project is to attract empty nesters and young professionals to the area. County Executive Edward Mangano issued a statement of support towards this new development, adding that the project would "generate economic activity throughout eastern Nassau County and the Route 110 Corridor."

Farmingdale Village Mayor Ralph Ekstrand supports the project, calling the plan the "centerpiece of our transit-oriented development" and "the start of revitalized building" in the village. "Transit-oriented development, developing and increasing density," Ekstrand added, "that's the future of Long Island."

Eric Alexander, director of Vision Long Island noted that the Bartone apartments would be among 7,000 units of transit-oriented housing approved in the past six years on the Island.

"I would say a trend is well underway," he said. "A certain part of the market wants to live in downtowns with easy transit access to Manhattan. We see communities across Long Island do what Farmingdale is doing."

Baldwin

A Baldwin neighborhood deemed blighted has a reputation for run-down buildings and neighbors aren't happy with plans for the area.

Nassau County Legislators joined 100 residents, business owners and community leaders took to Grand Avenue in January, protesting against Breslin Realty Development Corporation's plans to build a drive-through CVS pharmacy on the 5-acre property.

"We've been trying to get it developed for at least 15 years," Baldwin Civic Association President David Viana said.

The area near Grand Avenue and Merrick Road consists of ground-level retail with 52 second-story apartments. A fire destroyed two buildings, which remain boarded up. The Town of Hempstead gave the neighborhood a blight designation in 2006, which prompted landlords to stop maintaining buildings and chased away others.

The Town of Hempstead is negotiating with Breslin for the project, which now features a drive-through CVS. Using a single acre, the pharmacy would be the fifth CVS in Baldwin alone.

Vision spoke at the rally and has helped in assisting with their goals, including providing various designs for mixed use.

Glen Cove

Once avoided as a site of major contamination, Garvies Point is becoming a resource to the community.

A Glen Cove-based charter boat made its inaugural voyage last September as city and RXR Realty officials celebrated the latest progress on the Glen Cove Ferry Terminal and Boat Basin project.

The project, a past Smart Growth Award winnner, is part of the city's Waterfront Redevelopment Vision. Dredging and work along the dock was the first phase for the ferry project. The new building will house ticket sales, bathrooms, an office for the city's harbormaster and even a small restaurant upstairs. The city also wants other commercial ventures at the site.

Glen Cove Creek was once home to industrial properties. Fifty-two acres along the Creek were contaminated by a marina for 20 years. The land was designated a Superfund site, but the city partnered with RXR Realty in 2007 to create a mixed-use plan.

The site will now include a luxury hotel, a spa, 860 residential units, 50,000 square feet of offices, 25,000 square feet of retail space, 85 new boat slips and nearly 20 acres of accessible public open space.

Groundbreaking occurred in June 2010. Construction began in the fall and could take up to 18 months.

Hempstead

Vision Long Island 2012 Smart Growth Housing Choice Award recipient, Mill Creek Residential celebrated the opening of Nassau County's newest luxury rental community, Metro 303, with a special open house on July 16th. Vision Long Island was among many community stakeholders present at the event, including Hempstead Mayor Wayne Hall, the Village Board of Trustees, and Hempstead Chamber of Commerce.

Recognized as one of the Top 3 Builders in Multifamily Executive's Top 50 Mill Creek Residential has over 30 years of experience in developing, acquiring and operating high-quality apartment communities all throughout the country. Their work includes 29 communities totaling nearly 10,000 apartment homes both operating and under construction.

Downtown Revitalization

Centrally located in the heart of Nassau County, Metro 303 is within easy walking distance to the multi-modal Hempstead LIRR Station and bus terminal. The area is also easily accessible to Nassau County's major centers of employment, recreational, shopping and entertainment destinations, and educational institutions.

Metro 303 is a LEED Gold certified building because it was designed and constructed to minimize its ecological footprint in five key areas of human and environmental health. These include site development; water savings and efficiency; energy efficiency; construction materials and resources; and indoor air quality.

"We have had an overwhelmingly positive response to the lifestyle and convenience offered at Metro 303 and the successful lease-up of the property has demonstrated the demand for new, upscale apartment living options in Nassau County," said Ms. Mariah Rigopoulos. She also acknowledge the community support she received to make this project a reality. "This project would not have been possible without the proactive support and cooperation of the many stakeholders in the Village of Hempstead," said Maria Rigopoulos, Managing Director for Mill Creek Residential.

Village of Hempstead Mayor Wayne J. Hall, Sr. described his support for the project saying, "I would like to congratulate Mill Creek Residential on the wonderful work it is doing in our Village." He continued saying, "We are always looking to encourage growth among our local residencies and businesses, and the Metro 303 development provides an exciting opportunity for both."

Hicksville

Vision Long Island and the Hicksville Chamber of Commerce presented the revitalization plan for downtown Hicksville before the Oyster Bay Town Board.

The plan began in January of 2010 with a large public visioning, followed by additional public meetings and presentations before each of the civic organizations of Hicksville, with input from a revitalization committee to ensure that it reflected the interests of the Hicksville residents. After the report was completed, Vision would later complete a market study and fiscal impact analysis of the revitalization plan.

After the hearing was completed, Supervisor Venditto spoke a few words about what the Town has done in Hicksville in recent years, but emphasized that anything done has to be the will of the people and in the best interest of Hicksville.

The revitalization plan included elements of walkability, beautification and code enforcement, parking improvements, a restaurant row, local chains, a mix of housing types and office uses, as well as special events such as farmers markets, street fairs and family fun nights. In order to implement many of these ideas, the plan includes an overlay zone that breaks the current "one size fits all" zone into three subzones- one closest to the train station, one along Broadway and Marie Street and one for the southern portion of the downtown.

The market study found a demand of $31 million within Hicksville and surrounding trade areas that can translate to over 100,000 square feet of new retail space within the downtown. Additionaly, the fiscal impact analysis showed a full buildout of the plan would lead to a large net tax gain in the area to help relieve taxes for the surrounding residents.

The Town Board and Supervisor seemed pleased with how tailored to Hicksville the plan turned out to be. There were questions concerning zoning and the extent of outreach, as well as how the taxes were calculated. However, they recognized that the plan took into account the diversity of opinions within Hicksville and developed a compromise solution that focused on common goals.

After the presentation several members of the community spoke in favor of the project by relaying stories of growing up in Hicksville , and the need for revitalization elements to make it vibrant again. They pointed out that there was a need for affordable housing as well as a hope to see the downtown area cleaned up with a greater variety of shops, restaurants and activities.

As part of the revitalization process, on Sunday, July 21st, the 11th Annual Hicksville Summer Fair took place at Kennedy Park near the Hicksville train station. Over 4,000 people attended the event, which was was provided by the Hicksville Chamber of Commerce. Vision was more than happy to partake in this annual event and garner support for the downtown Hicksville Revitalization project.

Westbury

The theater tucked along Post Avenue in downtown Westbury is once again alive after a lengthy period of decay.

Contractors and elected officials celebrated the grand opening of The Space at Westbury in September. The ribbon cutting marked the end of the $10 million project that revived a dilapidated eyesore. Developer Cyrus Hakakian said he walked onto the state with an umbrella, flashlight and plans to raze the building for a new office building.

The Space at Westbury was originally constructed as the Westbury Movie Theater, Space Executive Developer Bruce Michael said. Attendance waned in the 1970s and the theater closed for good in 2001. Speaking to the theater's first guests since then, Michael said Hakakian found the building in 2004.

Jim Glancy, a partner in entertainment promoter The Bowery Presents, said Hakakian brought them in a few years later. Recalling the pigeons flying around and graffiti marking the walls, Glancy jokingly said he thought the building had been demolished.

Westbury Mayor Peter Cavallaro and former Mayor Ernest Strada,

Downtown Revitalization

both of whom supportted the new theater, were in attendance at the opening. Strada recalled going with his family to the old theater every Sunday and sitting in the five “Strada Seats.” He asked the developer to reopen the building as a theater.

“I think this project is going to put Westbury on the map for the arts,” Cavallaro said.

The Space at Westbury is capable of holding up to 1,500 patrons in a balcony, loge and standing area. The venue also features eight chandeliers, tall columns, six bars and a state-of-the-art lighting and sound system.

Michael said The Space is designed to host big name entertainment in genres across the board. Browery officials have said they will book about 100 shows each year. The venue’s first show wasbe pop band Fountains of Wayne and alternative rock group Soul Asylum. The second show was comedian Stephen Lynch.

But Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander said the venue can also be used by the community for other events.

“I think you’re going to see a bit of everything here,” he said.

Alexander also said that buildings like The Space at Westbury are a reflection of the community. In addition to the Village and county government, the director credited the Business Improvement District and newly-formed arts council for helping the theater open it’s curtains again.

Sunrise Highway

Vision Long Island and other community advocates looking to play a role in improving Sunrise Highway were featured on the front page of Monday’s issue of “Newsday.” The article emphasized a need for both enhanced safety and communication. Vision Director Eric Alexander called on transportation officials and local governments to work together.

“The five communities doing redevelopment plans along Sunrise Highway should be in sync with any roadway recommendations,” Alexander said.

Sunrise Highway is now recognized as one of the most dangerous roads on Long Island - for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike. The 16-mile corridor funnels vehicles traveling legally at 55 mph and illegally far in excess through densely-populated downtowns and communities. According to the Federal Highway Administration’s Fatal Analysis Reporting System, Sunrise was the site of 17 fatalities between 2005-2011.

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) has begun a project to address pedestrian safety and other improvements.

DOT spokesman Beau Duffy confirmed in Monday’s article that the project is underway, but said it was premature to involve community groups in such early stages. No cost estimates were available, he added.

An assortment of civics, local businesses and elected officials have called on the state to heed downtown voices in these improvements. Vision Long Island, AARP, the Tri-State Transportation Campaign and the Nassau Council Chamber of Commerce were among nine calling on transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald requesting a meeting to provide community input and obtain a project update.

The coalition has specifically advocated for a more pedestrian-friendly environment along the corridor, as well as general traffic calming measures.

Suffolk County

Coram

Vision Long Island joined the celebration when the long-awaited Wincoram Commons broke ground last month.

Plans to redevelop a blighted Coram movie theater have been moving forward for a decade, but concrete progress was made in early May when a backhoe knocked down the old marquis.

Civic leaders, elected officials and investors gathered to celebrate the groundbreaking of Wincoram Commons. The $55 million mixed-use project replaces the derelict UA movie theater.

In it’s place will rise apartment buildings and townhouses with commercial space on the first floor and a separate commercial building along Route 112. Plans also call for a clubhouse housing a leasing office, fitness center and community space across from the office building. This is all intended to frame a pedestrian-friendly plaza.

Safer streets have been a driving force all along. The project was created by the Town of Brookhaven’s Middle Country Road Land Use Plan. Passed in 2006, it calls for walkable communities with an internal main street, multifamily housing and retail, and public meeting places.

Downtown Revitalization

Huntington

A one-story building between 32 and 42 Gerard Street has been set to be demolished, by Islandia-based Heatherwood Communities, a family-run business that develops and maintains rental communities, to begin construction on a three-story, mixed-use development. The project calls for a 23,244 square foot building, with 7,000 square feet of retail on the first floor and 15,384 square feet for 12 apartments on the second and third floors.

Heatherwood Communities officials said applications for demolition and building permits have been sent and are awaiting for them to be issued. “There is just a process. All the paperwork is in,” said Douglas Partrick, a principal of Heatherwood Communities.

The apartment units will be luxury rentals starting at about $1,800 and the stores leasing the retail space will be determined by what the market demands.

Town Supervisor Frank Petrone said “this is a great project, just look at the location,” applauding the project’s convenience and walkability. “These types of projects do extremely well, it’s almost like having your apartment in Manhattan where you can grab a bite to eat and then meet friends right in your own neighborhood.”

Petrone said there is currently an additional mixed-use, rental over retail building with about 20 apartments on two floors in the works for the Huntington Ice & Cube property located on Stewart Avenue.

Director of Vision Long Island Eric Alexander said more mixed-use projects are needed on Long Island.

“It’s exactly what other downtowns should be doing,” Alexander said. “We know there is a market for these types of housing and retail units that fit within smart community-based planning.”

Heatherwood Communities were given a Smart Growth Award back in 2005 on behalf of Vision Long Island for their work in creating a mix of uses.

Vision Long Island led the Visioning process for the planning on Gerard Street in 2000, which has resulted in apartments over stores, a roundabout, streetscapes and other downtown amenities.

Huntington Township Chamber of Commerce co-Chair Robert Bontempi said Heatherwood’s changes on the adjacent Gerard Street building were “a great addition to the village” for its Smart Growth principles for a “walkable” downtown.

Huntington Station

Over 8,000 people came out in the heat and the rain to the Huntington Station Festival, sponsored by Source the Station and Renaissance Downtowns. The festival featured vendors from local businesses, representatives of community organizations in the area, food, mini golf, and a bounce castle for children.

Renaissance Downtowns is currently working on a crowd sourcing redevelopment project to revitalize Huntington Station and make it a destination for both visitors and residents. Members of the community are hoping to see changes that include economic development, green spaces, youth services, and mixed use development. The festival brought members of the broader Huntington community out to Depot Street to see all of the potential the area offers as well as to raise awareness about how individuals can be involved.

This project is one of many that have been initiated over the past decade and residents are hopeful that the revitalization will alleviate the stigma that is often associated with Huntington Station. The current push for progress by the community and convenient location of the railroad station make Huntington Station a prime area for development and now the perfect time for the project to begin.

The high turnout to the festival and general receptiveness to the project provided a positive start to the redevelopment that will hopefully push the project forward and make Huntington Station a thriving community and Long Island visitors destination.

Last year, Vision Long Island began meeting with various members of the community to gain input on the Brownfields Opportunity Area (BOA) phase 3 and the desires of the community for this area. Outreach has consisted of community events, attendance at community meetings, and individual one-on-one meetings.

One event Vision Long Island attended was the Huntington Station Community Festival hosted by Renaissance Downtowns Source the Station. Throughout the day, Vision Long Island staff interacted with community organizations and residents explaining the BOA process, giving a general overview of the process and its status, collecting input, and exchanging information for future meetings. During the course of the day Vision Long Island was able to speak to over 50 community residents.

The general response was to ensure that the jobs created will go to Huntington Station residents, housing will be affordable, and youth services will be provided. Residents expressed the need for more jobs in the community. Some are traveling long distances for work and connecting through public transportation which is difficult with children. Crime was also a top concern for residents. Many wanted to know what measures would be taken to ensure that any new development will not be destroyed by gangs and crime.

Northport

The Northport post office will stay open for business after all. United State Postal Service (USPS) officials confirmed plans for a possible closure have indefinitely put on hold after a concerted locel effort to keep the eighty year old building operational.

Downtown Revitalization

Northport Deputy Mayor Henry Tobin discovered the USPS was considering closing the downtown post office in 2012. Some of the services would have moved to a smaller 3,055 sq. ft. downtown store while all 19 postal carriers would have shifted to East Northport.

A public meeting at the American Legion hall that summer drew a packed crowd, while elected officials pressed USPS to abandon the plans. Superstorm Sandy delayed their decision into 2013.

“The fact it’s not closing is wonderful news. It’s a part of Main Street. It’s part of our commercial district. People who use it may stop in some of the local shops,” Mayor George Doll said, adding that it’s also heavily used by merchants and residents.

Vision Long Island assisted the Northport Village Merchant’s Association and Village officials in opposing the closure plans

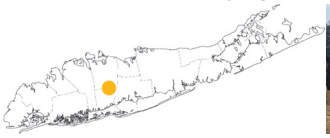
Meanwhile, taxpayers’ wallets seemed to be ground zero when a state edict required the Village of Northport spend $9.2 million cleaning up their sewer system.

But along the way, $1.8 million of state and federal money came in. And last summer, Suffolk County Legislator William Spencer (D-Centerport) announced $1.5 million in expiring state infrastructure funds were diverted to the Northport Sewage Treatment Plant.

Spencer announced in the fall that the village will receive a $3.18 million grant to help reduce the amount of nitrogen feeding problematic red and brown algal blooms and replacing dissolved oxygen for aquatic life. The funds are part of $28 million the Suffolk County Legislature is spending on affordable housing and sewers across the county.

Vision Long Island Executive Director Eric Alexander said sewage upgrades are “more than just an environmental project.” He referenced small businesses, offices and homes surrounding Northport Harbor.

The Northport plant has been on Vision Long Island’s and Citizens Campaign’s top five sewer list for upgrades on Long Island. The list also includes Bay Park and Hempstead in Nassau County, and Mastic/Shirley and Wyandanch in Suffolk County. Both organizations have been lobbying on state and county level.

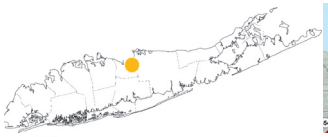


Wyandanch

July 16 marked the official groundbreaking of the Wyandanch Rising Redevelopment Project. The event, which took place in the parking lot of the Wyandanch LIRR station, included community members, organizations that advocated for the development and elected officials.

The revitalization project, which began 15 years ago, will include a renovation of the Wyandanch train station and the construction of two units of housing built on top of retail space, a plaza with concert space, fountains, and an ice skating rink. 67 percent of the housing in the first building will be affordable for three income levels and in addition to the two housing retail developments, another retail building is being designed.

By the end of the year, officials expect half of the first building to be finished and construction of the plaza to begin.



Route 347

The New York State Department of Transportation began the second phase of their 13-phase Route 347 revitalization last June. The $600 million project, which had been previously received a Smart Growth Award, is being hailed it as a great model for the future highway development.

The project’s first phase. from Veterans Memorial Highway to state Route 111, was completed last year. The second phase begans at Mount Pleasant Road in Smithtown and will add a third lane in each direction. The $30.5 million project closed part of the highway in Hauppauge in October.

The road, originally a farm delivery trail, did not have as much density in traffic that it does now. Post WWII, Route 347 slowly evolved into a very condensed, congested road given its commuter route accessibility and its shopping centers locations. Route 347 services the Towns of Islip, Smithtown and Brookhaven. It has seen an exponential rise in daily traffic from 48,000 in 1969, to 71,000, according to state figures.

When complete, the highway also include reduced speed limits, new bus shelters, solar-powered lighting, high visibility cross walks, raised planted medians, and bike and pedestrian paths separated from the road. These changes are designed to make the highway more attractive, as well as safer.

Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander said the project creates green growth. “We didn’t need another suburban death trap on our roadways,” Alexander said.

Work on this phase is expected to be finished in 2015. The larger project is not expected to be complete until 2031.

The original plan called for the widening roads, which was a concern for local residents for fear of their land being seized to apply the expansions, however a new plan was drawn up to narrow the lanes, in order to take up less land, and lower the speed limit from 55 mph to 45 mph.

Vision Long Island assisted in lobbying for federal infrastructure funding for this project.

Downtown Revitalization

Smart Growth Saturday

VISION LONG ISLAND invites you to: **Smart Growth SATURDAY**

The first annual Smart Growth Saturday attracted nearly 200 people gathered in downtowns across Nassau and Suffolk Counties to examine current and completed projects.

Tours meandered through Bay Shore, Farmingdale, Huntington, Mineola, Patchogue and Westbury, viewing communities that have won multiple Smart Growth Awards from Vision Long Island for transit-oriented, mixed-use and Complete Streets projects.

"Walking downtown reminds us of the great progress made in many of our main streets across Long Island," Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander said.

In Bay Shore, Islip Councilman Steve Flotteron and Vision Board member Dr. Nathalia Rogers led a contingent around Main Street. Joined by the likes of Brookhaven Councilwoman Connie Kepert, NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program Lead Vanessa Lockel, and Friends of Long Island members Kim Skillen and Theresa DiPietto-Roesler, and members of the Central Islip Coalition of Good Neighbors, the tour viewed The YMCA Boulton Center for the Performing Arts, Greenview Properties' Chelsea Place and other business and housing projects.

Bay Shore was prosperous around the turn of the last century, Flotteron said, but the opening of the South Shore Mall and closure of local mental health facilities sent the community spiraling downward. Retail moved away from Main Street, residents lost their jobs and patients were dumped into various Long Island communities without any support. Rock bottom came in the 1990s when half of the storefronts were empty, and many of those that weren't were churches or laundry facilities.

The neighborhood is no longer a nightmare. Alleyways between storefronts and parking were designed to be wide, well-lit and decorated. Community members and business owners pooled their money and bought some of the problem buildings in town. Some derelict buildings were saved for their history and others razed to expose canals and other waterfront; the site of the former Paradise bar is now the waterfront home of Bay Shore's gazebo.

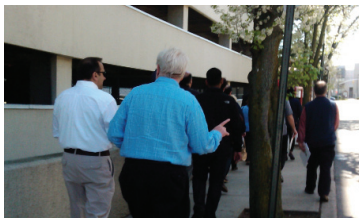
In downtown Huntington, Vision co-Chair Bob Fonti began the tour at the recently-renovated Paramount Theater. Fellow board members Ron Stein, Joy Squires and David Berg joined the tour. The $7 million theater frequently attracts crowds from across the island

for rock concerts and acts as an anchor to many nearby bars and restaurants. The tour walked along New York Avenue and Main Street towards the Old Town Hall, passing a row of shops that were among the first restore their facades to their historic character. Participants also discussed the proposed boutique hotel at the Old Town Hall. They walked north on Steward to see the site of the proposed mixed-use development at the former Huntington Ice and Cube building.

The group walked along Gerard Street to a pair of Heatherwood Communities' mixed-use projects. The first was built in 2005 and the second is currently under construction. Further down Gerard Street, in front of the post office, they visited the roundabout installed in 2003 after a charrette in the winter of 2000. Stein gave the tour a history of Smart Growth in Huntington leading up to the charrette. The roundabout has calmed traffic in the area, making it safer for pedestrians to cross and more attractive leading to restaurants fronting the roundabout starting to have outdoor dining.

In the Village of Mineola, Mayor Scott Strauss highlighted ongoing projects. The new projects aim to serve existing and new residents, including a new transportation hub, residential buildings for seniors as well as young professionals, and LaunchPad LI, which seeks to help start up new businesses in the area.

The tour first stopped at the Intermodal Facility, which houses more than 900 parking spaces, LIRR and NICE connections, and a pedestrian overpass to the north and south sides of the train station.



Many of the new projects are residential, including Hudson One Forty, The Marquis at Mineola and the Mineola Properties. These buildings are all designed to provide in-house amenities, logical parking planning and buildings that complement the existing architecture and layout of the downtown. This centralized housing, the mayor added, may increase demand for downtown businesses. Mineola welcomed LaunchPad LI, a business accelerator and coworking community that helps young entrepreneurs and start-ups get off the ground. Similarly, the Winthrop Research Insti-

Downtown Revitalization

tute could stimulate growth with cutting-edge medical research. Strauss said they have made it clear to businesses not only must a new project serve the people, but must not conflict with the Village's long-term interests. Companies have been rewarded with fast-tracked projects in return for investing money into capital projects.

In Patchogue Village, Vision board members Peter Florey and Lionel Chitty joined Mayor Paul Pontieri. The Riverwalk – a 163-unit community half a block from the LIRR station and close to shopping, restaurants and performing arts on Main Street – was the launch point for the day's events.

After touring the Riverwalk, residents walked by Copper Beech Village, able to see its connectivity to the other development and how they came around to the main street. The tour then passed the community garden and the recently completed ArtSpace – a five-story building with 45 live/work spaces on the upper floors and both The Patchogue Arts Council and Plaza Cinema & Media Arts Center at street level. Completed in 2011, the $18 million project includes a 2,000 square foot gallery space.

Pontieri and Trustee Lori Devlin pointed out some highlights, including great restaurants, long-time business and the many murals painted throughout the village. Peter Florey of D&F Development shared some of the details of his future project on Main Street.

Participants were able to see some of the draws to the village including the Patchogue Theater for Performing Arts. Revitalization of the theater, the Emporium and other venues began in 1997 when local businessmen came up with the initial funds to purchase the theater and the Village of Patchogue applied for grants to renovate the building. The theater was restored to its original 1923 style in several phases with the first performance held in December 1998.

The tour ended as participants made their way to the mixed-use Four Corners New Village. There are five new residential buildings, each four stories over parking with the exception of the locations where the ground level is to be retail, which will be only three stories of residential. In addition to the existing retail at 31 West Main, retail will be located along Ocean Avenue, Main Street and Havens Boulevard.

Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander assisted Deputy Mayor Patricia Christiansen on a tour of the revitalized Village of Farmingdale downtown. Vision board member Neal Lewis kicked off the tour by outlining the importance of public process in planning redevelopment. Christiansen and former trustees gave the history of the process and some of the challenges they overcame to breathe new life into this vibrant downtown.

Participants viewed Jefferson Plaza, located across from the Farmingdale LIRR station and one block from Farmingdale's Main Street retail corridor. The mixed-use development will house 115 residential units, a 70,000 square foot parking garage and courtyard recreational areas. Adjacent to the train station, participants passed the Staller Project, which will feature a 27-unit apartment complex. The project will include a new 3½-story building and the conversion of an existing brick warehouse keeping with the look of the red brick facade to better match the community.

Parks are a passive part of the downtown. Bethpage Road Pocket Park was transferred from Nassau County to the Village of Farmingdale to create a passive pocket park. The Village Green, located between Village Hall and the fire department, is a point of pride for the local government.

Running from Fulton Street through to the railroad tracks, Main Street features a mix of local restaurants, businesses, and specialty shops. The night scene has also improved with Croxley Ales, Library Cafe and other bars. Finally, the specialty shops are a draw with a wide variety of offered products.

In the Village of Westbury, Mayor Peter Cavallaro started his tour at The Space at Westbury. Joined by Vision co-Chair Trudy Fitzsimmons, Cavallaro touched on some key attributes, including their active and cooperative Business Improvement District getting merchants involved in drawing crowds downtown, as well as establishing an active arts and cultural scene and the formation of the Greater Westbury Council for the Arts. The Chamber of Commerce also plays a key role in attracting and retaining businesses.

Wide community support for the Smart Growth initiatives was key. Located on Post Avenue in their heart of their downtown, the Space at Westbury found new life as one of Long Island's premiere downtown concert venues. Cavallaro pointed out that just a few blocks from their train station is a mix of housing, 130 businesses and only 8 vacancies, entertainment and beautiful neighborhoods surrounding the downtown.

Participants saw a variety of downtown business and passed the Piazza Ernetso Strada. They were also able to see a mix of housing types, including townhouse-style condo and rental units at Westbury Gardens, condos at Horizon at Westbury and Maple Towers Condos, apartments at Legacy on Post and the future New Krupp property. The Bristol is also in the downtown and has 140 assisted living units.

Friends of Long Island

Friends of Long Island
Communities Helping Communities
Post - Sandy

Following the days of Sandy, a diverse coalition of local community and business organizations held a founding meeting on post-Sandy Rebuilding and formed a partnership titled Friends of Long Island: Communities Helping Communities post-Sandy. More than 18 months after the storm, many south shore neighborhoods, residents and businesses need all forms of assistance. The goal of these groups is to ensure public and private resources make it directly to local communities, and has pledged to raise $500,000 to this end.

Although many have put together the pieces, thousands of residents are still dis-placed, living in subpar conditions, or trying to recover from financial difficulties stemming from this event. Because Friends of Long Island consists of grassroots community groups, we were able to assess the common needs of the group and work towards solutions. For example, as the processes continue to change, we attempt to be a conduit where residents can receive real-time, accurate information guiding them to the best direction for their situation.

Additional, many of the organizations within this coalition since the storm, have ripped out over 700 homes and are in the process of rebuilding over 25 homes. Friends of Long Island members throughout the island continue to rip out or "gut", partially rebuild, or fully rebuild. The bulk of this work has been done by 500+ volunteers and donated building materials and tools. Friends of Long Island announced at the initial founding of the group that they were starting nearly half way to their fundraising goal because of 2 grants totaling $165,000 from the Robin Hood Foundation.

If you'd like to donate to Friends of Long Island to help us meet our goal, please visit us at www.friendsoflongisland.org. Checks should be made out to Vision Long Island Sandy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via email at tw@visionlongisland.org or we can be reached by phone at 631-261-0242.

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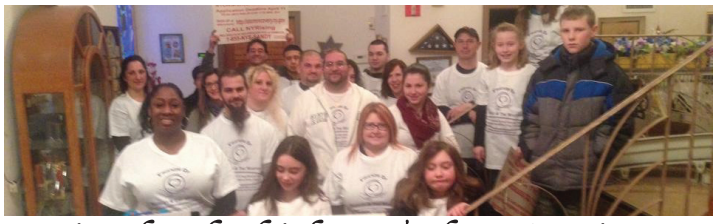
Local Rebuilding Initiatives

Lindy Manpower

Lindy Manpower provides labor assistance for those in the Lindenhurst, and at time surrounding areas. They come equipped with the tools, the manpower, sometimes materials, and a smile in knowing that they are helping another family get home sooner than later. Lindy Manpower's team has a good group of specialized volunteers to help homeowners that need certain services.

Over the last year, Lindy Manpower has continued to assist Sandy-affected residents with labor in their homes. They continue to provide demolition services, and this March even knocked down an entire one-story home. They are organizing another full structure demolition for this July. In addition they have been rebuilding homes, which includes installing insulation, sheetrock, ceilings, floors, etc., to make these homes livable once again.



Friends of Shirley & the Mastics

Since the days following Hurricane Sandy, members of Friends of Shirley and the Mastics have continued to support the residents of the Tri-Hamlet area. Volunteers have continued to assist in the needs of the community, ranging from acute housing needs, repairs, "rip outs", rebuilds, and resource linkage with assets available from partners. To continue to assist our area, Friends of Shirley and the Mastics operate a food pantry twice a week on evening and weekend hours to assist those who are working and recovering. They continue to assist in rebuilding efforts, workshops for youths, provide assistance on holidays, and assist our senior and Veteran population. Leaders from Friends of Shirley and the Mastics have participated in various local and national events and panels regarding recovery and resiliency efforts, and are committed to assisting neighbors for years to come.

Friends of Freeport

Friends of Freeport have come together as a result of Hurricane Sandy to help in any way they can with personal recovery. This crew are committed to getting people back into their homes and to help them continue their lives after Sandy. They are on a mission to make a difference in people's lives and move the community forward. Friends of Freeport plan to make this a long term venture by continuing our work in Freeport after people have recovered from Hurricane Sandy and the initial rush of support has dried up. They are not affiliated with any religious or political organization. They simply want to be known as a group of people that want to make a difference.

The Friends of Freeport work every Saturday on a home and also work as time and manpower allows during the week days. They announce jobs via Facebook, or an e-mail blast. The Friends of Freeport continue to "do our thing" some 19 months and 150 families later providing assistance in the form of teams who work indoors and out in all kinds of weather and varying conditions.

It continues to be awe inspiring to see the number of RED shirts growing . Some say why….FRIENDS say why not!

Adopt A House

Adopt A House has run many successful projects including a week long donation and delivery event held the week after the storm. Because of Adopt A House, fifteen families attended the Rachael Ray Show where they received $10,000 in donations and gifts. They have provided many homes with children's toys and gifts for the holidays. Additionally, they have participated in fundraiser events and activities at community fairs & events (Panera & Oktoberfest, Street Fairs, & more).

Adopt A House hosted Stars of Hope for affected residents to help raise community awareness as well as to increase emotional stability. They assisted residents through the Supplementary Insurance Claims Workshop in conjunction with Touro Law School. They have also hosted a workshop with Zucaro House Lifters to assist residents with the house lifting process. We will continue until everyone is provided the relief they need!

New York Rising CRP

The governor's rebuild and revitalize initiative, the New York Rising Community Reconstruction Program was established to provide additional assistance to areas severely damaged by Hurricanes Sandy, Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. The Long Island Region includes 21 NY Rising Communities. Vision Long Island was a part of the Suffolk County consultant team handling outreach to all 8 communities.

In addition to the original funding allocated to each community, the NY Rising to the Top competition awarding $25 million in eight categories. Oakdale/West Sayville and South Valley Stream were the Long Island winners receiving $3 million on top of their original CRP funding. As the communities begin the implementation phase, the next round of the competitive grants will award $50 million.

The 11th Annual Smart Growth Summit

Reflecting on the 2013 Smart Growth Summit the one thing folks keep telling us over and over was the positive and optimistic nature and can do attitude of all the varying attendees. We had about 1,050 folks coming and going all day – 500 in the morning, a sold out lunch of 800 along with 20 workshops featuring 120 speakers, a well attended youth summit and a new elected officials orientation along with nearly 60 elected officials joining us.

Scott Rechler's economic message was as inspiring as it was great to hear from Congressman Israel and Suffolk County Exec. Steve Bellone. The morning breakfast with supervisors and mayors from ten major municipalities were joined by Nassau County Exec. Ed Mangano, who spotlighted his advancements in our downtowns, including support for office space conversions near transit.

Kudos to all of the participants, speakers, and sponsors. Media coverage included Newsday, News 12, Verizon Fios One, LI Business News, the Herald, Patch, Long Islander News and local publications.

Breakfast Plenary Session

Kenneth Daly of National Grid spoke to crowd of 500 people during the breakfast plenary about National Grid's response and progress one year after Superstorm Sandy. About 140,000 gas customers were impacted during the storm and during this time restoring utilities was the main focus, a task that was completed within a week. Daly added that the assistance National Grid received, 46 crew companies in all, was one of the largest efforts of its kind and it is inspiring to see the efforts continue a year later. Daly discussed the future of LIPA and stated that National Grid is committed to a successful transitioning process from LIPA MSA to PSEG-LI, with more than 1,900 National Grid employees transitioning as well. He ensured that the company will be guiding their customers through the transition, enhancing their presence across Long Island communities, and growing the Long Island gas business and energy efficiency programs. He also took the time to review some of the current programs, grants, and projects that will help enable Smart Growth, including: the Cinderella program, which has been successful for over 40 years, that recently award an economic development grant to Cathedral Place Apartments, New Cassel; award-winning energy efficiency programs which have given $10 million to fund natural gas energy efficiency, $9 million of annual gas thermal savings, particularly a recent grant to Canon North American headquarters, and the Northport VA Hospital conversion, which is the largest

oil-to-gas conversion on Long Island. Daly said that National Grid will continue to improve customer service, mitigate bill impacts, and continue to invest in Downstate New York and Long Island to harden and grow natural gas infrastructure.

Mangano thanked Vision Long Island for their hard work, and talked about their partnership in turning several brownfields in great projects. He also talked about getting transit-oriented development projects done, with some projects already in the mix. He discussed the importance of providing people, especially younger generations, with excellent transportation service and affordable housing choices. He talked about his vision for the county post-Sandy, "we want to maximize open and available space and build a stronger, smarter Nassau County…we want to strengthen our most important resources and get people back in their homes, get the relief for those who need it, and get small businesses up and running."

He ended with a hopeful note, stating the county is seeing positive economic indicators, like low employment rate, great sales tax revenues, the return of many companies, and the entertainment business boom.

Traditionally, we welcome a panel of town supervisors and village

State of the Towns & Villages

mayors who are supportive of downtown redevelopment and infrastructure investments in their communities. The 2012 panel was completely focused on Superstorm Sandy, although this last agenda went back to Main Street redevelopment and housing.

The breakfast panel, State of the Towns & Villages, was led by Joye Brown from Newsday. The panel featured Hon. Rich Schaffer, Babylon supervisor; Hon. Sean Walter, Riverhead supervisor; Hon. Ed Romaine, Brookhaven supervisor; Hon. Anna Throne-Holst, Southampton supervisor; Hon. Ed Ambrosino, Hempstead councilman; Hon. Steve Flotteron, Islip councilman; Hon. Wayne Hall, Village of Hempstead mayor, Hon. Peter Cavallaro, Village of Westbury mayor; and Hon. Ralph Ekstrand, Village of Farmingdale mayor.

The panel was not only informative, but exciting and entertaining. Brown opened up the discussion with a simple question: now that elections are done, moving forward, is it going to be easier or harder to get Smart Growth projects going?

Babylon Town Supervisor Rich Schaffer was excited about a lot of

the work that was being done in the Town of Babylon. He discussed the importance of being smarter about the way we plan and build, "We've made communities haphazardly over the years, we need to change that." He said that when you involve people in the communities in the planning process, it becomes easier to get things going. "It isn't [about] the boogey man coming into town," he said, "this is about people coming together, making decisions, and forming their own community."

Farmingdale Mayor Ralph Eckstrand said the LIRR, controlling traffic flow and creating streets safe for all users are essential elements when building a great downtown. He stated that he has always been a supporter of affordable rentals, transit-oriented development, and vibrant downtowns, especially for young people, "because it works."

Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine stressed that in order to make it easier to get great projects going, we need regional cooperation and we need to address important important issues, such as transportation needs. He discussed Sunday bus service and how we need to important service overall, especially our railroads. "They don't run," he stated, "there is barely any service, we need to figure out a better transportation network." He also stated, that in order to get any kind of project going, we need to look at the way we structure our government and how it issues service.

Hempstead Village Mayor Wayne Hall mentioned that he has two sons living at home with him, "that's why I am really involved in trying to build a great downtown," he added jokingly. He discussed how a $3 billion project in Hempstead will be shovel ready in late spring of 2014. "We've had some protests against projects like these, but things are still moving forward." In the Village of Hempstead, Hall says yes, things are getting easier. "In Hempstead, we all know we're the real hub, and we want to bring people back."

Riverhead Town Supervisor Sean Walter said that winning elections wasn't his concern, "I just try to do what's right." He discussed a project in the works, a community life center which will feature an Olympic size swimming pool, a child day care center, 132 affordable housing units, a performing arts center, and an indoor walking track on 12 acres. "I don't understand why people wouldn't want rental housing or great downtown spaces." He talked about red tape and how it slows everything down, "anywhere you can find a problem, someone will point it out."

Hempstead Councilman Ed Ambrosino said that if we work to make great projects, then the people will want to come. He discussed the development plans of the Courtesy Hotel in West Hempstead, which had caused problems for the area for many years, to a transit-oriented 150- unit rental apartment community. It was a project which residents were excited about because it took an blighted building into a project that was beneficial to the community. He stated that things will be easier if "you put people ahead of politics."

Southampton Supervisor Anna Throne-Holst said that she has seen a lot of resistance against density in her town, mostly because Southampton has always been rural. most rural, all my children have moved away and cannot afford to live on long island. We see great resistance against the density. "Flanders and Riverside are desperately looking for downtown revitalization," she said, "and people are fully behind it." She hopes it will get easier, but for now things are difficult.

Islip Councilman Steve Flotteron said that "housing diversity, not just rentals" is the key. He talked about providing choices for people, how we can intelligently reuse, recycle, and adapt underutilized assets and create better spaces.

Westbury Mayor Peter Cavallaro said "it's going to be easier." He added that looking around the room he could tell that "there is always going to be a majority of people who support these projects and a lot of elected officials who support these projects. We just need people to step up in public forums and speak out."

Brown asked the panel how many units were being planned, in progress, or finished in their communities? The response was hundreds in Islip, a dozen or so in Southampton, Brookhaven and Hempstead boasted 2,000 and 2,500 projects, respectively, Riverhead had 350, the Village of Farmingdale reported 254, Westbury had 850, and Ambrosino said at least 700 in the Town of Hempstead. Brown had a young person from the audience do the math, the result: "10, 628…ish."

The panel held a brief Q&A session during which many of the students who participated in the summit raised concerns about transportation service, housing, and student debt. In their closing statements, the elected officials talked about how they each want to be remembered when they leave office and the need for regional cooperation.

Brown ended the session by saying that it was a good sign to see a young, diverse, and intelligent group of people in the room and a panel of electeds that want to get things done.

Post-Sandy: Rebuilding & Resilience

This workshop covered the NYS Community Reconstruction Program, local approaches to prioritizing infrastructure projects and other examples of resilience techniques used in waterfront communities.

The five members of the Post-Sandy: Rebuilding and Resilience panel offered observations each from their perspectives. John O'Connell led the discussion as moderator.

New York Office of Storm Recovery Director Jamie Rubin said the city has learned from past storms – e.g. burying power lines after the 1888 storm – and must continue learning. Through NY Rising, he said more vulnerable waterfront homes could be purchased. NY's Community Reconstruction Program selected locations including 31 in Nassau and eight in Suffolk before creating an eight-month planning process – then 10 weeks in – to improve each community. Professional consulting firms were selected to work with each area along the way. Rubin also said comprehensive stormwater drainage will protect the power supply and vulnerable populations on the South Shore. Green infrastructure, he added, can facilitate drainage.

New York State's Director of Smart Growth Paul Beyer sees NY Rising overlapping with Smart Growth, focusing more on resiliency, not just rebuilding, and not just adding layers of bureaucracy. Beyer said he's finding the state government is working together as a whole. Redevelopment Councils are developing sustainable plans for themselves, with community input required, including from youth. New aspects include linking sustainability plans to a long-term focus on resiliency and economic development, effectively integrating multi-discipline networks of regional and local stakeholders for the first time.

Rob Weltner, of Operation Splash in Freeport shared his first-hand experience of losing two family-owned bay houses over time, as well as observing the post-impact Sandy scene through scuba diving and fishing. Although newly-appreciating the value of salt marshes, he sees persistent larger-scale industrial problems still affecting both homes and businesses along the South Shore: sewage – which contributes to mold – and the discharge of diesel fuel from damaged or destroyed oil tanks.

Oakdale Chamber of Commerce President Ron Beattie backed both state and federal support for the new transparent planning process for Oakdale/West Sayville, as well as the assignment of professional planning firms for tech support. Despite limited funding, Beattie said the committee is already developing a full list of needs for their area residents, including storm preparedness, response and recovery as well as future storm mitigation. He hoped incentives will be offered to replace cesspools with sewage treatment, and that more effective ways will be devised to protect utilities.

David Berg, of Cameron Engineering, is serving as a project manager for the eight Suffolk communities in NY Rising. Berg showed photos in the Netherlands, which has centuries of history of devising new approaches to flood mitigation and urban design, since one-third of their land is below sea level. Berg found similarities to the needs in Long Beach. In addition to sea barriers that can be closed when storms approach, he referenced Dutch roads and streetcar tracks on top of levees, and even underground canals to store stormwater.

Contractor Andrew Zucaro added a specialty of elevating homes to his other construction and restoration services, noting that insurance and other funding currently available to lift exposed homes will contribute to resiliency by enhancing the future resale value of those homes.

After a brief Q&A session, there was consensus was that although NY Rising has some limitations that may challenge its high expectations, compared to the usual workings of government, "New York State is moving at lightning speed."

Brownfields, Boom or Bust?

Long Island has many contaminated properties in need of remediation and numerous planning efforts underway to attempt to address them. Concerning the NYS-sponsored Brownfields Opportunity Areas program and Brownfield Tax Credit program, what can be improved to more adequately advance redevelopment of Brownfields? What other county or municipal resources are in place to facilitate Brownfields redevelopment?

In the Brownfields Boom or Bust workshop, guided by moderator Keith Samaroo, panelists seemed to agree Long Island needs to be more aggressive about the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program. The conversation focused on why local municipalities need to get developers involved as well as what they could do to help incentivize the system.

The rental market for Long Island is spread to the five boroughs of New York City, Samaroo said, with the lack of rental housing in Nassau and Suffolk. At the same time, more than 300 Brownfield sites on Long Island still need to be remedied. He asked his panelists how tax credits can be extended beyond 2015 so more developers get involved.

Under the current plan, projects must be complete by 2015 to receive tax credit. Long Island Builders Institute CEO Mitchell Pally said developers would not be eager to jump into a brownfield clean up without some knowledge of what the site would produce. Meanwhile, municipalities are more concerned with the immediate clean-up and tend to not focus on whther or not that the site made for good development. These conflicting views often clash, creating issues between developers and municipalities over proposed sites.

Meanwhile, Suffolk County Legislator DuWayne Gregory confirmed there are more than 100 unused and undeveloped properties with great potential, demonstrating a need for local governments to work with developers to clean up these sites.

Economic redevelopment was the inspiration behind the BOA program, GEI Senior Consultant Gary Rozmus said. He spoke on how a tax program such as BOA could help private developers to better get through the door instead of leaving it solely in the hands of municipalities. He salso uggested grants from the DEC and other agencies could be turned over faster to developers.

Finally, DEC Long Island Regional Director Peter Scully noted that local government does still promote economic growth. With Brownfields projects being very time-consuming and developers needing a return on investment, Mr. Scully predicted an extension to be discussed by the government and supported by developers.

Complete Streets

Long Island has some of the deadliest roadways in New York State. With a declining number of automobile users and an increased number of residents walking, biking and using transit, our roadways need improvements to accommodate all modes of travel. More than a dozen Long Island municipalities have passed Complete Streets legislation to lay the groundwork for pedestrian-safety oriented projects. This panel addressed the best practices and status of Complete Streets improvements for the island's roads.

Funding and fatality rates dominated the conversation on the Complete Streets panel, moderated by Tri-State Transportation Campaign Associate Director Ryan Lynch.

In the Town of Brookhaven, Councilwoman Connie Kepert reflected on their Sustainable Complete Streets Policy passed in 2010. Designed to create roads safe for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists and mass transit, Kepert admitted the board did fear some backlash from voters. But she also referenced startling statistics, like how almost a quarter of all traffic deaths in New York from 2007-2008 were pedestrians and that pedestrian traffic accidents are the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among kids ages 5-14. Bicycle lanes were added to finished projects like Granny Road and active jobs like River Road.

Kepert also said New York has the third highest rate of pedestrian deaths, although AARP Associate Director Will Stoner said the state bumped down a spot. He added that traffic deaths and an aging Baby Boomer generation are cause for concern. However, he said Complete Streets could prevent many accidents, while encouraging exercise, attracting businesses and connecting people to mass transit.

Stoner also said he was very unhappy with the lack of community stakeholder input on the state DOT's Sunrise Highway improvements. AARP is working with Vision Long Island and Tri-State Transportation Campaign to make the highway safer, although the director speculated the public will reject any plan that ignores them. Jim McLaughlin, public transportation specialist for Wendel Companies, also said that "getting people to the table" is critical to making Complete Streets work.

When Valley Stream resident David Sabatino created Envision Valley Stream to improve his community, he discovered nobody knew what Complete Streets. Like McLaughlin and Stoner, Sabatino said education is an important piece of the foundation. And once his neighbors understood the project, Envision Valley Stream went about arguing it would improve road safety and the local economy.

New York City DOT Assistant Commissioner Ryan Russo pointed at changes in Manhattan as proof that Complete Streets are effective. When Broadway was closed to motor vehicle traffic, reported injuries dropped by 31 percent. Russo, however, also said Complete Streets projects require proper planning and funding. Fortunately, he added these projects are not always excessively expensive; renovating 40 blocks of Broadway cost the city $700,000.

Emerging Businesses

Long Island is becoming an increasingly diverse region. In many cases our downtowns are being shaped by independent businesses that cater to this growing diversity. Are many Long Islanders aware of the large market these businesses obtain and take advantage of the growing population? What is the role of minority owned businesses in the building community? How do we strengthen this emerging economic development sector?

Moderator Lionel Chitty from the Hicksville Chamber of Commerce, opened discussion on the Emerging Businesses panel about the use of technology and in what direction the future of Long Island business is headed. Jorge Martinez, of the Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; and Yvette Richardson, of SRW Engineers spoke about technology as a use for building reputation, how micro-lending is adding more growth in minority and female entrepreneurs, and the Huntington Business Incubator.

Richardson stressed the need to embrace technology to grow business, although Martinez cautioned taking care with technology. The chamber representative also supported micro-lending. Local businesses can turn a couple thousand dollars into significant growth. Minority and women business owners specifically, he added, rely on this source of funding.

The current generation doesn't know what manufacturing is, Chitty said. Instead, they are an idea generation, and venture capitalists are always on the hunt for the next good idea.

Discussion also touched on a growing need for both trade schools and business skills. Panelists mentioned a lack of interpersonal skills, especially with interns, and difficulty writing professionally.

Graham International's President Corrinne Graham offered some closing thoughts. She referenced the need to focus on youth and how networking opens the door for future businesses.

Transit-Oriented Development

More than 7,600 units of transit-oriented development has been approved on Long Island over the last seven years in over 50 projects with more in the planning stages. What are some of the best practices that are working on and off Long Island? How can we overcome barriers to advance this needed form of downtown redevelopment?

The Transit-Oriented Development panel featured Anthony Bartone of Bartone Properties, Jamie Stover of Mill Creek Residential, Sal Coco of BHC Architects, Thomas Jost of Parsons Brinckerhoff, and moderator Bob Paley of the MTA. Panelists discussed links between transit investment, economic development and zoning.

Paley spoke of Long Island's history of learning from New York City, citing the suburban model of Forest Hills Gardens and the anchored Roosevelt Field Department Store. Long Island continues to learn from the city's use of zoning to allow higher density development around transit hubs. In the coming years, the MTA will receive over one billion dollars to reinvest in the NYC and LIRR transit systems, including the Double Track project and East Side Access to Grand Central Station. Paley stressed the need for Long Island's leaders to collaborate early, and to be willing to explore innovative financing and accept financial risk as the transit projects proceed.

Bartone discussed his hotel and plaza project in Farmingdale, a complex with 154 rental units and 20,000 sq. ft. of street-level retail

space a few steps away from the LIRR station and within walking distance of SUNY Farmingdale, Bethpage golf course and Main Street. An amenity rich lifestyle community, the site will include courtyards, a fitness room, movie theater, business lounge and underground parking.

Coco discussed Wyandanch Village, a TOD that broke ground in July 2013. The Station Green component of the development will include 91 residential units four floors above street-level retail within a short distance to education and retail destinations.

Jost spoke about TOD's potential to create tax opportunities, increase economic value in the real estate market, and its necessity in responding to changing trends in transportation preferences. In an effort to reclaim station areas of Long Island, Parsons Brinckerhoff recently conducted a study of 21 Nassau County neighborhoods to find pilot communities in which residents desired transit-oriented development. Communities that indicated readiness for TOD included those around the Baldwin, Lynbrook and Valley Stream LIRR stations. Strong neighborhood's need effective school districts. One of the key attractions to living or running a business in a community is a healthy school system, as they are traditionally hubs of community activity. This panel discussed the health of our school districts and their role in supporting the redevelopment of downtown areas.

Education's Role in Rebuilding our Downtowns

The Education's Role in Rebuilding our Downtowns panel featured speakers Maria Rianna of the Glen Cove School District, Mike Hynes of the Shelter Island School District, Kathy Mooney of the Port Washington School District, Ken Bossert of the Port Jefferson School District, Kimberly Reiser of Nassau Community College, John Lombardo of Suffolk Community College, and moderator Dr. Elana Zolfo of Dowling College.

This panel discussed how Long Island can utilize its educational facilities to create great, vibrant spaces and the importance of fostering mutually interested relationships between educational institutions and local businesses. Dr. Elana Zolfo talked about incorporating shops, restaurants, and other local businesses into college campuses in order to draw students and teachers to places, she added that Oakdale is "tired of being a pass through town."

It is in a school district's best interest to take into account small businesses when making major decisions. Ken Bossert said businesses make up a large portion of taxes and revenue that fund Port Jefferson schools. Maria Rianna suggested field trips to local businesses as a way to create relationships. She also noted that a downtown within a school campus would make it safer for students, especially near high schools, because they could stay near school, instead of driving or walking near dangerous highways.

Small businesses can facilitate gathering area where students can meet outside of class while staying within the campus area. Kimberly Reiser discussed the importance of having an efficient network of transportation, adding that many students from the community colleges often take multiple buses and trains just to get to school.

Kathy Mooney mentioned that in Port Washington, while there is a very wide, diverse socio-economic spectrum of people there is still a great need for skilled laborers in the workforce. Mike Hynes added that Shelter Island has about 200 students from grades K-12, one of the smaller districts, and finds that many of the students don't have the proper skills to work with others or, for the older students, to work in the future job market.

The panel agreed that the region needs to invest in affordable, accessible transportation and infrastructure that allows easy access to campuses on Long Island, partnerships between local businesses and educational facilities, and find ways to make sure that Long Island students have the skill set that is necessary for the current workforce.

Youth Vision for Long Island's Future

There are many conversations that talk about the "Brian Drain" and the prospect of youth leaving Long Island. Very few planning efforts actually involve and have young people speak for themselves what future they want to see here on Long Island. This panel focused on the vision of five teenagers/twenty-somethings that play different roles in creating the types of communities that will attract and retain the next generation of workers and residents. The panel also involved the voices from the Long Island Youth Summit that is organized every year out of Dowling College.

Youth Vision for Long Island's Future panel featured Tara Bono of LIincs Young Professionals, Jeff Guillott of the Suburban Millennial Institute, Joshua Lafazan of the Syosset School Board, Danielle Cirimello of Dowling College,Kendra Armstead of Stony Brook University and moderator Dr. Nathalia Rogers of Dowling College.

The panel focused on Long Island's population of students, youth and young professionals, and what the region can do to invest in its youth. They discussed the lack of affordable housing, entertainment, employment opportunities and the cost of living. They also discussed some of the main factors that are driving youth off Long Island and what can be done not only to bring them here, but to get them to stay.

Rogers opened the discussion saying the amount of student debt surpassed the amount of credit card debt last year for the first time in years. Unemployment, debt and a severe lack of opportunities are just a few of the biggest concerns among Long Island's youth. Older people are staying in their jobs longer, largely because they're having trouble meeting costs of living after retirement. These jobs become unavailable and scarce to recent grads and young professionals; even paid internships are difficult to find. In a changing economy and a shift in job trends, young professionals are having a tough time trying to stay on Long Island.

With a challenging job market, young professionals are finding it difficult to afford to live on Long Island. People are getting married and starting families later in life and are not ready, especially financially, to buy single family homes. If they can't afford to live here, Bono said, they will leave and not come back. Even if they did want to buy homes, the property taxes on Long Island are some of the

highest in the country. Armstead noted it's also expensive to own a vehicle, something that is necessary to get around on the Island. The panel discussed the importance of affordable and accessible transportation and investment in infrastructure that allows easy access to places where young people want to be, whether it be a school campus or a fun, vibrant downtown.

"You'll move to New York City or Brooklyn or Astoria or North Carolina or Ohio, anywhere else because it's affordable and because, let's face it, it's more exciting," Guillot said.

The panel stressed the importance of participation on behalf of young people in both the communities and local government. Young people need to get involved, run for local office, participate in local public forums and voice their opinions. Otherwise, issues that are important to them will continue to be tabled. It is important that young people get a say in their communities in order to secure their future and the future of Long Island.

Future of Energy on Long Island

Long Island's energy landscape has changed since the prior Summit. The reformatted LIPA provides an opportunity to improve efficiencies while continuing the ongoing commitment to very effective clean energy and renewable programs. The panel involved the relevant power suppliers, operators and renewable energy companies and advocates to discuss the future energy direction for Long Island.

Efficiency was the primary topic on the Future of Energy on Long Island panel, led by moderator Neal Lewis.

Ross Ain, president of Caithness, said capacity is a major problem with power plants, especially as many age. Modern plants are more efficient and save money, not to mention release fewer pollutants into the air.

David Schieren, CEO of EmPower Solar, believes the demand for solar power is growing after Superstorm Sandy. People want self-sufficient, efficient systems, and introducing solar leasing for residents can help with the cost of these systems.

Rich Kessel agreed that solar and battery systems are more resilient, but emphasized a push for more renewable energy sources on Long Island. He also said people must learn to be more efficient and use less resources. Investing in infrastructure would be progress.

PSEG Director of Energy-Efficiency and Renewables Mike Voltz said maintaining a reliable system like his company's requires resource integration and planning.

National Grid wants to make balanced choices during the PSEG and LIPA changes, Economic Development Specialist John Keating. Natural gas is not the only answer, Keating said, but utilities can keep up with the demand and provide emergency power supplies by using renewable options.

Lewis raised concerns about the future of Long Island clean energy programs (which have won awards and lead the state) once the new structure goes into effect in 2014 with a budget that includes a 22 percent cut in the funding for solar and efficiency.

Tourism and Downtowns

With the recent recession and slow economic recovery Long Islanders have opted to spend their money locally in the form of "staycations." This has provided many opportunities for investment in downtown areas, events, new businesses, restaurants, bars, nightlife and other attractions. While our downtowns are seeing more life, we haven't taken full advantage of marketing Long Island differently as we continue to focus exclusively on traditional attractions like parks and beaches. The panel discussed varying successful strategies to market Long Island's downtown to tourists on and off Long Island.

Jaci Clement from Fair Media Council moderated the discussion on Tourism and Downtowns, inviting the panelists to address this issue in terms of stay-cations and promote an interconnectedness of communities. Gail Lamberta, associate dean at St. Joseph's College; Lois Howes, Freeport Chamber of Commerce; Northport Village Merchants Association founder Artie Berke; Karen Harding, THEM Media; and Long Islander News publisher Jim Kelly had an intriguing discussions on stay-cations, specifically how Long Island communities work together and how to maintain the charm associated with each communities' uniqueness.

Lamberta suggested working more with East End wineries and better connecting local businesses. In Huntington, Kelly said there are two types of people – those who like to visit and those who call it home. He also referenced the growing attraction since the Huntington Lighthouse Boat Parade first set sail in 2010. Harding talked about bringing families in from the city for weekends, including Manhattan bus service packages.

The principles of Smart Growth and New Urbanism are more than 20 years old and the underlying values and designs chart back to the dawn of early settlement patterns. The Smart Growth movement on Long Island has grown, but some misconceptions of the types of walkable communities sought after remain. This panel tackled some of the basic tenants of placemaking and the built environment from design experts in the field.

Smart Growth / New Urbanism 101

The Smart Growth and New Urbanism 101 panel, moderated by Alex Latham of ADL III Architecture, discussed what Smart Growth and New Urbanism is and what it is not. Panelists included Bill Tuyn

of Greenman-Pedersen Inc., Paddy Steinschneider of Gotham Design and Marc Wouters of CNU New York.

On Long Island, everything is based on driving with a car. Heavy traffic and large arterial roads leave little room for other users of the roads. This panel discussed the importance of smart placemaking, creating complete communities which benefit everyone and some of the main reasons for push back against Smart Growth projects, including fear of density, interfering with open space, and retaining rural/suburban feeling and culture.

Not only are fewer people applying for driver's licenses and buying cars, Wouters said the cost of building towards a car and suburban oriented communities is wasteful. Seniors and millennials make up a large portion of the population, generations who want to live in highly-socially connected places. It's not just about affordable housing, but providing various choices of quality housing that people can afford. Latham cited downtown Georgetown, where rental is available over retail along their main street, was cited as an example where everything from groceries to entertainment is available within walking distance and the community has available housing.

Responding to these demographics does not have to mean risking way of life. The panel agreed the key to building smart is to redevelop spaces that are underutilized to accommodate the needs of local communities, and to create compact, complete and complex places that also reflect the local culture. They used examples from cities across the world, from Prague to the Tuxedo Reserve – located upstate in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains. They agreed what is great about building "smart" is that it takes into account the people, the space and the natural ecosystems that surround it.

Tuyn proposed the question, if, at the end of the day, when everything is built, would you put your community on a post card? Would you look at the work and feel confident that your community is a great place to live? They were optimistic about the future of Smart Growth on Long Island.

"We have a lot of good stuff going on, especially when you have multiple people working together to make it happen," Steinschneider said. "We just need to learn from past mistakes, retrofit, and try again."

New Town Centers

While Long Island has been slowly revitalizing its many existing downtowns there have been very few new town centers planned and approved. This workshop focused on the status of two of the most advanced new town centers, Heartland in Brentwood and Garvies Point in Glen Cove. Updates in two downtowns, Hempstead and Huntington Station planned with the community and the Master Developer were also explored.

The New Town Centers panel began with David Wolkoff of Heartland Town Square, a Smart Growth-planned community that will be built on the former Pilgrim State grounds in Brentwood. The project will include 9,000 residential units in a variety of housing types, transit alternatives such as bike routes and a shuttle service to the Deer Park LIRR station, and ample green space with pocket parks and two outdoor plazas. The project is expected to be approved by the town of Islip this January.

Tom Graham of RXR/Glen Isle talked about the Garvies Point project at the Glen Cove waterfront. Eight hundred sixty residential units, 25,000 sq ft of retail, and 19 acres of public amenities will be collaboratively planned by the city's parks and recreation department and private developer RXR. Architecture and signage will reflect the city's post-industrial past. Graham stressed the importance of public-private partnership.

Brandon Palanker, filling in for Don Monti of Renaissance Downtowns, spoke about the $2 billion Hempstead Village redevelopment. Residents will not be displaced because eminent domain will not be necessary; the site of the future redevelopment is currently a parking lot. SEQRA and zoning for the project was completed in an unheard of 127 days, a result of cooperation between public and private entities. Creativity in smaller unit design will be critical in creating residences that young professionals can afford. The project is now at the implementation stage, with a planned end date of 2015.

Moderator David Winzelberg of Long Island Business News prodded panelists with questions about roadblocks in the redevelopment process, drawing attention to particular challenges that panelists face day-to-day.

Transit Opportunities

Transit investments for Long Island are continuing with East Side Access, Double Track to Ronkonkoma, East End Scoot Service and a major upgrade to the Hicksville train station coming online. Strengthening bus service in Nassau and expanding service in Suffolk are also underway. These projects and their impact on the mobility of our region were explored on this panel.

The Transit Opportunities panel featured speakers Elisa Picca of the LIRR, Pat Bowden of the Transit Workers Union, Michael Schoolman of 7 Bus, John Durso of LI Federation of Labor, William Henderson of PCAC and moderator Denise Carter of Greenman-Pedersen.

Picca began the discussion with an update on MTA/LIRR projects underway. The Hicksville LIRR station sees the second most riders after Ronkonkoma and is going through a $55-million renovation. The facelift will replace platforms and amenities.

"This will be a catalyst for future development in and around the train station," Picca said.

She also spoke about the Double Track project; the first phase of adding a complete second line between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma was completed last year. Picca also referenced the $8 million East End Access project expected to save Long Islanders from over-commuting 40 minutes every day by 2019.

Durso said none of his children drive into Manhattan and always give him odd looks when he does. But he also said the LIRR system leaves him high and dry when it's time to leave the city.

Long Island's youth, Durso added, are a major reason to improve the region's transit opportunities. Transportation and affordable

housing are instrumental to keeping youth from leaving the island. Without a modern transportation system, he said, there won't be any middle-income jobs for them.

Bowden grew up on Long Island using the busses, which she griped have not improved since. The union president said NICE Bus employees lost 27 percent of their pension when Nassau County privatized its bus system.

Improving transportation, she agreed, is essential to creating jobs, especially for the poor. Without public transportation, their options may be walking miles to get to work or not working. Youth, she added, have trouble paying the high cost of driving around the area.

Henderson referenced a concept known in the logistics industry known as "the last mile." While transporting product over large distances between terminals is fairly easy, getting it to the final destination adds extra time and cost. The Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee leader suggested bicycle racks, shuttles, smarter parking and transit-oriented development as possible solutions.

"We have a way to get people from Manhattan to Ronkonkoma, but once you get to Ronkonkoma the fun starts," he said.

Schoolman's 7Bus began carting people to and from Long Island and Manhattan in July as an alternative to driving. His customers, he said, range from businessmen headed into the east side, families going to see a show, students going to college and senior citizens headed to a doctor's office.

"From a Long Island perspective, the big picture is the LIE is the second most congested roadway in the United States. Any type of transportation that takes a single car and single driver off the road long-term is a good thing," Schoolman said.

Water and Wastewater

Infrastructure investment for our region's key projects are well underway. Due to the Smart Growth Infrastructure Act and the Regional Councils some of these resources are directed to our downtown areas. The most promising development is the $455 million investment in Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant to upgrade the failing facility that services hundreds of thousands of Nassau residents, possibly the largest single infrastructure grant to Long Island. Regardless of this progress, more needs to be done to protect our groundwater, advance new sewage treatment technologies and secure state and federal resources to grow our downtowns. This panel had a mix of engineers, sewer developers, water resource regulators, sewer financers and advocates.

While there was no shortage of details, figures and facts among the Water and Wastewater presentations, panelists offered different opinions and perspectives.

Suffolk County Principal Public Health Engineer Walter Hilbert, filling in for Legislator William Spencer, said they were examining future upgrades. With about 70 percent of the 1.5 million county residents unsewered, Hilbert was optimistic code changes could be used to move beyond septic systems and leaching pools. He confirmed a study is underway to examine technologies that reduce nitrogen from the waste stream.

However, Frank Russo, wastewater director for architecture firm H2M, argued it's time for action, not studies. Pointing to suffering downtowns like Mastic Beach and Rocky Point, Russo said sewers allow for increased density, which can help create new business and housing, even stalling the departure of Long Island's youth. New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) and Suffolk County grants are a start, but he recommends issuing bonds.

"That's part of this Smart Growth initiative. Let's stop studying. Let's put money to good use," Russo said.

EFC Director of Engineering and Program Management Tim Burns talked about some of the funding available for water projects. The state's 1987 Clean Water State Revolving Fund and 1996 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund help fund infrastructure for both causes. Burns said they help save millions by offering low-interest funding. He also highlighted water funds available through New York Rising for issues created by Superstorm Sandy. Almost $340 million is available for clean water and almost $68 million for drinking water, primarily through long-term loans with no interest.

But Michael Posillico, vice president of developers Posillico, said funding for wastewater projects largely dried up for decades when the federal gravy train ended in the 1980s. Few projects happened until the recent surge in renovating existing plants to modern environmental standards in the last few years. Work is happening at the fastest pace in 30 years, with Posillico recently winning a contract for the Bergin Point Sewage Treatment Plant. The demand is there, he added, because the need to protect the environment is very real.

Natural Systems Utilities Vice President Rick Cisterna said his company specializes in treating and releasing wastewater, and converting waste organics into energy. He highlighted membrane bioreactors (MBRs) that cut nitrogen levels and can be hidden within the development or community. Two new MBR plants that spend no more than $30 per gallon per day were built in Islip apartment complexes, although that water is leached into the ground rather than recycled. Cisterna said their waste systems uses anaerobic digestion to transform sludge and bio gas into power.

Moderator Adrienne Espositio agreed with an audience demand for lower nitrogen limits – below the current 10 milligram per liter Suffolk County threshold. She added that money needs to be moved quicker and new technology must be deployed.

"We need the public pushing the charge," Esposito said.

Bringing Tech Companies Downtown

Emerging high-tech companies are looking to situate downtown. Launchpad Long Island in Mineola and tech incubators in Hicksville and Huntington demonstrate that trend. This panel tackled new strategies to create the best environment to bring these businesses into local communities.

Jon Rudes, of CRESA, agreed many Long Islanders prefer not to commute into New York City. He suggested connected the island to "Silicon Alley" in the city, which he helped to develop. Rudes referenced a "Demo Night" on Dec. 4 with ideas being pitched in New York City. He's found would-be entrepreneurs cannot usually sustain the expenses of a co-working tech site on their own, and need some public investment to have the best chance of success. This is a good chance to reuse old buildings, Rudes said, and density concentration around transit helps.

Peter Goldsmith, of LISTnet, said Long Island universities are stepping up to create incubators, including Stony Brook University, Touro Law School and St. Joseph's. He hoped more "angels" can be found to invest in startups. One individual, Kimberly Hawkins, has been attempting to create an incubator site in Huntington Station herself, as well organize a 2014 summit that will include venture capitalists. She would be connected with others to facilitate further development in Huntington Station.

Launchpad LI co-founders Andrew Hazen and Rich Foster have self-funded their work to date and brought in partners through networking. They've rented space in Mineola near the LIRR station since February 2013, and regularly hold "pitch nights" where ideas are shared, but no funds are solicited. Launchpad rents office space and provides office services, with various experts available for advice. To date, the founders said 13 of their offices have been rented. They also said they hope to expand to the Huntington/Melville area soon. Others suggested they look into Great Neck Plaza and Patchogue, both of which have transit connections. Rudes said he'd like to help create Launchpads across Long Island. Foster also supports the Angel Network, which allows investors to see opportunities, with possibility for some to invest jointly but at different levels.

New Elected Officials Orientation

For the second time the Smart Growth Summit featured an orientation with newly elected officials in County, Town and local governments.

This session was a candid primer on how to advance downtown revitalization, transit-oriented development and mixed-use projects in local communities. The orientation also covered how to secure infrastructure funds for transportation, wastewater and energy projects and how to handle public pressures on controversial land use issues. Special thanks to the participants including NYS Senator Jack Martins, Islip Councilman Steve Flotteron, Westbury Mayor Peter Cavallaro and the newly elected officials, Brookhaven Councilwoman-elect Valerie Cartright, City of Glen Cove Mayor-elect Reggie Spinello, Councilwoman-elect Pamela Pazenbeck and newly elected Nassau Legislators Laura Schaefer, Ellen Birnbaum and Laura Cullen.

Plenary Lunch Session

Rich Cantwell of Friends of Freeport opened the lunch plenary session with a tribute to Henry Lenahan, a firefighter of the Freeport Fire Department and lifelong Freeport resident who passed away after a long battle with cancer.

"He was essentially our very first volunteer, he provided us with

anything we needed," Cantwell said.

The day after the storm, Lenahan ventured out to help his neighbors and community, despite having severe damage to his house. He was a founding member of the Friends of Freeport team, still volunteering a year later, and Cantwell expressed his deepest gratitude for all his work.

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone spoke about the importance of protecting our environment and local economy, and how we can begin to apply Smart Growth principles. He talked about the success of Wyandanch Rising and the Ronkonkoma Hub.

"Working in government, you get the sense that aren't many people who don't understand the challenges that are taking place; challenges that affect our long term economic development. But when I come [to the summit], I see that there are people who do get it and do want to see change," Bellone said.

Congressman Steve Israel spoke briefly about the history of Long Island and a tribute to President John F. Kennedy for the 50th Anniversary of his death. He discussed about what Long Island used to be and where we are now and how we can move our region forward.

"How do we take that Long Island playbook of grasping crisis, creating opportunity, and pursuing vision and carry it into the 21st century?" Israel asked.

Scott Rechler of RXR served as the 2013 keynote speaker. His presentation focused on economic status and how Long Island can be competitive, long term, and successful once again. "Based on where we are in current economic landscape, we need to accelerate and focus our resources…and make sure we prioritize."

Rechler briefly discussed RXR, which has been a multigenerational Long Island real estate family. It started with his grandfather, a developer of farms almost 60 years, the company has become one of the largest owners of properties on Long Island, one of the most active developers, and committed to this community. RXR is also an active investor in New York City, owning more than 8 billion square feet of property. Rechler said having a regional perspective, not just Long Island, but on a state level, promotes and encourages

economic development growth and moves us forward.

"When we think about where Long Island fits, we think about it in a bigger puzzle, and this is a piece of that puzzle," the developer said. Rechler said the country is currently halfway through our own version of a "Lost Decade," much like Japan in the early 90s, a 10-year period with no growth. He said America is seeing "below trend growth" with "startling unemployment." Structural changes and cyclical upturns continue to cause below trend growth and increased volatility. Factors like heavy leveraging and debt, global and national uncertainty, paralyzing gridlock in Congress and a severe lack of bipartisanship, and self-inflicted uncertainty are weighing down our economy, he said, "it's just been a wet blanket of cyclical growth."

The upside is New York City has one of the greatest economies in the world, Rechler said. He attributes quality of life, availability of opportunities, strong infrastructure, open space, transportation networks and education to the success of New York City.

Suburbs in New York constantly struggle with high taxes, aging infrastructure, enormous debt and adapting into new lifestyles. "Adapting into the 21st century lifestyle" is an important step when moving forward into the future. "The white picket fence just doesn't work anymore," the developer said.

Rechler also said Long Island boasts many great assets absent from other locations, like great beaches, parks, open spaces and world class research, one of the largest transportation systems, and most importantly "great talent to do great things."

He talked about the Garvies Point Development, a project in Glen Cove he is working on in collaboration with Don Monti of Renaissance Downtowns. The project is a 56-acre mixed use waterfront development which will include, 488 rental residential units, 488 for-sale residential units, 109 workforce housing units, a hotel and spa, commercial space, and two marinas. Every dollar spent on this project, he said, will be matched with $9 of private funding.

"We have the means to make this work…healthy diversity and accessibility, areas that have great transportation networks and areas that have great leadership that can help build in smart ways and collaborate with both public and private partnerships," Rechler said.

He stressed the importance of taking advantage of events like the Summit to create solutions together. He commended Vision Long Island for taking a leadership role in bringing people together and continually working on great projects.

"We need to take responsibility. It's incumbent on all of us to make a difference," Rechler said.

Post Sandy: Disaster Planning and Recovery

One of the biggest challenges post-Sandy has been the ability to marshal resources directly to local residents, businesses and community infrastructure and resiliency projects. A number of local service groups, churches, small businesses and municipalities have stepped forward to assist in filling the gaps. This panel addressed the strategies that have worked and lessons learned from the past year of Sandy recovery initiatives. Speakers included a plethora of community rebuilding and relief organizations who have been working round the clock to assist Long Islanders in need.

The Post Sandy: Disaster Planning and Recovery panel, led by moderator Carl Corry of Newsday, delved into the devastation post-Sandy, as South Shore communities pick up the pieces a year later. It was an emotional workshop during which the panel heard personal stories from affected people. With homes destroyed, difficult claims to file and lawyers challenging lawsuits, it's been a struggle from many to get things back to normal.

The panel discussed some of the issues Long Islander are still facing and various groups' functions. Many storm survivors are suffering from mental health issues. The group addressed the urgent need for mental health care for Sandy victims. Another issue in the wake of the storm was the lack of communication and a grasp of what is really happening on the ground. The panel discussed ways of getting information to the public and media to become a proactive resource, showcase real stories and avoid romantic storytelling.

Jon Siebert of Friends of Long Island, a group organizing post-Sandy community volunteer efforts, said picking up the pieces is a slow process.

"Recovery is like a black, oil-infested snowflake: no two residents or cases are the same," he said, "[Our] groups ensure that houses being repaired are done so according to local code. These residents are waiting for funding for mitigation and elevation, and have no alternative but to repair now so they have a place to live."

He admitted that some in Mastic and Shirley simply gave up and abandoned their damaged homes.

Ron Benenati, formerly of FEMA, recalled working in Long Beach. He stressed that emergency management is not a long term fix.

"We could not even begin to touch the complexity of issues a catastrophic event like Sandy brings in just a 2-hour discussion. As much as we tout our accomplishments and development, we need to be humbled by the forces of nature," Benenati said.

The panel highlighted one of the most important successes to come from Sandy: Long Island's ability to efficiently mobilize groups and communities on a local level. Randi Dresner of Island Harvest was requested by the Office of Emergency Management to deploy in Bethpage, without any direction or instructions. Instead of waiting, her group distributed food and supplies to different communities. They redefined their method of operations and adapted quickly to help the residents in need. United Way of Long Island handed out literature and explained the 211 system and LIVOAD/Long Term Recovery Group's role in the recovery. Theresa Regnante, CEO of United Way of Long Island, admited there were challenges in receiving the funding that was pledged, a total of over $7 million was raised, although many residents were assisted. Their role in recovery, she added, will end in June 2014. Friends of Freeport, which started as a just a few people helping their neighbors, now has a few construction crews and operates during the week and on weekends. Founder Rich Cantwell spoke about rebuilding and how social media was a helpful tool to garner support and assistance.

Kim Skillen of Neighbors Supporting Neighbors said her group utilized local churches and schools to help pass out food and clothing to people who needed it. For Skillen, this past year has been trying with a lot of work ahead.

"[Volunteers] are doing this work because it has to be done and we want our communities to remain strong and resilient and we do not like to see our neighbors in need," she said.

After the most recent recession financing Smart Growth projects has been viable but at times challenging in specific areas like the condo markets and independent mixed use developments. The increased amount of infrastructure, public benefits and amenities that are needed to invest in quality redevelopment often needs public matching funds to create the economic development and place-making impact the downtowns need. Thankfully IDA's, select local banks and a cadre of developers have stepped forward with strategies and deals that have created real projects on Long Island. This panel tackled a series of approaches and resources available to finance Smart Growth in a difficult market.

Financing Smart Growth

The Financing Smart Growth panel featured Anthony Manetta of the Suffolk County IDA, Bill Mannix of the Town of Islip IDA, Larry Jones of Bethpage Federal Credit Union, Steve Krieger of Engel Burman, Dr. Norman Smith of Dowling College and moderator John Callegari of LI Business News.

Panelists engaged a packed room with dialogue about the challenges and initiatives, particular to Long Island, of financing Smart Growth projects. Krieger spoke of Engel Burman's Doubleday property in Garden City, in which the firm took advantage of time spent waiting for lending approvals by building a free-standing model unit in its parking lot, selling 27 of the 54 units in only three months. Jones discussed Bethpage FCU's efforts to respond to pent-up demand for housing by beginning to offer commercial lending and business banking.

Suffolk IDA also plays a role in construction financing, particularly by providing incentives for retaining and growing existing businesses. Funded improvements make a company more cost-effective, increase its competitiveness, benefit the larger economy and often times the environment. Mannix discussed the Town of Islip IDA's emerging role in revitalizing downtowns, as it has the power to exempt key items from sales tax such as building materials and provide tax abatement.

Smith spoke of the need for finances to revitalize Oakdale, the home of Dowling College. Panelists and audience members discussed Start-Up NY, Governor Cuomo's initiative that creates tax-free zones for new and expanding businesses, as a possible asset in helping businesses locate around college campuses by offering tax reductions for those businesses and their individual employees. Westbury's newest project opened its doors, "The Space at Westbury," providing a music venue in downtown that is helping the retail and restaurants in the area. This adds to the tremendous value arts have added to local business districts. Theatres and music venues in Riverhead, Patchogue, Bay Shore and Huntington among others point to these successes. This panel tackled the role art, music, cultural events and other creative amenities have in strengthening downtown areas.

Arts, Music, and Destinations

Panelists agreed that culture can lead to new jobs and businesses on the Arts, Music and Destinations workshop, moderated by Patricia Snyder.

Westbury is becoming more intriguing for visitors, Bruce Michael said, now that theater and community venue the Space at Westbury is open. The executive director first saw the space in 2011, when it was a decaying movie theater that owner Cyrus Hakakian considered razing for offices. Now able to house up to 1,500 sitting and standing patrons for smaller national acts, Michael said the Space gives Westbury a second professional theater – in addition to the NYCB Theater. And with the Old Westbury Gardens and other attractions nearby, he believes the community is getting stronger.

Michelle Stark, director of the Suffolk County Office of Film and Cultural Affairs, went a step further, saying the arts actively create jobs and support downtowns.

"Small businesses are smart businesses. They go where foot traffic is," Stark said.

Arts, Stark said, were a major part of the Village of Patchogue's recent revitalization. The dilapidated Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts was renovated back to the 20th century style in 2001 and a brand new sound system was installed three years later. The $18 million Artspace Patchogue project, opening in 2011, added galleries and retail space to mixed-use development.

Stark also referenced a study which said Long Island has a similar density of artists compared to communities like Boston and Silicon Valley, even though there's less development of said art. With 10 percent of all Suffolk County hotel and motel taxes going to cultural programs – about $1.4 million annually – the director hoped to make the arts a central piece of all 71 Suffolk County downtown business districts.

Meanwhile, arts organizations on Long Island are actively seeking support. Tricia McDermott, artistic director of Airmid Theatre, said her nonprofit production company needs a home to produce their versions of classical works by women. She said the Long Island Philharmonic also lacks a home, and that a local opera company disappeared after a public/private partnership failed to materialize. Unlike performing arts centers like the Space and the Paramount in Huntington, McDermott said production companies use local acting talent for their performances. At the same time, many actors are being forced to leave Long Island.

Audience questions led panelists to discuss uncovering untraditional performing spaces that everyone can afford or get to, e.g. poetry nights at a local cheese shop; creating artsy places; and partnering local artists with venues and sources of money.

More than 250 community and regional plans based on the tenants of long term sustainability have been underway for years shaping many local projects with public input. Beyond an academic exercise, the past two years has produced a number of plans that are tied to policy and regulatory changes along with potential grant funding from Federal and State resources. Officials from NYSERDA, NYMTC and the Federal Sustainability Partnership discussed these varying regional planning efforts towards bringing resources

directly to Long Island's communities and municipalities in order to implement the many community plans already in motion.

Panelists offered a variety of opinions on how resources should be directed towards Long Island's communities and municipalities in the Sustainability, Planning and Implementation session, led by moderator Elissa Kyle. Long Island has gone through and is going through several regional sustainability plans including NYSERDA's Cleaner Greener Communities plan and the Federal Sustainability Partnership plan. How these plan become implemented was the focus of the panel discussion.

Sustainability Planning and Implementation

Gerry Bogacz, planning director of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, said there are many types of planning that produce fruitful conditions for implementation. The Federal Sustainability Partnership between the Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency has regional planning programs to coordinate place-based programs and initiatives, and will follow with a $236 million in grants for implementation. Livability is an important part for the federal partnership, while regional planning allows funding to reach local municipalities. The "Consortium" for the plan includes nine cities, two counties (Nassau and Suffolk), five regional councils and one non-profit planning organization across New York and Connecticut. The consortium can create place-based plans, but cannot implement them. The responsibility of implementation falls to the local branches of government, which is difficult because Long Island has such a complex breakout of small governing entities. Using overlay maps of several areas such as transportation, energy, housing, food, education and environment would provide a wider view and GIS should be used to help. Coordination between municipalities will help further sustainability goals through either cross-accepted plans, common plan sections or more spatially specific approaches.

Since the sustainability planning panel discussion at the 2012 Summit, the NYSERDA Cleaner Greener Communities Plan has been completed, said North Hempstead Chief Sustainability Officer Frances Reid. The plan, the result of substantial public input, was awarded a 2014 Engineering Excellence Award by the ACEC for Energy. The goals are to implement policies and practices that support communities as they adapt to the challenges of the 21st Century and pursue an affordable, high quality of life, a strong economy, and equitable communities allowing everyone to enjoy the quality of life that Long Islanders desire. Reducing solid waste, installing more charging stations for electric vehicles and emphasizing livable communities, all with community engagement are several of the recommendations that came out of the plan. The development of the plan was phase one of the program, phase two involves funding for projects that meet the goals and recommendations of the plan.

Beth Fiteni, of the CDC of Long Island, said funding for many programs is available on the public benefit corporation's website as Program Opportunity Notices. These cover a wide variety of programs such as renewable energy fleets, storm water management on a small scale, and energy audits for homes and businesses. The first $30 million round of Cleaner Greener Community funding was announced in December and two more rounds of funding of $30 million will happen in 2014 and 2015.

Long Island has for many years provided housing stock of small- and large-lot single family homes and illegal apartments. Recent demographic changes have pushed the market demand for a range of housing types well beyond the inventory of older apartments and creatively-designed housing in Long Island's older downtowns. The necessary housing includes apartments over stores, live work units, loft apartments, townhouses, multifamily rentals and other smaller units adjacent to downtowns and transit. This panel spoke to this emerging market, the needs of working Long Islanders to have real housing opportunities and discuss real examples of success underway on Long Island and throughout the region.

Housing Opportunities

The Housing Opportunities panel featured Sol Marie Jones of the LI Community Foundation, Anthony Atkinson of the LI Board of Realtors, Peter Florey of D&F Development, Ralph Fasano of Concern for Independent Living, Richard Koubel of the Huntington Township Housing Coalition and moderator Pam Robinson of Patch.

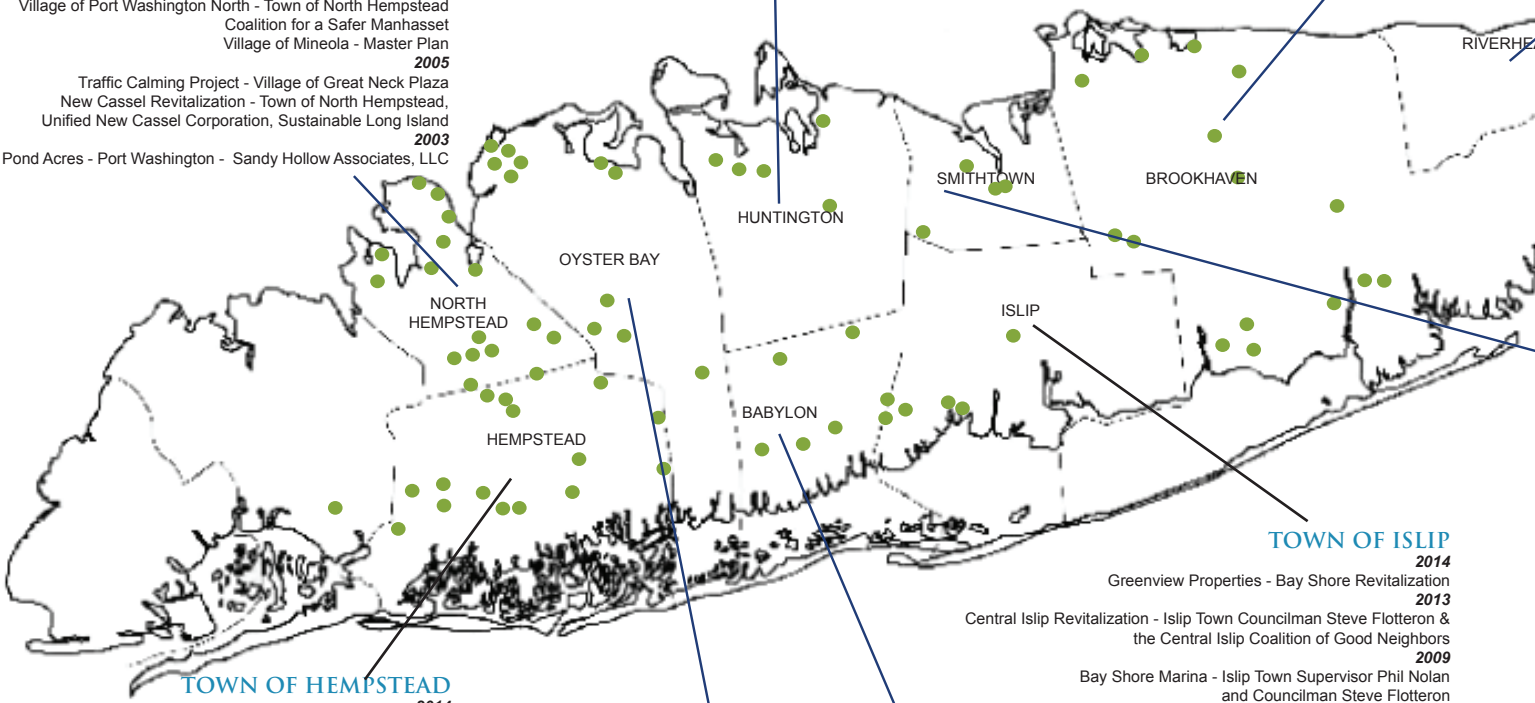
Pam Robinson discussed the need for a wider range of housing options on Long Island. Maintaining a high quality of life depends upon meeting the demand for affordable rental units with ample supply. Communities should be more representative of who Long Islanders are today, with affordable as the majority. Speakers brought their own unique insight into the housing issue, a crucial component of both the local the national economy.

Fasano spoke on his work with Concern for Independent Living, which provides supportive housing and community resources to homeless veterans, the mentally-ill and other disadvantaged groups through the redevelopment of dilapidated facilities. Next, Florey discussed the need to catch up with our surrounding suburban counterparts on rental housing, citing that Long Island is currently 15 percent behind Westchester and 10 percent behind Connecticut. Jones added that just 1-in-5 homes are rentals – 50 percent less than the average suburban area. Florey discussed his involvement with a future project on Ruland Road in Dix Hills, which will include mixed-income housing and units set aside for veterans. Panelists agreed on the need to convince people entrenched in myths that rental housing drives down property values.

Atkinson discussed the current state of the housing market. Residential sales have increased 39 percent from the prior year, the price of homes has increased 5 percent, and a large number of people are moving into larger homes while renting their old ones. Atkinson said affordability is the key factor on Long Island.

Jones brought attention to the fact that more than a quarter of Long Island's rentals are clustered in only ten communities. Zoning restrictions prohibit all but five of Long Island's townships from renting accessory apartments. Superstorm Sandy exacerbated the demand for rentals, but the supply is simply not there. Despite difficulties, panelists expressed confidence in our community's ability to improve and diversify the housing supply.

2014 SMART



TOWN OF HUNTINGTON

2013
Joy Squires - Huntington Conservation Board
2012
The Paramount
Dolores Thompson - Huntington Station Enrichment Center
2010
Buy Local Campaign - Huntington Township Business Council
2005
New Gerard - Huntington - Heatherwood Communities
2004
Constitution Square - Northport, Skippers
2003
Gerard Street - Huntington - Town of Huntington, RMS Engineering, ADL III Architecture
Orchard Park - Huntington

TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN

2014
Wincoram Commons - Town of Brookhaven, Conifer Realty, Coram Civic Association, CDC of Long Island
2012
The Riverwalk - GRB Development, Inc
2011
Bishop Harrison Hale, Cornerstone C.O.G.I.C.
Portion Road Land Use Plan for Lake Ronkonkoma & Farmingville
Hon. Paul Pontieri - Village of Patchogue
2009
Mt. Sinai Heritage Center - Lori Baldassare
Ronkonkoma Hub - Town of Brookhaven, VHB
Patchogue Village Center - Tritec
2008
Save the Forge River
2006
Copper Beach - Pulte Homes
Middle Country Land Use Plan - Coram & Middle Island
2005
East Setauket Firehouse - Peter Caradonna
2004
Floyd Harbor - Shirley - Parisi & Son Construction, Village of Port Jefferson
2003
464 Main St. & Barnum Ave. - Port Jefferson, Barnum Equities
Montauk Hwy Project - Mastic-Shirley - WIlliam Floyd Community Summit

TOWN OF NORTH HEMPSTEAD

2014
Great Neck Sewer District
2013
LaunchPad Mineola
The New Cassel "Yes We Can" Community Center
2012
Mayor Jean Celender - Village of Great Neck Plaza
2009
Marquis at Mineola - Kingdom Family Holdings
2008
The Winston at Mineola - Polimeni Associates
The Bayles House at Baxter Estates - Village of Baxter Estates, Condeco Development
2007
Village of Roslyn - Master Plan
2006
Village of Port Washington North - Town of North Hempstead
Coalition for a Safer Manhasset
Village of Mineola - Master Plan
2005
Traffic Calming Project - Village of Great Neck Plaza
New Cassel Revitalization - Town of North Hempstead, Unified New Cassel Corporation, Sustainable Long Island
2003
Mill Pond Acres - Port Washington - Sandy Hollow Associates, LLC

TOWN OF ISLIP

2014
Greenview Properties - Bay Shore Revitalization
2013
Central Islip Revitalization - Islip Town Councilman Steve Flotteron & the Central Islip Coalition of Good Neighbors
2009
Bay Shore Marina - Islip Town Supervisor Phil Nolan and Councilman Steve Flotteron
2008
Chelsea Place - Bay Shore - Gene Murphy, Town of Islip, Greenview Properties
2004
Bay Shore School District
2003
Southwind Village - Bay Shore - Town of Islip, LI Housing Partnership

TOWN OF HEMPSTEAD

2014
the 11518
Envision Valley Stream & The Village of Valley Stream
2013
Linden Knolls - D & F Development Group & Greater Hempstead Housing Development Funding Corp.
2012
Metro 303 - Mill Creek Residential Trust
Town of Hempstead - Elmont Mixed-Use Zoning District
2011
Westbury Theatre Project - Lowe Properties
2010
The C - Freeport, Signature Organization
Roosevelt Development Group, LI Housing Partnership
2009
Hawthorne Court - Valley Stream, Dennis Organization
Alexan @ West Hempstead - Trammell Crow Residential
2008
Rosalie Norton & The West Hempstead Civic Association
2007
Afrikan American Media Network - Roosevelt - Andreaus 13
2006
The Albanese Organization - Garden City
2005
Bristal at Westbury - Engel Burman, Village of Westbury
2004
Village of Garden City
Time Equities - Freeport
Signature Place Apartments - Rockville Centre, Chase Partners
2003
Village of Rockville Centre
Archstone Roosevelt Center - Town of Hempstead
CBD Revitalization

TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

2014
Sandy Suport Massapequa Style
2012
Bartone Properties & BWC Realty Partners - Farmingdale Hotel
2011
Glen Cove Piazza - JOBCO Realty & Construction
2010
Glen Cove Waterfront Redevelopment - RXR Glen Isle Partners
2009
Glen Cove Master Plan - Mayor Ralph Suozzi
2008
Glen Cove Ferry Terminal - Urbitran Associates, City of Glen Cove
Avalon at Glen Cove North - Avalon Bay
2006
Oyster Bay Main Street Association - Town of Oyster Bay
2005
Avalon at Glen Cove - Avalon Bay
2004
Underhill Preserve - Jericho - Society to Preserve Underhill

TOWN OF BABYLON

2014
Neighbors Supporting Neighbors
2013
East Farmingdale Republic LIRR Station - Town of Babylon
2011
Wyandanch Rising - Hon. Steve Bellone, Town of Babylon
2010
Village of Babylon
2009
Village Hall - Amityville - Village of Amityville
2007
Oak Street Plaza - Copaigue, Town of Babylon
2003
Western Waterfront Redevelopment - Oyster Bay - NYS, Town of Oyster Bay, Cameron Engineering
Village of Farmingdale

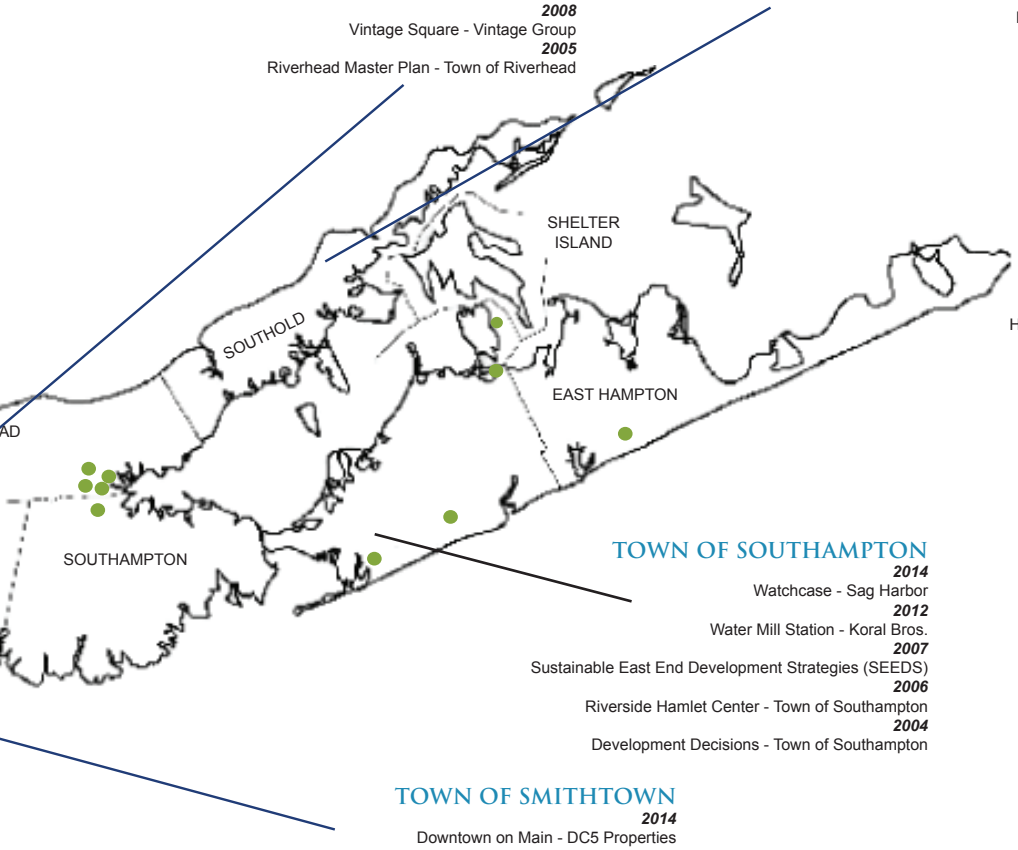
Growth Awards

Town of Riverhead

2011
Atlantis Marine World's Hyatt Place
2010
Concern Riverhead - Concern for Independent Living
Summer Wind Square - Eastern Property Investor Consultants, LLC
2008
Vintage Square - Vintage Group
2005
Riverhead Master Plan - Town of Riverhead

Town of Southold

2005
Village of Greenport, Mayor Dave Kapell



Town of Southampton

2014
Watchcase - Sag Harbor
2012
Water Mill Station - Koral Bros.
2007
Sustainable East End Development Strategies (SEEDS)
2006
Riverside Hamlet Center - Town of Southampton
2004
Development Decisions - Town of Southampton

Town of Smithtown

2014
Downtown on Main - DC5 Properties
2013
Smithtown Main Street - Lavena Sipes, the Courtney Sipes Memorial Foundation
Smithtown Main Street - Mark Mancini, Smithtown Chamber of Commerce
2006
Country View Estates - Smithtown - Landing Avenue, LLC

Smart Growth Hall of Fame
(multiple award winners)

Glen Cove - 6
Riverhead - 5
Bay Shore - 5
Huntington - 4
Patchogue - 4
Hempstead - 4
Mineola - 4
Great Neck – 4
Freeport - 3
Port Washington - 3
Smithtown - 3
Farmingdale - 2
Garden City - 2
Mastic/Shirley - 2
Port Jefferson - 2
Rockville Centre - 2
Ronkonkoma - 2
Westbury - 2
West Hempstead - 2
New Cassel - 2

Community Leaders

2010
Sergio Argueta - S.T.R.O.N.G.
2008
Diana Coleman - EOC of Nassau County
2007
Dr. David Sprintzen - LIPC
2005
Lake Ronkonkoma Civic Organization
2004
Connie Kepert - Affiliated Brookhaven Civic Organization
2003
Neal Lewis - Long Island Neighborhood Network, Nassau Hub CAC

Government Leaders

2014
Hon. Ed Mangano - Nassau County Executive
2013
Hon. Peter King - US House of Representatives
2012
NYS Lieutenant Governor Robert L. Duffy
Hon. Charles Fuschillo - NYS Senate
2011
Hon. Carl Marcellino - NYS Senate
Hon. Sam Hoyt - NYS Assembly
2010
Hon. Tim Bishop - US House of Representatives
Hon. Kate Browning & Hon. Ed Romaine - Suffok County Legislature
2005
Hon. Vivian Viloria-Fisher - Suffolk County Legislature
2004
Hon. Michael Balboni - NYS Senator
Hon. Steve Engelbright - NYS Assembly
2003
Hon. Thomas DiNapoli - NYS Assembly
Hon. Edward Hennessey - Town of Brookhaven
Hon. John Jay LaValle - Town of Brookhaven
2002
Hon. Mark Cuthbertson - Town of Huntington

Regional Leaders

2014
Robert Scheiner - H2M Architects + Engineers
2013
Sandy Rebuilding Volunteers
2012
Sandi Vega
2008
Richard Kessel - LIPA
2007
Robert Yaro - Regional Plan Association
2006
Richard Bivone - Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce
2005
Nancy Douzinas - Rauch Foundation
2003
Robert Catell - Keyspan

Islandwide

2014
Hon. Jay Schneiderman - Suffolk County Legislature - Sunday Bus Service
Bernadette Martin - Friends & Farmers
Operation Splash
2013
7Bus
LISTnet
Connect Long Island
LIPA Clean Energy Programs
2012
EmPower Solar
2011
John Durso & Roger Clayman, LI Federation of Labor
Adrienne Esposito - Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Kelly Douglas - West Islip High School
James Rhodes - Dowling College
2010
David Glass - NYSDOT Bike-Ped Coordinator (posthumously)
2009
Nassau-Suffolk Coalition for the Homeless
North Shore Land Alliance
2007
Peconic Land Trust
Four Star Variety Store - Northport, East Northport, Farmingdale
Suffolk Community College - Riverhead, Sayville
Nassau County Department of Economic Development - Patrick Duggan
Arverne By the Sea - Beechwood Organization & The Benjamin Companies
Bill Chaleff, Green Building
2006
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
2005
Waterfront Revitalization Program - NYS Department of State
2004
Catholic Charities
2003
MTA Long Island Bus - Neal S. Yellin

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Huntington Station

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American Transit Insurance Company
Good Harvest Financial Group
RMB Drafting
Electrical Inspectors
Better Claims Management Solutions
Vincent James Management Co.
GF Realty
Wildan Financial
them TV
Omni Presenters
Northport Copy

Design/architecture
ADL III Architecture
Spector Group
Zyscovich Architects
Beatty Harvey Coco
Hoffman Grayson Architects

Education
Dowling College
Molloy College
Hofstra University
St. Joseph's University
NYU Wagner

Energy
National Grid
Caithness
EmPower Solar

Engineering
Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.
H2M, PC
VHB
Wendel Companies
Paulus, Sokolowski & Sartor
Cameron Engineering
PW Grosser
Parsons Brinckerhoff

Government
Town of Islip
Town of Babylon
Town of Hempstead
Town of North Hempstead
Town of Huntington
Suffolk County IDA

Labor
Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW
Local 252 TWU

Legal
Harras, Bloom & Archer
Certilman Balin, LLP
Albanese & Albanese LLP
Ruskin, Moscou, Faltischek, PC
Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, LLP
Law Office of Eliot F. Bloom
Kushnick Pallaci
Farrell Fritz
Schanker & Hochberg, PC

Media
LI Business News
Newsday
Noticia
Herald Community Newspapers
Building Long Island
NY Real Estate Journal
IQ Strategy Group
The Corridor
UCOMM Radio

Real Estate - Commercial
RXR
Heartland Business Park
Zucaro Construction
Lou Hall Properties
DWH / Cushman & Wakefield

Real Estate - Residential
Renaissance Downtowns
Jobco Organization
Engel Burman
Posillico
Mill Creek Residential Trust
Concern for Independent Living
Greenview Properties
D & F Development Group
Condeco Development LLC
The River Walk
Livingston Development Group
Crystal Windows

Transportation
AECOM
Long Island Rail Road
Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA
Metropool
Nicolock Paving
Scalamandre Contractors
MetroPool

Foundations
The Robin Hood Foundation
LI Community Foundation
New York Community Trust
Feldman Charitable Trust
The Harry Chapin Foundation

Regional Partners
AARP
Citizens Campaign for the Env.
Empire State Future
Huntington Township Chamber of Commerce
Long Island Business Council
Long Island Federation of Labor
LI Board of Realtors
LI Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
LI Software and Technology Network
The Sustainability Institute
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
APA Long Island
Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce
NY League of Conservation Voters
American Communities Institute at Dowling College
LI Coalition for the Homeless
Child Care Councils of Nassua and Suffolk
GoRail
Smart Growth America
CNU New York
Neighborhood Network
Long Island Minority AIDS Coalition
Harrison Hale Community Action Center
Regional Planning Association
Workforce Development Group
HIA Long Island
Nassau Suffolk Law Services
NYCOSH

Community Partners
Concerned Citizens of Plainview / Old Bethpage
Coram Civic Association
Cornerstone Church of God in Christ
Elmont Chamber of Commerce
Greater Smithtown Chamber of Commerce
Huntington Station Shared Vision
Glen Cove BID
Hicksville Chamber of Commerce
Hicksville Community Council
Lake Ronkonkoma Civic Organization
Mastic Beach Property Owners Association
Mastics-Moriches-Shirley Community Library
Middle Island Civic Association
Nesconset Chamber of Commerce
Northport Village Merchants Association
Plainview/Old Bethpage Chamber of Commerce
Porter Trejo Action Network
Save the Forge River
Youth of Ethical Societies - Long Island Chapter.
Uniondale Community Council

Regional Leadership

Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano

Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano is a recipient of this year's Regional Leadership award.

While Nassau County tackles a tax assessment system creating millions in debt, the brain drain of young professionals and the wake of Superstorm Sandy, Mangano has been a rock in the county government.

Growing up in Bethpage, Mangano earned his undergraduate and law degrees from Hofstra University. He also put in time as a janitor and newspaperman before the New York State Bar admitted him in 1988 and a Long Island law firm brought him on board.

His foray into politics began with an election to the Nassau County Legislature in 2002. During his seven-year tenure, Mangano represented the 17th Legislative District and was honored by the League of Conservation Voters for championing open space and ground water. But his campaign changed to cutting wasteful spending, fixing the assessment system and limiting debt just to pay expenses in 2009 when he successfully ran for the county executive title.

"A revitalized downtown helps everyone"

These days, Mangano is heavily focused on economic development, especially on Main Street.

"A revitalized downtown helps everyone," the county executive said.

Of all jobs in Nassau, he said, 60 percent come from small businesses. These merchants tend to be the most generous in supporting their community through youth sports, PTAs and schools.

Spending dollars in downtown shops also keeps money within the community. Towns with a healthy Main Street are likely to see home property values rise.

But it's hard for the county's economy to flourish when young professionals are leaving in droves. Dubbed the brain drain, Long Island is seeing countless youth move away after picking up the bill to educate them. After successfully focusing on creating affordable housing for seniors, Mangano set his sights on keeping young professionals in Nassau.

The solution, he believes, is a combination of downtown entertainment, housing and transportation. It's called transit-oriented development and it combines commercial and residential uses in a walkable environment with transit solutions nearby. In the Village of Farmingdale, construction is underway for Jefferson Plaza. Once complete, the two-building development will house 154 apartments and 19,200 square feet of retail neighboring the LIRR station. Over in Mineola, The Winston and The Churchill incorporate 275 units of housing and 36 units of senior housing near the LIRR station and bus terminal. In Great Neck Plaza, Plaza Landmark offers 93 units of housing.

Apartments and condos in these downtown units are more affordable to young professionals, Mangano said, while many prefer mass transit and walking to driving. Transit oriented development also creates more bars, arts opportunities and other sources of entertainment not commonly found in suburbia.

While the county executive said fewer youth are leaving these days, he announced the creation of the Nassau 200 program during his State of the County address in March. This includes a panel of 200 residents born between 1979-1995 to determine what neighborhoods young people want and how likely they will be to set up a business in Nassau.

"What could make them want to raise a family on Long Island?" he said.

Regional Leadership

Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano

Mangano and his economic development team have helped create and retain more than 19,000 private sector jobs in Nassau County. The county won a heated competition with the State of New Jersey for the International Headquarters of Hain Celestial. Nassau has also attracted new homeland security jobs, high-tech jobs, as well as film and television industry jobs to the former Grumman-Navy property in Nassau. In 2013, the state Department of Labor reported that Nassau County leads the State of New York in terms of job growth and employment.

The county executive added that maintaining and improving the county's infrastructure is critical to future success. While much of the infrastructure is more than 50 years old, the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant is at the center. Badly in need of updates before Sandy, the plant "was basically destroyed" by nine feet of saltwater flooding. Millions of untreated and partially-treated sewage flowed through the plant and into local waters before emergency repairs were made. Temporary measures kept the plant up and running again for months after Sandy, but emergency generators cost taxpayers $1 million every month and generated noise and odor complaints from neighbors. More than $830 million was allocated from county and state coffers to fund repairs by the end of 2013.

When Long Island was hit by Superstorm Sandy in October 2012, Mangano led the charge to protect human life and advocated Congress to pass the necessary funds for residents to begin to recover and rebuild in storm ravaged areas. He also joined with the chaplains of Nassau's police and fire departments to create a Hurricane Recovery Fund that assists victims of Sandy, and opened a Nassau County Business Recovery Center for local merchants.

"You can't build an economy without an efficient wastewater treatment plant"

Thanking Governor Andrew Cuomo and Senator Chuck Schumer for their support, the county executive has also advocated for an ocean outfall pipe. Effluent - treated sewage - is currently released into Reynolds Channel. The Atlantic Ocean could better dilute the effluent without increasing nitrogen levels to dangerous levels for the ecosystem.

As part of these ongoing efforts, Executive Mangano joined a gathering of nearly 100 people calling for upgrades to the Treatment plant. Joined by politicians from both major parties, environmentalists, civic groups and residents, Mangano gave the keynote address.

"You can't build an economy without an efficient wastewater treatment plant," he said

Complete Streets Legislation as proposed by Nassau County Executive, Edward Mangano, was passed by the County Legislature earlier this year.

Mangano stated that the purpose for this legislation is to "set forth standards and guidelines to help us better plan road projects to make Nassau's roads the safest they can be at all time for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike."

Mangano has also helped to support small business with his Buy Locally initiative. Announced at Umberto's of New Hyde Park in 2011 for the holiday season, the initiative encourages local residents to shop in their downtowns.

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and all the Vision Long Island Smart Growth Awards recipients

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Regional Leadership

Robert M. Scheiner, H2M

This 2014 Regional Leadership award goes to Robert Scheiner for advancing Long Island's infrastructure from behind the scenes.

Now a senior vice president with H2M Architects + Engineers, Scheiner began his career with the Town of Riverhead in 1976. He spent a decade directing all phases of architectural, planning and structural engineering projects, including designing comprehensive master plans, coordinating public works projects and providing architectural designs and supervision on all architecture projects. He served as director of Community Development & Planning before becoming deputy supervisor and assuming all oversight for construction projects, and water and sewer districts.

During his time in Riverhead, the Commack resident said a former mayor once advised him the best way to improve a community is to improve its weakest parts. Scheiner took the message to heart and focused on affordable housing during his tenure.

"Government can make a difference," he said, urging the public to join civic leaders and local government in the decision-making process.

While H2M began as water and sewage specialists in 1933, Scheiner came on board in 1986 to start their architectural division. The company currently employs more than 50 architects. Now a senior VP and chief marketing officer, he still steers the firm along Smart Growth currents. H2M is working on the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant, and Scheiner believes downtown development is not possible without proper sewer and water systems.

"There's a positive change we can all see."

In fact, he believes Long Island is at a crossroads with a need for more transportation and housing opportunities. He supports downtown development, open space preservation and Complete Streets transportation policies as a board member with Vision Long Island.

"There's a positive change we can all see," Scheiner said.

By the same token, he's interested in making the region more hospitable to young professionals. Transit-oriented development would create affordable housing and lower taxes, both of which are desperately needed to retain the talent pool with which to attract employers to Long Island. That mindset also benefits his employees. Scheiner said the average H2M employee is in their young 30s.

"We're helping our own people," he added.

But his concern for the community doesn't end at 5 p.m. Scheiner has a history of philanthropy and volunteering in leadership roles. As vice chairman of the Huntington Township Chamber of Commerce, he participates on the Executive, Government Relations, Green/Sustainable, and Huntington Village Parking Improvements committees. He's also a board member for the Community Development Coalition of Long Island and former chair of the Leadership Huntington Foundation.
A former Rotarian in both Riverhead and Huntington, Scheiner received the Paul Harris Fellowship by the Huntington Station Rotary.

The Huntington Chamber awarded the Commack resident its John Klaber Memorial Award last fall for his devotion to the community and leadership roles throughout the town.

"It's been a privilege to spend my career serving the people of Huntington and contributing to our community's quality of life," Scheiner said.

After crossing paths with the H2M executive for years, Long Island Business Council Co-Chairman and Vision Long Island board Co-Chair Bob Fonti described his fellow board member as a visionary who derives pleasure simply from helping others.

"Bob brings people together," Fonti said.

A Tradition of Excellence

JOBCO

Jobco is proud to support the Vision Long Island 13th Annual Smart Growth Awards. Congratulations to the 2014 honorees.

Sense of Place

Bay Shore Revitalization, Greenview Properties

Bay Shore has had new stores and restaurants moving in to the downtown, and new mixed-use development provides a new demographic of residents. Greenview Properties is the force behind three of these new projects, and the recipient of the 2014 Sense of Place award.

Around the turn of the last century, Bay Shore was prosperous. But the opening of the South Shore Mall and closure of local mental health facilities sent the community spiraling downward. Retail moved away from Main Street, residents lost their jobs and patients were dumped into various Long Island communities without any support. Rock bottom came in the 1990s when half of the storefronts were empty, and many of those that weren't were churches or laundry facilities.

The neighborhood is very much on the upswing. Alleyways between storefronts and parking were designed to be wide, well-lit and decorated. In some parts of town, community members and business owners pooled their money and bought some of the problem buildings in town. The current Second Avenue Firehouse Gallery was saved from demolition and rebuilt to reflect its image as the community's first firehouse and Jewish temple. Derelict buildings were razed to expose canals and other water abutting Main Street; the site of the former Paradise bar is now the waterfront home of Bay Shore's gazebo.

The continued improvement is also in large part due to Greenview Properties President Larry Gargano. Greenview owns several properties in the community, with more developments on the way.

The neighborhood is very much on the upswing

A resident of Bay Shore, Gargano and his company acquired their first Bay Shore property in the late 1980s. At that point, the community was struggling with commercial vacancies. He's seen steady slow improvement in 15 years, with a surge of restaurants, businesses and offices opening.

Greenview themselves have made significant progress on a trio of mixed-use projects in downtown Bay Shore. The first is the company's new headquarters on Shore Lane. Known as the 5 Shore Lofts, the building is home to 11 studio and one-bedroom apartments on the second and third floors with company's offices on the ground floor. The site was previously home to a county building offering services, which left a problematic crowd after they left. The property is now home to a number of residents and a parking lot used by Main Street customers.

Located across from the Long Island Railroad station, Chelsea Place is part of the gateway to Bay Shore. The mixed-use development was constructed in 2008; it houses 28 duplex apartments and a small amount of retail space. Even the smallest units - a one-bedroom unit priced over $1,000, are still built on two floors to create an intimate sense of home. Cobblestone curbs around the neighborhood, garages hidden in the back of the buildings, and colorful flowers and black fences in front give the community a traditional feel compared to conventional apartment complexes.

Meanwhile, Greenview's Village Place development is still under construction. Once complete, it will offer studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom duplex apartments in a walkable distance from Main Street. That site had been home to blighted factory and commercial buildings before Gargano acquired it. Commercial and retail will return to the site on the first floor, with housing on the top two floors.

Gargano has emphasized infill projects, redeveloping existing downtown buildings for quality rental housing. He credited the Town of Islip with being receptive to mixed-use and multi-family developments. The neighborhood, he added, also supports his projects since a thriving downtown boosts property values for single-family homeowners.

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Compact Building Design

Watchcase

Once a symbol of nineteenth century industrialization, a former watch factory was an eyesore in the heart of Sag Harbor. It had spent years in various industrial uses, but spent 25 years falling into disrepair.

The site, however, will once again be a major component of the village in its new life as Watchcase. The team behind this multi-family development - developer Cape Advisor, engineers Racanelli Construction and architects Baldassano Architecture - is receiving the 2014 award for Compact Building Design.

"It's a win-win for everyone"

Measuring 2.29 acres and sandwiched between Division, Sage and Church Streets, the site has a rich history appropriate for the East End village. The property was first developed in 1881, becoming a steam cotton mill in the 1850s. The mill fell victim to the end of the whaling industry in Sag Harbor in 1871.

Fahys Watch Case Company relocated from New Jersey and opened a new brick factory on the site. The factory produced jobs, especially countless immigrant workers from Ellis Island. By the turn of that century, they were producing more than 12,000 watch cases every day. Employees worked by light streaming through oversized windows.

But fire consumed most of the factory in 1925 and the company succumbed to the Great Depression in 1931. The building sat vacant for six years before Bulova began operations. They signed a 10-year lease in 1937 before buying the property outright. Manufacturing continued through World War II before the plant closed in 1980.

Since then, Baldassano Principal Alex Badalamenti said the building sustained damage from water penetration and moisture. Residents routinely complained about the vacant property becoming a blight to Sag Harbor.

Cape Advisors purchased the site in 2005, but legal hurdles and the recession stalled development. Progress didn't resume again until 2010.

In a walkable community, Badalamenti said the Watchcase development offered a chance to revitalize downtown Sag Harbor. Residents of the project's 64 condos and townhouses will support local merchants. But that location and the historic nature of the building, he added, requires extra care.

"This project is very unique," the architect said.

Once complete, Watchcase will house 47 lofts within the factory and 17 units of housing in adjacent townhouses and bungalows. It'll also hold a pool and outdoor patio, pavilion and fitness center, new sidewalks, landscaping and an underground parking garage for 100 cars.

The design of this project is a significant departure from most of the neighborhoods on the East End, let alone the Village of Sag Harbor. Many of Long Island residents live in single-family homes; those houses turn into mansions in the Hamptons. But in downtown Sag Harbor, Watchcase attempts to balance higher density with walkable space and aesthetics. Badalamenti said it's almost seven times as dense as the average Long Island development, but the density and height are appropriate for the community.

Interest is also high, he added, for property ownership without maintenance. Reflecting on the abandoned building, with its opulent windows gone and brick falling off, Badalamenti said the Watchcraft project will bring the landmark property back to life, support downtown merchants and raise property values throughout the village.

"It's a win-win for everyone."

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Housing Choices

Wincoram Commons

At best, Coram lacked a community hub to define its character. At worst, stretches of Middle Country Road were blighted.

But after the turn of the millennium, members of the neighborhood took action. The Coram Civic Association and Town of Brookhaven joined the Community Development Corporation of Long Island and Conifer Realty to create Wincoram Commons. This project has netted all four the 2014 Housing Choices award.

Once completed, Wincoram Commons will create 176 units of workforce housing and 13,300 square feet of commercial space. A backhoe could be seen ripping up the remains of a deserted UA movie theater on the 17.65-acre site in March, symbolizing progress on the $55 million mixed-use development.

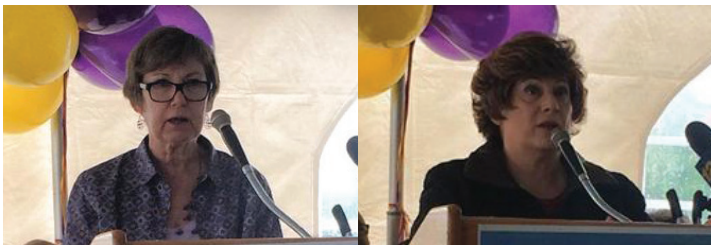
Residents are excited about having a downtown

About 7,300 square feet of commercial will be built into the first floor of three-story residential buildings, with another 6,000 square feet in a commercial building along Route 112. Plans also call for a clubhouse housing a leasing office, fitness center and community space across from the office building. All of these structures are intended to frame a pedestrian-friendly plaza.

Coram Civic President Erma Gluck said residents are excited about having a downtown, which will both create a sense of place and support local business by locating stores near homes. The name of the project hails from a native American chief who once oversaw the region; residents picked the name.

Monthly rent for the Wincoram Commons is set at $1,176 for one-bedroom, $1,140 for the two-bedroom unit and $1,625 for three bedrooms.

The development is also creating 145 temporary construction jobs and 34 new permanent jobs. In addition, it also includes infrastructure expansion, like a connection to a nearby sewer treatment plant and a connector road from Route 112 to Middle Country Road to prevent congestion north of the site. A sidewalk between the development and nearby Avalon Bay at Charles Pond luxury apartment complex is also in the plans.



The Wincoram project began as an intensive planning process led by Vision Long Island and the town in 2002. Residents met with planners and traffic engineers during focus groups, presentations and discussion groups to create plans for land use and a network of roadways in Coram and Middle Island.

Town Councilwoman Connie Kepert, president of the Middle Island Civic Association before being elected to the town board in 2005, was anxious to ditch strip-zoning. Mixed-use development and walkability are important for creating a sense of identity, she said. The town's land use plan was adopted in 2006, identifying the blighted UA theater as a potential mixed-use site.

Real estate firm Conifer Realty will construct the development in three phases. Ninety-eight apartments and 7,300 square feet of retail will be built during the first stage. The second phase calls for the remaining 78 residential units. The final stage consists of 6,000 square feet of retail space.

Conifer Realty last year announced they secured funding for Phase I. New York State committed $2.1 million earmarked for affordable housing, plus another $1 million from Empire State Development's Regional Council capital program. Suffolk County chipped in $1.5 million from their Infrastructure Improvements for Workforce Housing Capital program. CDC-LI rounded out the funding with a $500,000 loan.

Once the project is finally complete the development will fit into the community so well that people quickly consider it a part of Coram's history.

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2014 Smart Growth Award recipients on all of your hard work and effort.

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Sustainability

Great Neck Sewer District

What began as mandates to reduce nitrogen pollution in the Long Island Sound transformed into the 2014 Sustainability award for the Great Neck Water Pollution Control District.

Federal and state environmental agencies are requiring sewage treatment plants tied to the Sound to reduce their nitrogen output by 58.5 percent from 1990 levels. Located along the border of Nassau County and New York City, the Village of Great Neck and the water district each had their own plants. District Superintendent Chris Murphy said the solution was consolidation.

"We started discussing the potential for having one plant on East Shore Road that would handle both flows," he said.

The district operated a plant with a daily capacity of 3.8 million gallons and the village maintained a plant that could process 1.5 million gallons every day. In 2010, the sewer district began a $60-million expansion to their facility while village officials began preparing to demolish their plant.

The improved facility opened in January 2013 with a daily capacity of 5.3 million gallons. And this past December, they began treating all of Great Neck's sewage. In total, the plant is processing just about 3.6 million gallons every day. "We're designed that we can treat on a 24 hour basis and not have any issues," Murphy said.

Having the additional capacity, he added, creates more opportunities and benefits. District officials are contacting businesses and other municipalities in hopes of selling them on hooking up to the plant. Comparing the system to a bus with varying number of riders, Murphy said residents will see lower taxes if the costs can be divided among more customers. He also said processing more flow at the plant means less goes into septic systems.

"A well-maintained septic system may do an acceptable job, but it doesn't have the same treatment as a technologically advanced system like ours," he said.

Meanwhile, the expanded plant is a model of efficiency and technology. Not only does it remove significantly more nitrogen than required, but the superintendent said it treats more sewage at a lower price than both plants combined. Some of this is possible from using an asset management system. Typically found in larger sewage plants, the Great Neck system became more efficient when computers keep track of maintenance schedules and automatically dispatch staff.

"We're designed that we can treat on a 24 hour basis and not have any issues"

Murphy said they also built the expanded facility with the environment in mind. About 30 percent of the electricity necessary to run the plant is generated through green means on site. Stationary solar panels generate about 10 kilowatts every hour, although district staff are redesigning flat roof space so additional solar panels can be installed down the road. Sewage plants produce methane gas, which is typically used to run a boiler or just burned and released. At the Great Neck plant, methane turns microturbines, creating 130 kilowatts of power. They also have a rain garden on site, which collects stormwater from the parking lot and runs it through a garden of indigenous plants that excel in removing phosphorus and nitrogen before it goes into Manhasset Bay.

"The goal is to get as close as we can to neutral," Murphy said.

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Congratulations to Vision Long Island on a successful year and to all of the 2014 award recipients honored.

Mixed Use

Envision Valley Stream & Village of Valley Stream

For their efforts in 2013, this year's Mixed-Use award goes to Envision Valley Stream and the Village of Valley Stream.

Envision Valley Stream is a nonprofit designed to grow Valley Stream through residents, business, education, houses of worship and other facets of the town. Created in 2009, their goal is to enable communication and cooperation to improve the community.

"It's a wonderful place to live."

Founder David Sabatino lives in Valley Stream. He also owns local coffee shop Sip This, was married to wife, Sarah, in the community and participates in various local groups like the Friends of Valley Stream Dog Park and Community Fest.

"It's a wonderful place to live," he said.

Another Valley Stream resident ignited the village's branding effort last year as well. Playing off Montauk's slogan "The End," Joe Pontillo suggested Valley Stream go by "The Beginning." Sabatino, who co-owns his coffee shop with Pontillo's daughter, loved the idea. While Pontillo sells shirts, stickers and magnets with the new campaign, Sabatino launched Facebook page "Begin in Valley Stream" to support the cause. These days, almost 700 fans follow regular community updates and upcoming events.

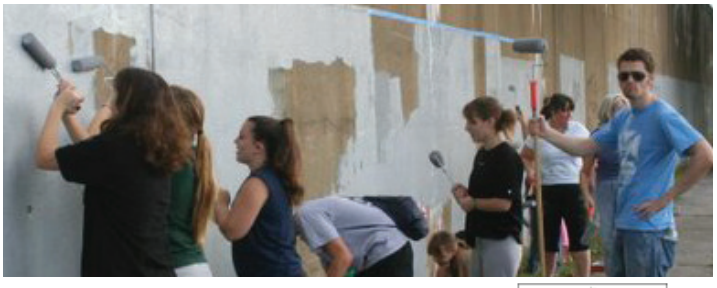
Once upon a time, the village was home to historic structures and an assortment of local merchants. Mayor Ed Fare recalled the downtown Woolworth's being the center of town as a kid, before the Green Acres Mall opened in the 1960s and drove a number of stores away.

Where Rockaway Avenue - their Main Street - once had mom and pop stores with owners living above their stores, village officials are now looking for housing for seniors and young professionals trying to live in walkable downtowns and by public transportations. Walkability and participation, Sabatino added, are essential for a thriving downtown. He's also hoping to see some multifamily housing to help stop the brain drain. Mixed-use development can be a major piece of the solution, attracting more residents, shops, customers and professionals. As a local business owner, mixed-use development increases his local customer base.

In 2013, village officials amended zoning code to allow mixed-use developments and were named by the Long Island Railroad to a study that will explore promoting development around LIRR stations. Envision Valley Stream also backed the Sun Valley Towers project last year. With construction beginning last year, the development includes 13,000 square feet of retail and parking on the first floor and 72 apartments on the top four floors.

Sabatino said he'd like to see the new York State Department of Transportation implement pedestrian islands and signal timers for pedestrians. Customers, he added, routinely complain about how dangerous crossing the highway is.

Also in 2013, the Valley Stream Village Board approved Complete Streets legislation. Complete Streets policies are designed to make roads safer for all users by painting narrower lanes, adding bicycle lanes, improving intersections and lowering traffic speeds. The mayor said they are investigating the best locations to implement the new policies and improve walkability and safety on the roads.



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Strengthening Communities

Downtown on Main, Smithtown

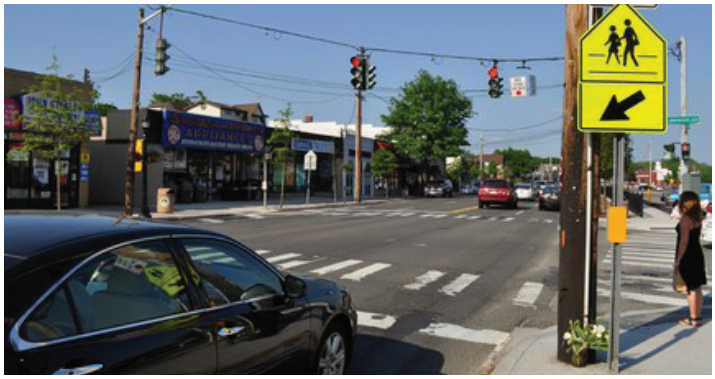
Across from Smithtown Town Hall and sitting along Main Street, a former lumber yard sat abandoned for so long vines and shrubs were growing inside.

To describe the former Nassau-Suffolk Lumber and Supply Corp. as a blighted property is akin to calling Smart Growth an interesting idea. But contractor Zucaro Construction and developer DC5 Properties are breathing new life into the property, earning them the Strengthening Existing Communities award.

Once a lumber yard, the 3-acre property sat untouched for several years since someone last tried developing the land in 2009. The town dropped taxes to benefit owners North Fork Management & Maintenance, but later issued a stop-work order after they demolished more buildings than they were permitted. The lot was ultimately the subject of a Suffolk County grand jury investigating if town officials pressured North Fork into illegally demolition to save on taxes. No charges were filed.

Meanwhile, graffiti covered the building, plywood replaced a broken window, pieces of the storefront began collapsing and plants grew inside.

Last fall, Smithtown Town Board voted to remove zoning restrictions



"The downtown wasn't what it's about to be"

on the property once plans for Downtown on Main were filed. Town officials placed a restrictive covenant on the site during a 1987 zoning change, limiting 0.9 acres strictly for lumber use. In exchange for relaxing the zoning, North Fork agreed to have demolition complete by April 1.

Once complete, the Downtown on Main project will house 56 apartments and up to 15,000 square feet of retail in four buildings on the lot. That would include three, three-story residential buildings with 12 apartments in each, plus a 11,149-square foot mixed-use building with another 20 units. In addition, 20 apartments have been set aside for workforce housing.

Construction boss Andrew Zucaro and DC5's Jared DeLew said the building will feature a turn-of-the-century appearance. After consulting with experts, they planned on using a brick or stone exterior.

But what it looks like is nothing compared to what they hope it will do for downtown Smithtown. DeLew said there's a movement on Long Island to eschew suburban sprawl in favor of community living. They hope the former lumber yard can help create a sense of place.

Demolition occurred earlier this spring with construction underway. Once complete, Zucaro said it will improve the local tax base since small businesses will see increased customers.

And with the property near Route 347, Jericho Turnpike, Northern State Parkway and the Smithtown LIRR station, the developer said it appeals to all ages. Young professionals can commute to the city while empty nesters will have a Main Street to peruse. Zucaro said he believes the development will benefit the youth; his three children prefer downtowns to white picket fences.

"The downtown wasn't what it's about to be," he added.

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Community Revitalization

Bernadette Martin, Friends & Farmers

The 2014 Community Revitalization award is bestowed to Bernadette Martin for her work in supporting both the local economy and well-being through farmers' markets.

Martin is the director of Long Island Greenmarket, an organization that manages five markets and promotes open space preservation. But her experiences with produce began years earlier.

"We hope to draw people with our unique fresh products"

After the family moved from Queens to Island Park, Martin's father introduced her to the family garden. She tended the plot until she was in high school, where she joined the Future Farmers of America despite living in a beach community. A SUNY Plattsburg degree in economic development later, Martin became a horticultural therapist working with kids on an upstate farm in 2001.

Leaving the farm a few years later, Martin spent 2004-2006 as the fulltime farm inspector for New York City's Green Markets. She also spent the early part of the new millennium living on the East End, moving west to Long Beach after leaving the fulltime gig. Compared to the plethora of markets available out east, Martin found "nothing" in her old stomping grounds.

She founded both market management organization Friends & Farmers and the Long Beach farmers' markets in 2008. Martin contacted Nassau County Legislator Denise Ford (D-Long Beach), although city officials were already considering a market before the new resident touched base. She filed paperwork with the state, convinced some of her vendors from the city market to take the risk and opened the market that July.

"It's a very successful market. I think we're a destination location in the summertime," Martin said.

The Long Beach market is open Wednesdays and Saturdays. The weekend hours attract musicians and artists, adding to the sense of community. But even the weekday hours draw large crowds.

"We hope we draw people with our unique fresh products," Martin said.

These days, Long Island Greenmarket also manages farmers' markets in Amityville, Kings Park, Nesconset and Spinney Hill - in Great Neck. They also perform live cooking demonstrations and distribute recipes, distribute vouchers for fresh produce to senior citizens from New York State and accepts food stamps at their markets.

Farmers' markets, the director said, offer substantially different choices than supermarkets. Produce grown for the latter are designed for aesthetics and lengthy transportation, while locally-grown fruits and vegetables are more about taste.

Markets also serve a role in supporting small businesses. Local farms can participate with very little overhead, only needing to purchase insurance and rent a tent. At the same time, downtown merchants benefit from the extra traffic and restaurants can use the local food.

Agriculture is also a major part of Long Island's economy; Suffolk County is the largest source of production in the state. And although development is consuming farmland, Martin said it's easily worse in other parts of the country. Farming is gaining interest with young people, accordinf to the director of the Peconic Land Trust.

"They want to reconnect. They think it's a valuable skill to have and a lot more people are trying to get back to basics," she said.

Similarly, farmers' markets have been popping up all over Long Island. Opening a new market requires contact a chamber of commerce, civic group or other community group for support; finding a walkable location with slow-moving traffic; and communicating with area businesses to ensure they don't feel threatened.

The organization's secondary goal, Martin said, is to preserve open space and create a direct producer-to-consumer relationship.

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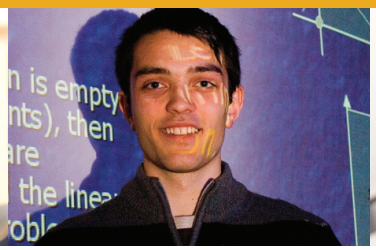

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Transportation Choices

Hon. Jay Schneiderman, Sunday Bus Service

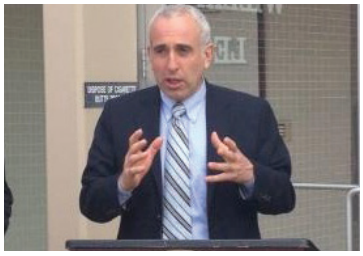
The 2014 award for Transportation Choices goes to Suffolk County Legislator Jay Schneiderman (I-Montauk) for his work with the Suffolk County Transit system.

Suffolk County measures 86 miles wide and home to nearly 1.5 million people. Some sections of the county are more densely populated, while others like the Town of Brookhaven have more empty space. Either way, Long Island Jobs with Justice Community Outreach Coordinator Richard Koubek said transportation is a problem.

"It's a basic need. You need to get to and from work."

Walking is out due to distance alone, and mass transit is extremely limited. But for the young and poor who are unable to drive a car, the bus system doesn't fill the need. When the poor don't have access to mass transit, Koubek said they end up hailing a cab that could cost them half a day's pay.

"It's a basic need. You need to get to and from work," he added.



The situation is especially rough in the 2nd Legislative District, Schneiderman said, due to the dichotomy of the Hamptons. The rich and famous flock to the waterfront during the summer, but very poor residents also live in the area. It's an unusual situation where two people are living in a 20-bedroom house within half a mile as 20 people living in a two-bedroom house. To make matters worse, the area lacks clinics, public transportation and other support services. Schneiderman said he routinely battles with other legislators for public resources despite the Hamptons' reputation.

But the problem extends beyond the borders of Brookhaven. Alternative transportation is very limited throughout the county, a region that is growing older. The population in Suffolk is aging, and there is a lack of housing, transportation and resources available to them. Busses would be a strong option for them, as well as young professionals and residents who can't afford to own a car.

And through most of 2013, Suffolk County didn't even offer bus service when people were off of work or on Sundays. It was worse in Brookhaven, Schneiderman said, which is a very seasonal tourist area. With the Hamptons real estate market improving, the local workforce was actually forced to move further away and, with no Sunday busses, hitchhike to work.

The legislator championed the cause beginning in 2007, but his focus stretched across all 86 miles of Suffolk. According to a study, 24 of the county's 50 bus routes needed Sunday routes. He proposed a pilot program, bumping bus fare from $1.50 to $2 to cover busses on Sundays and holidays between Memorial Day and October. A casual poll of riders by Schneiderman found riders supported the initiative, although former County Executive Steve Levy tried to sabotage the plan. He issued a formal poll, but was surprised at the results again in favor of the more expensive fare.

The additional service was added to 10 routes throughout the county this past January, and has already been reported as an overwhelming success. Since those additions, 3,000 people are riding every Sunday.

Now, Schneiderman is focused on adding Sunday service for the other 14 lines, adding expanded evening service and otherwise growing the Suffolk County Transit system. Public transportation supports small businesses and downtowns, with the latter growing in popularity across Suffolk. Busses not only get shoppers to reduce air pollution, but they add sales tax revenue to the county by delivering shoppers to local stores.

Schneiderman also joined a contingent including Long Island Jobs for Justice, Vision Long Island, Tri-State Transportation Campaign and Long Island Federation of Labor outside the state's offices in Hauppauge to rally for more bus funding back in March. Suffolk County pays $29 million of the $57 million annual cost for the bus system and the state kicks in $22 million. Over in Nassau County, the state spends $57 million annually and the county spends $2.6 million for the $113 million service. He is cautiously optimistic Governor Andrew Cuomo will heed their calls for more assistance.

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Operation Splash

The award for Environmental and Historic Preservation goes to Operation SPLASH for their efforts in protecting Long Island's waterways and shorelines.

Based out of Freeport, Operation SPLASH is a nonprofit that cleans garbage from the water and advocates for marine life. President Rob Weltner said polluting the area's ecosystem for decades has cost Long Island precious resources.

"We've learned our lesson and hopefully we can move on," he said.

A Freeport native himself, Weltner grew up fishing and clamming with his father. But when it came time for him to take his children to enjoy the water, years of pollution eliminated many maritime opportunities. More than 65 million gallons sewage are dumped along Long Island's bays and shorelines every day, while storm drains route oil and other waste directly into the water.

He even came up close and personal with contamination. Summoned to a sewage treatment plant in his professional capacity as an electrician, Werner happened to look inside the plant's tanks. When he went scuba diving the next day, the same substance was in that water.

Operation SPLASH was founded in 1990 with a beat up old boat and a handful of volunteers to pick debris out of the water. Fast-forward to 2014, and the organization now features 3,500 volunteers and six boats docked at the Town of Hempstead's Guy Lombardo Marina in Freeport, Nassau County's Wantagh Park Marina and East Rockaway's Town Marina.

Captains go out once a day, taking volunteers from all walks of life wherever they feel there is the most garbage. After learning about stormwater runoff, sewage treatment plants and other pollutants, Weltner said volunteers "tend to walk a little more softly on Earth."

Every year Operation SPLASH removes about 125,000 pounds of debris. They've rescued more than a million pounds of plastic bags, plastic bottles and bottle caps, juice boxes, styrofoam cups and food containers, BBQ grills, hot water heaters, flat screen TVs, engine blocks and coconuts. But after Superstorm Sandy, the nonprofit picked up more than 300,000 pounds of debris in 2013. Sandy actually claimed SPLASH's seventh boat, in the process of closing

"We have to get this pipe built. No more delays."

marinas, adding more garbage floating in the water and damaging the boating industry.

And when the federal government created the "Rebuild by Design" contest for tri-state areas to win additional Sandy relief funds, the nonprofit worked with the team representing Long Island. They hosted boat and bus tours to proposed project sites in Nassau County.

The storm also crippled the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant with nine feet of storm surge. The plant serves 550,000 Nassau County residents and processes about 50 million gallons of sewage daily. Weltner has joined the contingent calling for an ocean outfall pipe at the plant. Reynolds Channel is too stagnant to handle normal release of treated sewage without increasing nitrogen levels, but the ocean can easily dilute the effluent.

Weltner said the outfall project had originally been discussed 36 years ago, but was put on hold. Not only would the upgrades protect water for Nassau County, but he also said it would create temporary jobs for Long Island workers.

"We have to get this pipe built. No more delays," he said at the rally outside Nassau County Legislature this winter.

Community Leadership

the 11518

The situation was especially bad in the Rockaways where nine feet of saltwater inundated the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant. Responsible for treating wastewater from 550,000 Nassau County residents, the plant had been sorely in need of renovation before Sandy knocked it offline. Millions of untreated and partially-treated sewage flowed through the plant, local waters and nearby communities before emergency repairs were made two days later.

Noisy generators are still powering the plant as Nassau County officials needed all of 2013 to pool $700 million of county and state funds for repairs. Demands for an ocean outfall pipe to release treated wastewater into the Atlantic Ocean also continue.

Meanwhile, more than 12,000 people live in Bay Park and East Rockaway. They dealt with raw sewage on their streets and in their homes immediately after the storm. And for some time, neighborhoods remained in the dark, both of power and information.

Community Leadership award recipient The 11518 was formed in April 2013 as a resource for residents to stay informed. President Dan Caracciolo said they were plagued by seven feet of flood water, flooding half the town. Initially the plan was to provide information and survey the community about unmet needs, but results revealed residents were tackling a variety of issues. Some were waiting for contracts, others needed legal aid and some were trying to bridge the fiscal gap between insurance and FEMA. The group's monthly meetings began a support group with support for each unique situation. They distributed goods around the community and began to tackle unmet needs.

The 11518 also banded volunteers together to accomplish "little wins" for the Rockaways. They assist homeowners with ripping out some damaged homes and light repair work. The goal is remind residents why they chose to live in East Rockaway and Bay Park.

> *"There are so many aspects of this storm and it's not over for many residents"*

In August 2013, about 150 people gathered in Kevin McNulty Park to demonstrate against delays in aid and in support of their neighbors. Residents complained about being forced into the upper floors of their homes, if they could return at all. More griped about extensive delays from FEMA and insurance. Ten months after their rally, many residents are still waiting for neighbors to come home.

"It's not over. There are so many aspects to this storm and it's not over for many residents," Caracciolo said.

The 11518 is now part of Friends of Long Island - an umbrella organization of grassroots groups focused on Sandy recovery in their communities. Supported by Vision Long Island, Friends of Long Island members tackle ripouts, rebuilds and other projects both in their own neighborhoods and on the road with other Freinds of Long Island groups.

Neighbors Supporting Neighbors

When Superstorm Sandy ravaged the Eastern Seaboard in 2012, communities along Long Island's South Shore joined New Jersey and parts of New York City in bearing the brunt of the damage.

Executive Director Kim Skillen and President Theresa DiPietto-Roesler founded Neighbors Supporting Neighbors Babylon after their families jumped into service post-Sandy in different parts of town; Skillen's was distributing food while DiPietto-Roesler's barbecued in the street. Out of touch since high school, the pair reunited via social media. But it was also Facebook, Twitter and other Internet mediums that carried unfiltered images and words of devastation via their friends.

Skillen and DiPietto-Roesler went to work, collecting clothing and household goods, and distributing them from the First Presbyterian Church in Babylon Village. They filled the church just 24 hours after posting on Facebook, along with five classrooms and a gym after 48 hours. They helped hundreds of people working out of the church for two weeks.

They moved into the field and began cooking outside of the Fred Shores Beach Club. As residents began to clean up and rebuild, volunteers provided a hot meal. Barbecues began to include information with FEMA, AmeriCorps and local agencies on hand.
"It's what I would want somebody to do for me should I be in that position. That's why we do what we do," DiPietto-Roesler said.

Community Leadership

"It's what I would want somebody to do for me"

These days, the organization continues to inform, facilitate and feed. Skillen admitted she may not know how to sheetrock like other Friends of Long Island members, but she knows just who to call when a homeowner asks. They organized a holiday party for 200 in 2012, giving gifts to every child and more than $6,000 in a gift card raffle for parents. Neighbors Supporting Neighbors also played a role in educating the community about NY Rising when that was born last year. More than 500 people attended one of their Q&A session with NY Rising boss Jon Kaiman.

They've also become a COAD (Community Organization Active in Disaster). While confusion about getting immediate help and later financial support reigned, COADs are trained to serve as a go-between for those in need and sources of aid. Information and guidance for insurance matters turned out to be almost as important as the clothing, shelters and food volunteers distributed.

"We've never had a storm like Superstorm Sandy before and people didn't know what resources they had available," Skillen said.

But as much as Sandy brought destruction and despair, the two ladies also see it as a disaster that led to inspiration. As a lifelong resident of the Town of Babylon, Skillen never saw her neighbors pull together so much. Sandy spawned their group and other grassroots efforts that put boots on the ground. Growing alone in Babylon, they learned about and joined Friends of Long Island, which now organizes volunteers from various communities to neighbors across the island.

They also became leaders in the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program. The state funneled almost $600 million in federal Community Disaster Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds after Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, and encouraged communities to develop their own solutions. Both Skillen and DiPietto sat on the committee guiding the Babylon/West Babylon team. Plans were submitted to Governor Andrew Cuomo March 31 and opened to the public in April.

The calendar may say almost two years have passed Sandy, but life is still rough for many in Babylon and along the South Shore. Access to money has been slow, while homeowners navigate red tape and mold issues. Life south of Montauk Highway is still living the storm every day, Skillen said, and her organization is committed to making the community whole and bringing their neighbors home.

"This is where I live. It's where I grew up. It's where I want my children to grow up," DiPietto-Roesler said. "It needs to be whole again. I don't like to see it broken."

For their efforts, each founder was awarded a Town of Babylon Community Service Award. They've also been featured on News 12, CBS News, Fox News, CBS Radio and FiOS 1.

Sandy Support Massapequa Style

Another member of the Friends of Long Island is Sandy Support Massapequa Style. This Community Leadership winner works very closely with another nonprofit, Adopt A House. The community organization was founded in January 2013 to disseminate information about everything and anything.

The group began making welcome baskets for neighbors who could return home. But it was April 2013 when Sandy Support, Massapequa Style and Adopt A House first worked together to celebrate children who survived Sandy and the storm's aftermath.

All five top leaders have been Sandy victims themselves

These days, Sandy Support Massapequa Style continues to serve as a source of information and resources. They helped encourage homeowners to apply for NY Rising funds before the April 11, 2014 deadline. Members went door-to-door disseminating fliers.

Families on the organization's list have also received various aid, including grants valued at $1,000, as well as 500 trees and shrubs. This month, Sandy Support will invite families to refurnish kids' bedrooms with the help of a $1,000 Ikea grant.

All five top leaders have been Sandy victims themselvesm and bring a unique prespective and understanding to their community rebuilding approach.

Sandy Support, Massapequa Style and Adopt A House have joined forces with Stop FEMA Now to protest legal restrictions and high insurance premiums. The rally was held on the steps of Babylon Town Hall with over 200 people in attendance. Their agenda included demands for lower base flood elevations, more community mitigation, including eligibility for second homeowners, permitting flood insurance to be transferred among property owners and lowering flood insurance premiums.

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