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**Virtual Smart
Growth Journal**





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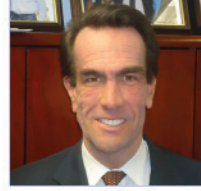
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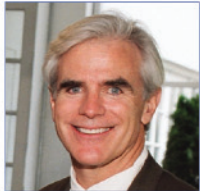
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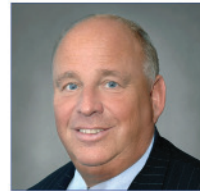
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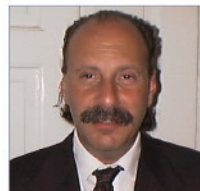
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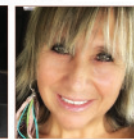
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Leading Long Island's Smart Growth Movement

OUR 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.

Over the past 20 years Vision has counseled downtown Villages and Towns, and has been a resource for the County, State, and Federal governments, as well as the business and civic community on downtown revitalization, planning and infrastructure. Vision has made over 2,500 presentations, performed over 25 community visionings and advanced over 125 public and private planning projects towards implementing the goals of Smart Growth on Long Island.

IMPLEMENTING SMART GROWTH

- Smart Growth Education and Training: Delivering nearly 2,500 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.
- SmartTalk - our e-newsletter reaches 25,000 Long Islanders weekly. Social media efforts include a presence on Facebook, Twitter, an Instagram, and YouTube channel
- Community Visioning & Planning Assistance: Work in communities on visionings, charettes and the advancement of community projects. Communities include: Hicksville, Farmingdale, Baldwin, Westbury, Manorhaven, Riverhead, Gordon Heights, Huntington, Huntington Station, Mastic/Shirley, Bay Shore, Kings Park, Central Islip, Lake Ronkonkoma/West, Farmingville, Southampton, West Babylon, Coram/Middle Island, Mastic Beach, and Bethpage
- 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, Suffolk Alliance of Chambers, Long Island Complete Streets Coalition, and Friends of Long Island.
- Downtown & Infrastructure Projects: Advanced over 100 public and private planning projects towards implementing the goals of Smart Growth. Over 13,000 units of transit oriented development have been approved in our local municipalities with the support of Vision 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
- Promotion of downtown business districts and other community driven programs and to strengthen great places



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Long Island Lobby Coalition

Local Communities & Business head to Albany

A Diverse coalition of Long Island small businesses, civics, human services, downtown planners, labor, environment, and transportation advocates headed to Albany for the 12th annual Long Island Lobby Day.

The Long Island Lobby Coalition traveled to Albany this past February 25th to meet with the LI Senate and Assembly delegations, and the Governor's office on the coalition's legislative and budget priorities for 2020.

Dozens of small business and community leaders urged state representatives to secure funding for important transportation, sewage and infrastructure projects, housing, human services, champion environmental programs and support legislation to benefit small business and encourage economic development.

Founded in 2009, the Long Island Lobby Coalition as a diverse alliance of organizations working together to advance meaningful improvements to Long Island's quality of life and our economy.

Since its founding, 15 bills on the Coalitions agenda have been enacted into law, and nearly 20 budget and regulatory proposals were approved with key Long Island infrastructure projects funded.



The day featured several meetings with New York State lawmakers and key staff

This year's agenda included: Transportation with funding for LI buses, pedestrian safety & commuter tax benefits; Economic development such as small business savings accounts, support for local manufacturing, small business tax cuts and funding for downtowns; Water, Energy & Environment concerns that included water quality, off shore wind, and solar energy; Housing & Human Services such as affordable housing, child care, childhood nutrition, veterans services & support for family caregivers.; and Ten Major Infrastructure projects for Long Island communities.

Meetings during the day included the LI Senate Majority Delegation including Hon. Monica Martinez, Hon. James Gaughran, Hon. Kevin Thomas, Hon. Anna Kaplan, Hon. John Brooks, and Hon. Todd Kaminsky. We also met with Senate Minority Leader Hon. John Flangan. The LI Assembly Delegation also met with our group, including Hon. Steve Engelbright, Hon. Phil Ramos, Hon. Chuck Lavine, Hon. Fred Thiele, Hon. Ed Ra, Hon. Kimberly Jean-Pierre, Hon. Michaelle Solages, Hon. Michael Montesano, Hon. Judy Griffin, Hon. John Mikulin, and Hon. Steve Stern. To close the day the coalition met with Governor Cuomo's policy team, which included representatives from the legislative office, transportation, environment, and budget staff.

"There are a great deal of competing interests represented in the halls of Albany and Long Island's needs can differ dramatically from the rest of the state. That's why it's so critical that we unite our voices and carry a clear message to our elected officials on critical

issues for small businesses, sewer infrastructure needs, expanding solar, public transportation and more" said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment.

John R. Durso, President of the Long Island Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO said, "The Long Island Lobby coalition has reconvened to better the lives of working people throughout our region. We have are once again returning to Albany with a robust agenda aimed at preserving, protecting, and enhancing the quality of life of all citizens on Long Island." Durso continued, "Including Nassau and Suffolk Counties in the Facilitated Child Care Enrollment initiative, continuing the state's focus on expansion of the offshore wind industry, and making critical infrastructure investments, particularly around preserving water quality, are areas we believe collectively our elected officials must take action to move the region forward."

"Bringing resources back from Albany to our local communities has been a theme of our collective work and the best voices to deliver that message are the community and small business leaders themselves. We look forward to a dialogue with our elected representatives in the NYS Senate , Assembly and the Governor's team to make the unique needs of our many communities get their fair share of resources," said Eric Alexander, Director, Vision Long Island & LI Main Street Alliance.

This year is the coalition's 12th year with over 100 organizations in support and 40 of the groups represented at the Lobby Day.



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H2M is proud to be a Silver Sponsor of the 2020 Long Island Smart Growth Summit



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The Complete Streets Virtual Summit



Creating Safe, Walkable Streets

Vision Long Island, the Long Island Complete Streets Coalition, and Long Island Main Street Alliance came together virtually to hold part one of its 8th Annual Complete Streets Summit earlier this year.

Despite the inability to meet in person, close to 100 participants joined to discuss this year's topic, "Healthy Citizens, Healthy Main Streets."

"People are walking and biking. This is the best of times for people we care about," said Vision Long Island Executive Director Eric Alexander, who greeted the group before quickly zeroing in on the state of Long Island during this remarkable time. Mr. Alexander also outlined as the theme for the day, with credit to Dennis Carter from GPI: *Keep It Going*. "We need to continue to be a public voice for walking and biking as a coalition," Alexander stated.

3 Calls to Action were identified: Everybody individually getting out there and continuing to walk and bike; Make towns, villages, county and state roadways as pedestrian/bicycle safe as possible; Make sure federal, state, county and local funds continue to stream to pedestrian and bike amenities.

Starting off the conference, Vision's Sustainability Director Elissa Kyle explained that several community members expressed their experiences of walking and biking on Long Island. These were shared with the attendees and dubbed Silver Linings.

Sara Hill of Baldwin provided the following account: "A young white man pushing his baby in a stroller. Two middle aged South Asian women in saris walking around the school field. An elderly white woman in scrubs talking on the phone. A black man riding his bike with his son. Some type of multicultural suburban utopia? Hardly. It's North Baldwin on a weekday between 4-5 pm during the pandemic. It's not that I didn't know my neighborhood was diverse.

"In fact, that's why we moved here, and have been residents for over twenty years. What's remarkable is that the pandemic has made it much more visible. It's a silver lining, and a reminder of what we have to offer. For all the current racial tension, Baldwin provides a glimmer of hope as the spotlight glares on the lack of diversity and inequity in other towns, villages, and hamlets on Long Island. This lack of diversity has been structurally created because of years of systemic racism -- where zip codes determine the quality of your school system -- for example."

Opening remarks were made by Nassau County Executive Laura Curran, who discussed some recent changes in downtowns as a result of the pandemic. With these changes community members are beginning to appreciate what downtowns have to offer - a sense of community and coming together.

She also briefly discussed some helpful initiatives the County has been involved with when it comes to helping local businesses during these unusual times. The County, partnering with the IDA



and Town of Hempstead Supervisor Don Clavin, are providing free PPE packages to downtown businesses to help them reopen. A recent study revealed that the biggest concern businesses have during this reopening stage is the lack of consumer confidence. The County is also partnering with the IDA to help businesses who were passed over for PPP from the federal government and are offering loans to small businesses that need it. (www.boostnassau.net)

County Executive Curran stated, "It is our mission to bring communities together, to the benefit of the entire community. This crisis has given all of us an opportunity to commit to that mission."

While discussing keeping walking and biking habits flourishing, she expressed the need to move away from Long Island's car culture. The more residents do it, the more elected officials will begin to take it seriously. On top of that, Ms. Curran acknowledged the need for funding to achieve these goals, especially infrastructure money. Advocacy work needs to continue to help with this local recovery.

Bernard Macias from AARP discussed the organization's present efforts, which includes working with Congress to get more COVID 19 testing and PPE to staff and residents in nursing homes and advocating for virtual visits between families and residents. AARP is also working to keep SNAP assistance flowing to the people who desperately need it, and is looking to address the racial disparity that has become even more apparent in the past months.

Jonathan Keyes, Executive Director/CEO of the Suffolk County Economic Development Corporation, discussed the tremendous progress in moving the Suffolk County Hike and Bike Trail from a dream to reality. This past March saw the completion of the Hike and Bike Master Plan, a comprehensive plan created with tremendous public participation. The goal of the plan is to create 1,200 miles of walk, hike and bike facilities, with 84% of residents within ½ mile of these facilities.

Denise Carter of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. then piloted the presentations by Dr. Keshia Pollack Porter, Associate Dean for Faculty at Johns Hopkins University and Paula Flores, Transportation Planning Practice Leader at GPI.

Dr. Pollack Porter emphasized the idea that streets can promote public health, noting the benefits of being outdoors, physical activity, immunological health, social cohesion, mental health and access to goods & services.

Complete Streets enable safe access for all users of all ages, abilities and modes by improving equity, safety, and public health. Incomplete streets are dangerous and can harm health, which disproportionately impacts low-income people, people of color, and people with disabilities.

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health



such as poverty, racism, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care. Moreover, transportation systems & streets can help advance health equity.

Some approaches regarding complete streets Dr. Pollack Porter discussed was the need to put people first, before vehicles, engage in policy advocacy, center equity, help achieve health equity, embrace Safe Systems Approach (closing or limiting traffic on streets, change speed limits), and partner with communities.

Dr. Pollack Porter emphasized, "It is critical to have partnership with communities. The process needs to be a community involved street design." She explained, "We should embrace safe streets and we now have an opportunity to sustain changes. Keep it going."

Michele Gervat of the American Heart Association noted that it's the Association's mission to improve American's cardio-vascular health by 20%. To do so, AHA is committed to safe parks, safe streets, safe schools and safe walkways. Health of all our communities cannot be addressed until social detriments of health are addressed.

"We are only as strong as our weakest link." Ms. Gervat stated.

Paula Flores of GPI discussed the importance of Complete Streets and community health. Noting that residents in walkable communities are 2X more likely to achieve CDC endorsed daily exercise recommendations and that inactivity contributes to 1 in 10 premature deaths.

Ms. Flores stressed "It is time to stop thinking, it is time to act."

Discussing the lack of safe streets, Ms. Flores stated, "We have a crisis. The number of lives we are losing is unacceptable." She also noted that we are not talking about statistics, but people.

In discussing the need for change, Ms. Flores talked about the changes needed to reflect context sensitivity and how there must be citizen engagement. There must be democratic design and citizens must be listened to in order to achieve the right outcome.

As the first day wound down, areas of attendee concerns included the need to connect public health dollars with transportation dollars; safety education; street traffic safety; and the need to keep communities and elected officials engaged and supportive.

Day 2

Day 2 focused on how Long Island's downtowns are transforming main streets to support businesses and facilitate outdoor dining while maintaining social distancing.

Moderated by Vision Long Island's Sustainability Director Elissa Kyle, the panel included Mayor Ralph Ekstrand of Farmingdale, Mayor Margot Garant of Port Jefferson, Rich Vanderburgh of the Greenport BID, Clariona Griffith of the Hempstead Chamber of Commerce, and Jacob Dixon of Choice for All. Discussions centered

around advancing Day 1's principles and theories throughout local communities.

Vision Long Island Executive Director Eric Alexander opened Day 2 outlining the important work of the Complete Streets Coalition, from working on Complete Streets policy and advocacy, to obtaining necessary funding. The Coalition is a public voice for pedestrians, bicyclists and bus transit passengers. Despite the present health crisis, the good news is people are out walking and biking. The theme this year is Keep It Going.

Mr. Alexander thanked Vision Long Island's Board of Directors and the sponsors of the Summit - AARP, GPI, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, VHB, Lift Tango and Nice Bus, for their tireless commitment to communities.



Just as on Day 1, Ms. Kyle again shared community member observations about experiences walking and biking on Long Island these last several months. These narratives were dubbed Silver Linings.

Ray Thomas, of 1st Equity Title, provided the following account, "So when the Coronavirus hit I was stuck at home so I dusted off the old bike that I had. Now I get to explore the neighborhood I live in. It started out small, but riding around you get to know how beautiful your neighborhood is. When you are driving in the car you are whizzing by – you don't know what's in the stores. When you are on a bike you stop and look – I stopped several times to check out the local business. Some of these businesses I had no idea were in my neighborhood. So, biking for me has been a great experience: Learning about the community, learning about the businesses in my community and getting exercise. After being stuck at home, being outside now biking is a win-win situation."

Opening remarks were made by Sean Sallie, AICP Deputy Commissioner. Mr. Sallie started off his comments by thanking local elected officials, community leaders, engineering and planning firms and the non-for-profit sector for working together to make good projects happen. "Public works cannot do anything alone, it takes a team to bring about Complete Streets changes and public place improvements," Mr. Sallie stated.

Mr. Sallie then updated Summit attendees on several Nassau County initiatives designed to help local businesses, including the County's Open Streets Program. This pilot program serves to streamline road closure permits so municipalities can take advantage of public spaces to help businesses offset the loss of indoor seating during this difficult time. "Our county roads in some cases have an identity crisis," Mr. Sallie explained. "They also serve as local main streets to some communities."

Mr. Sallie also gave a brief rundown on the Complete Streets projects that are in the works, including Grand Avenue, Baldwin; Park Beach Street in the Village of Atlantic Beach, a GOSR funded project; Village of Island Park one block demonstration project; Middle Neck Road, traffic calming study; downtown Hicksville traffic study; Motor Parkway Trails; and the Lido Beach shared use biking and walking study. "The COVID pandemic has certainly thrown some challenges at us," Mr. Sallie noted, "but we have great leadership and great



partners in both the community and government so we are looking at moving these projects forward.”

Mayor Ralph Ekstrand of Farmingdale kicked off the five-person panel by discussing the challenges of outdoor dining. He identified the greatest challenge in his community has been maintaining walkability in downtown. Restaurants tend to place tables onto sidewalks. To handle this issue, the Village created a plan for each restaurant, identifying the number of tables allowed and the location. The Village created two plans for each business, one for when Main Street is open, and one for when it is closed. Restaurants are allowed to use loading zones and are encouraged to work with their neighbors to utilize additional space. Mayor Ekstrand stated, “Safety is number one.”

Rich Vanderburgh, co-founder of the Greenport Harbor Brewery and president of the Greenport Business Improvement District, discussed Greenport’s innovative sidewalk expansion plans the Village is undertaking during this time. The goal was to create greater outdoor opportunities. A group of engaged citizens and leaders, along with award winning architects, worked on the issue of outdoor space. According to Mr. Vanderburgh, “That conversation immediately moved to the parklet design.”

A concept map was created. The plan to eliminate downtown parking was at first a heavy lift. The group went on to drill down on what they had to work with, and then they drew up several different concept plans, finally landing on having businesses set up in the parklet areas and keeping pedestrians on the street. The plan was accepted by the community. Thereafter, materials were solicited, local contractors offered time, and safe and attractive parklets were created. The Village was on board, test demonstrations were successful, and the parklets are now allowed to remain until October. Several on-street parking spaces remain, set up in a way that is safe.

“By next week, we will have approximately 1,500 linear feet of parklets installed,” Mr. Vanderburgh stated. “All the businesses and residents are happy with it.”

He mentioned that, “In Greenport Village the BID has worked hard to advocate on behalf of our merchants and district residents to provide the best possible opportunity to endure this challenge. With increased spatial distancing for pedestrians and expanded outdoor dining and retail space with the installation of over 1000 feet or parklet spaces this recovery effort has brought renewed optimism and vibrancy to the village. This initiative would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of our BID Board, along with the strong commitment from our volunteer labor force, and the direct support of Dave Kapell, Paul Palowski, Riverhead Building Supply and the Mayor and Trustee of the Village of Greenport. So come to Greenport as it’s open for business and there is still a reason for every season to be out East!”

Discussing Complete Streets in Roosevelt, founder and CEO of Choice for All, Jacob Dixon stated, “All children and families deserve and expect safe streets and open spaces, regardless of zip code.” Choice for All is a non profit that focuses on community leadership, education, nutrition and wellness. The group’s work in Roosevelt

began with a research partnership with Hofstra University titled LICARP (Long Island Community Academic Research Partnership). The partnership also includes stakeholders such as Roosevelt School District and a qualified health center in order to determine how health outcomes can be improved.

Another identifiable barrier for residents in Roosevelt is Complete Streets. Mr. Dixon reported current conditions in Roosevelt have created less than ideal circumstances for residents to become fully engaged in the community. “Incomplete Streets” greatly diminish opportunities for community members, including children traveling to school. A team was put together to identify problems that need to be addressed, from repainting lines in the road, to the need for traffic calming devices. Focus groups were set up, surveys conducted, and as a result, the group was able to pinpoint at least 18 locations that have issues that need attention. The group created a healthy resource map as an aid to the community. The year one task the partnership is working on, along with Vision LI, is to create a Roosevelt Complete Streets Task Force to move health and safety goals forward.



Clariona Griffith, president of the Hempstead Chamber of Commerce, is a hands-on leader in the Hempstead business community, visiting 300 businesses since March 18th to learn what they need and how the Chamber can assist them throughout the pandemic. Although a few businesses have closed due to financial burdens, many businesses are beginning to open back up. One important task the Chamber is engaged in is helping businesses learn to utilize the internet. “Hempstead is moving along nicely, slow but sure,” Ms. Griffith stated. She pointed out that there are areas in Hempstead where they need to change the structure. This includes dealing with speeding cars to protect pedestrians, including children traversing to school. Ms. Griffith also stressed that Hempstead has absolutely no bicycle lanes. “There is definitely a need for them,” she stated.

Ms. Griffith summed it up in this manner, “Hempstead is definitely moving along nicely, it is getting back to normal, but there are some things that can be done to make it even better.”

The last panelist to speak was Mayor Margot Garant of Port Jefferson. Mayor Garant explained the Village has been working within the State and County mandates, but also has been seeing if there are ways to help provide the merchants and restaurant owners with what they need to survive. Some challenges have included keeping downtown sidewalks walkable, which is one reason why outdoor dining is not permitted on Main Street. Port Jefferson is unique in that the ferry welcomes many commuters to the downtown area. “We are however, using sidewalks, parking lots, public space and private space where we can,” Mayor Garant explained. “This pandemic has challenged us, but there are things that COVID has helped us uncover, which we have become more tolerant of, including outdoor dining. The general public is really loving outdoor dining and I think it is something we are going to look at for seasons to come.”

In closing, Mr. Alexander concluded, “These two days have been inspiring. We all need to lend our voices and talents to address inequities in our communities. We recognize this is an exciting and worthy challenge to take on.”



Applauds VISION Long Island for leading Long Island's smart growth movement.



Long Island Main Street Alliance



Over one hundred small businesses, chambers, civics and local officials joined us in Farmingdale in July 2019 for the first meeting of the LI Main Street Alliance to focus on bringing resources to their downtown business districts.

Speakers at the inaugural meeting included Albert Brenner from People's United Bank, Harry Coghlan from the Nassau County IDA, Tony Catapano from the Suffolk County IDA, John Keating from PSEG Long Island, Kathy Wisniewski from National Grid, and Peter Daly from GettinLocal all spoke at the event.

It opened with a welcome from Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander and a thank you to the participating organizations for the event. This included the Long Island Business Council, the Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce, the Suffolk County Alliance of Chambers, and Vision Long Island.



The first order of business was addressing the moratorium on natural gas that impacts 2,400 applications for service in the last two months. Of those 400 applications are for new service which impacts the construction of 12,000 residential units in the region with roughly 2,000 from downtown, TOD, Main Street and affordable housing units on Long Island. The delay also impacts commercial and institutional development including downtown small businesses, hospitals, schools, supermarkets, industrial and office buildings. The remaining 2,000 applications in the moratorium are conversions from carbon polluting home heating oil to natural gas or

expanded gas services for residential homes or local businesses.

The attendees spoke of delays for downtown TOD and affordable housing projects and small businesses openings in downtown Farmingdale, Central Islip, Bellport, Baldwin, Lynbrook, Uniondale, Huntington Station among others. Letters are being collected to the NYS DEC who will make the final decision on the proposed "Williams pipeline" and public demonstrations are also being planned.

There was also the announcement of a rally in Lynbrook to raise support for passage of this important regional project. The rally will take place August 7th at 10 am in downtown Lynbrook and the Mayor and some Trustees will be there. People can also continue to write letters of support here.

Albert Brenner Senior Vice President of People's United Bank provided a comprehensive economic update for the region that includes a slow but long economic expansion with a decline on LI of manufacturing jobs into health care and social services delivery. He covered our region's assets and opportunities with a focus on downtowns to increase density for housing and commercial development, preserve existing housing stock, provide small business incubation. To the delight of the attendees he also emphasized the economic importance of placemaking for improved public spaces in our Main Street business districts.

He started by stating that even though you may not see a direct reflection of trends in the economic market on Main Street, that all economics was local. Mr. Brenner talked about how we are in the longest period of economic growth in the US right now, but that it's been exceptionally slow when compared to previous periods. However, Main Street provides certain unique challenges that require investment by both private and public entities. Aging building stock needs to be updated while new types of businesses



are needed to attract foot traffic and bring outside money into the area. There's also now a need for community in the downtowns as millennials have shown a preference for urban living. This comes as Long Island's population is aging and there is a rising need for affordable housing to help keep youth on Long Island.

Harry Coghlan Director of the Nassau IDA spoke about their actions to create local partnerships and increased transparency of IDA funding with a full commitment to downtown growth. They also now have a radio show to better communicate the economic development activities in Nassau County. Mr. Coghlan began by talking about how his background was in the private sector and how that gave him the perspective to see that the IDA needed to raise awareness about its mission. He moved to begin marketing and advertising the IDA as a resource for Main Street businesses. He also talked about how the IDA is collaborating with Suffolk IDA and local businesses to create a better environment for everyone. In particular, the IDA has partnered with Discover Long Island and National Grid to create a "Businesses Belong on Long Island" campaign. He also took time to praise the work of some downtowns on Long Island, such as the work in the Town of Hempstead to create a path forward on important regional projects.



The Suffolk County IDA's Tony Catapano was up next, talking about his 20 years of experience with the organization. The IDA has been in existence for 50 years now and, in that time, has evolved beyond its industrial roots into an tool used to assist Long Island's economy. Part of that support includes finding places for residents in downtowns to support local business. This includes assisting a couple of projects in Huntington Station and the Port Jeff shipyard project as well as support for the small business incubator LaunchPad in Huntington. Mr. Catapano also talked about Suffolk County's Downtown Revitalization program, which has partnered with multiple municipalities to help revitalize neglected areas. The IDA has also worked to educate by funding studies into TOD in downtowns. Mr. Catapano spoke about their efforts underway with projects in downtown Kings Park, Ronkonkoma HUB, Huntington Station, Northport and their ongoing commitment to Main Streets and transit oriented development. Both IDA's are working together on regionwide marketing programs to attract and retain local businesses and jobs.

John Keating from PSEG Long Island was the next speaker, and he started by laying out a brief history of how the company came to be in charge of Long Island's electric grid on behalf of LIPA. He also spoke about how they were the most improved utility company in the nation, improving from last to middle of the pack in recent years. One of the ways they've done that is to reach out to local business with new economic programs, which also included over 1100 volunteer outreach events. PSEG worked to implement a Main Street Revitalization Program as well as a Vacant Space Program. Both of these have helped to fill previously vacant storefronts and bring new life to local downtowns. Local developer Michael Puntillo was in the crowd and stood up to add his voice to the effectiveness of these programs.

Kathy Wisnewski from National Grid talked next on the work that her company has been doing to help storm-harden gas lines that were damaged by saltwater during Sandy. She's also talked about the Cinderella program with \$250,000 in grants available for

rehabilitation. This is just part of a half dozen economic development grants that include brownfield redevelopment, marketing, efficiency programs, rebates for maintenance upgrades, an insulation among other things. She also talked about the ongoing issue with NESE pipeline and how it has held up development in Brooklyn and Long Island. Since May 15th National Grid has received 2400 applications, including 420 for new constructions and 2,000 housing units on Long Island. Though National Grid is still taking applications, nothing can be processed at the moment. The comment period is still open for the project until August 7th, and you can write your support here.

The final speaker of the day was Peter Daly from GettinLocal, who spoke on how to bring customers and sales to Main Street. The Westbury-based mobile marketing company works to make Main Street companies more visible in today's online market. Greater than 65% of all searches take place on a mobile device, which has led major companies to focus efforts on reaching those devices. This has left Main Street businesses at a disadvantage when someone less than a mile from their location can't see it on a search. He also talked about the need to move beyond just a mobile website and focus more on promoting the business itself, which is what his company focusses on.



Other downtown and coalition updates included Gina Coletti from the Suffolk Chambers who covered their work creating a health collaborative to provide health care for local businesses and Julie Marchesella and Mariano Ugalde from the Nassau Chambers spoke about their participation in the Nassau HUB next steps coalition mapping out plans for the Coliseum area and other upcoming events. Elizabeth Wellington from the LI African American Chamber covered their groups networking meetings growing the Island's diverse small business base. Updates from individual downtown communities and the LI Business Council were also provided.

The LI Main Street Alliance is convened by Vision Long Island for the 40 Long Island communities that have downtown revitalization plans and programs creating a unified public voice to bring attention and resources to local neighborhoods.

Our Second Meeting



Well over 125 Chamber of commerce and civic leaders joined to support downtown revitalization and small business development at the first LI Main Street Alliance meeting of 2020 in Farmingdale.

Over 20 Main Street business districts were represented including a dozen downtowns reporting from Baldwin, Farmingdale, Hicksville, Roslyn, Westbury, Lindenhurst, Kings Park, Huntington Station, Bayshore, Port Jefferson, N. Bellport, Amityville and Central Islip. The case examples all referenced the importance of local planning and partnerships between civic and chamber of commerce leaders as instrumental to getting their projects approved.

Downtown initiatives underway with representatives in attendance also included, Bethpage, Hempstead, Huntington, Patchogue, Ronkonkoma, Long Beach, Island Park, Northport and Greenlawn.

The impact of Bail Reform was a key issue with over 2/3 of attendees seeking changes or a repeal to the current law when questioned. Local action to date has been taken with press events in Central Islip and events with Suffolk County Sheriff Errol Toulon and Nassau County Executive Laura Curran. The Suffolk County Alliance of Chambers reported this issue being a top priority on their agenda at their December meeting. The LI Main Street Alliance will further poll their members and take a position on this important public safety issue in the coming weeks.



Vanessa Lockel from the MTA/LIRR previewed local station and infrastructure improvements in the recently approved \$51 billion capital plan. "We're dedicated with the transition team to come in and really change the image of what people have in regards to their relationship with the Long Island Railroad," said Ms. Lockel. She also discussed procurement opportunities for local small businesses. She made herself and her team very accessible to meet with local community organizations in their planning process for upcoming train station area improvements.

Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman reported 44% of millennials living at home in comparison of 18% in prior decades. He pledged to work with the Main Street Alliance attendees from local communities to input more local information for the menu of reports on Nassau County finances and economic indicators his office is producing in the coming year.

"It used to be that 16% of 20-somethings on Long Island lived at home, about the national average," said Mr. Schnirman. "Today that number is at 44%. There's a whole sort of deal that people make with the idea of living here and, as we all know, in a variety of ways that deal is under some economic threat. And as with everything ... it needs updating and it needs modernization."

Suffolk Deputy County Executive Jon Kaiman spoke about procurement opportunities for small business as the County spends \$1 billion annually on goods and services that should go local. He also covered the past and present investment in wastewater treatment to better Suffolk County downtowns and residential communities.

"One of the things that is important for our region, for business, for communities, for quality of life, is that everybody respects everybody else," said Mr. Kaiman. "We understand that it's not just about tolerance but growing our diversity in a way that helps us all rise together."



Nassau County Office of Minority Affairs Director Lionel Chitty and Luis Montes from McBride Consulting discussed strategies to build on the small business diversity in local downtowns and job development. "When it comes to downtown areas," said Mr. Chitty, "you need to be involved in your community, you need to be

involved in the chambers of commerce, you need to be sitting at the table, you need to be a part of those community benefit programs, to make sure that your voices are heard and that you are a part of that process."

The goal is for minority and women owned business to take advantage of local economic opportunities as revitalization efforts take shape. Mr. Montas noted that "NYC set a goal to certify 9,000 MWBE (Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises) companies, and they did it in record time, two years ahead of schedule. Unfortunately, only about 600 of those are actually procuring from NYC right now. This is due to issues like bonding, issues like insurance. Those are the issues that many times these small businesses have no experience or no record in. This is one of the issues we need to address going forward."

The concern of gentrification was raised and displacement was also raised from the audience with a project in N. Amityville removing affordable trailer parks for luxury apartments as an example.

Attendees are reviewing the recently proposed NYS Budget and pleased with the prospect of a Small Business Tax cut, increased funding for affordable housing, transportation assistance and the prospect of an environmental bond assuming Long Island receives its fair share of these resources. Members of the Main Street Alliance are preparing to join the LI Lobby Coalition for the annual LI Lobby Day in Albany in February.

The Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce, the Suffolk County Alliance of Chambers and Vision Long Island co-sponsored the meetings and provided updates on their respective work along with the LI Hispanic Chamber and Long Island African American Chamber of Commerce. All attendees pledged to work together collaboratively in the coming year to combat increased polarization on the national and regional level to better their members and local communities.



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The 2020 Smart Growth Virtual Summit

Over 1,100 Gather to Help Main Street Businesses, Advance Downtown Redevelopment, and Support Infrastructure through COVID

Over 1,100 local business, community and government leaders joined this year's LI Smart Growth Summit held Wednesday through Friday December 2 through 4th. 20 workshops featured over 125 speakers are scheduled focused on varying topics related to helping small businesses through the Coronavirus regulations, downtown revitalization and infrastructure investment.

Transportation, infrastructure and Complete Streets professionals presented along with immediate needs like affordable housing, health and food insecurity. Our local small business community had panels on financing survival, the future of events and challenges facing restaurants. We had sessions on an economic and jobs outlook along with a residential housing forecast and project financing.

There were special interviews available each day from our "LI Main Street News" desk along with a few other surprises and cameos. The registrants participated for the 3 day event either by zoom or live stream. In addition the sessions are now viewable on Vision Long Island's Facebook and Vimeo pages in the links below.

The management of our Main Streets through the Coronavirus on Long Island ultimately comes down to municipal officials, 12 of whom gave local updates on the State of the Town's and Village's Panel.

The 2020 panelists included: Town of Smithtown Supervisor Ed Wehrheim, Town of Babylon Supervisor Rich Schaffer, Town of Islip Supervisor Angie Carpenter, Town of Southampton Supervisor Jay Schneiderman, Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joseph Saladino, Town of North Hempstead Supervisor Judi Bosworth, Town of Huntington Supervisor Chad Lupinacci, Village of Westbury Mayor Peter Cavallaro, Village of Lindenhurst Mayor Michael Lavorata, Village of Lynbrook Mayor Alan Beach, Village of Farmingdale Mayor Ralph Ekstrand, Village of Amityville Mayor Dennis Siry.

This year's Summit featured a closing session with NYS Comptroller Tom Dinapoli who presented an update on NYS Finances and the upcoming budget session. US Congresswoman Kathleen Rice will provided an Washington update on the then potential Federal aid package. The NYS Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul gave an update from Albany on NYS's handling of the Coronavirus and impacts on local communities.

Speakers also include Nassau County Executive Laura Curran, Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone who covered their efforts to help Main Street businesses.

NYS Senator Todd Kaminsky and NYS Senator-elect Mario Mattera also previewed the 2021 Albany legislative session.

In a transportation panel Phil Eng from the MTA/LIRR reported on their efforts to save LIRR service and ridership.

The LI Youth Summit incorporated virtually students from St.

Joseph's College, SUNY Old Westbury, Hofstra University, Suffolk Community College, SUNY Farmingdale, LI University and local high schools for the 13th straight year bringing young people into the planning process of their communities. The theme for the students this year was workforce training to navigate potential jobs.

The Long Island Main Street Alliance had members out from 45 different downtown communities that have plans for managing Main Street, future growth and preservation. Despite the pandemic these many communities have downtown plans and approved transit oriented development projects as there are nearly 15,000 units of housing approved in the last fifteen years with projects currently opened or under construction. Over 10,000 units are in the planning stages now driven by local community and small business leadership.

98 of 118 public hearings for downtown and TOD redevelopment projects have been approved over the last 8 years with more community supporters than opponents. Millions have been dedicated this year to traffic calming and pedestrian and bike safety initiatives and record investments in transit and downtown economic development are still underway despite the Coronavirus regulations.

Long Island is a community of communities and not surprisingly local residents have answered the call to support their Main Street businesses, fill food pantries, follow safety guidelines and try to keep their lives going despite massive health, economic and social challenges.

The efforts to shop local in particular have helped keep vacancies low. In a survey from the LI Main Street Alliance of 33 downtown business districts less than four stores on average have gone vacant since the Coronavirus restrictions began but many are still struggling.

"Vision Long Island and LI Main Street Alliance members have worked side by side with local residents, small businesses, local governments and our regional leaders to manage through the Coronavirus shutdowns and regulations to safely maintain services and commerce in our communities. After nine months of crisis management it is important to take stock and tackle the tough winter months together." Eric Alexander, Director, Director Vision Long Island & Founder LI Main Street Alliance

"The summit has always been a vehicle to bring together the community voices of Long Island to address some of our most difficult challenges. Though we may not be able to meet in one physical space, our goal has not changed. This year's summit is even more important than year's past and it is going to take all of our local voices to help manage the present and plan our future" – Tawaun Weber, Assistant Director Vision Long Island

The local input from this large swath of Long Island's leadership will result in a prioritized agenda and lobbying effort to ensure that local communities receive their fair share of support from Federal and State levels of government in the months that follow.

State of the Towns & Villages



Long Island downtowns have begun experiencing resurgence in recent years, thanks to the cooperative work of communities, businesses and local governments. The widespread damaging impact of Coronavirus shutdowns, however, has led to many challenges which local towns and villages are meeting head on.

Joining the 19th Annual Smart Growth Summit's opening day event, discussing how towns and villages are managing through the turbulent and novel impacts of the pandemic, were Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joseph Saladino, Town of North Hempstead Supervisor Judi Bosworth, Town of Huntington Supervisor Chad Lupinacci, Town of Babylon Supervisor Rich Schaffer, Town of Islip Supervisor Angie Carpenter, Town of Smithtown Supervisor Edward Wehrheim, Town of Southampton Supervisor Jay Schneiderman, Village of Westbury Mayor Peter Cavallaro, Village of Farmingdale Mayor Ralph Ekstrand, Village of Lynbrook Mayor Alan Beach, Village of Amityville Mayor Dennis Siry, and Village of Lindenhurst Mayor Mike Lavorata. Moderating this conversation was Newsday's Joye Brown.

After updating virtual attendees on the state of Coronavirus in their towns and villages, the leaders discussed how, by working together across party lines, they have been able to move projects forward and offer innovative assistance to their community, thereby keeping main streets stable. Some examples included providing outside dining permits, closing down streets, supplying PPE to local businesses, and bilingual public education.



Supervisor Lupinacci spoke about the bilingual outreach the town has performed to keep residents aware of critical information as well as the Business Recovery Task Force that was formed to help support local businesses affected by the shutdown through streamlined outdoor dining permits, closing downtown roads for increased dining capacity and a holiday plaza with a 65 foot tall Christmas tree to encourage shopping downtown.

Supervisor Angie Carpenter spoke about similar things the town of Islip had done including facilitating outdoor dining and other ways to support businesses within the town and highlighted the need to open a testing center in Brentwood which has unfortunately seen a very high infection rate in the county. They are working on some additional testing sites in conjunction with local hospitals.

Supervisor Schneiderman spoke of the importance of testing "to keep things moving until we have a vaccine." The town has two yellow zones and hopes that increased testing will help get out of that. Southampton is also doing bilingual outreach and has gotten a lot of financial support for testing with Southampton hospital.

Supervisor Saladino spoke about the town's COVID-19 task force and the electronic platform they have set up for tracking and quarantining cases with town staff and others and emphasized the need for communication. Saladino also discussed regular meetings with chambers of commerce to get them assistance and help get people back to work. Supervisor Saladino noted, "It is very important to share best practices."



Town of Smithtown Supervisor Ed Wehrheim provided an update on their work to install sewers in Kings Park and Smithtown along with a new Master Plan for those downtowns. In addition construction began on sewers in Saint James and several multifamily projects were approved and constructed.

Mayor Ekstrand noted that they haven't lost any businesses on their Main Street in Farmingdale and to remember that when the vaccine comes out there will be some time needed for it to take effect. "We have been very aggressive in working with everyone, especially Supervisor Saladino," Farmingdale Mayor Ralph Ekstrand noted. They also created a plan for outdoor dining on Main Street to ensure that proper distances were met, distributed PPE and repaved one of the municipal parking lots.

Village of Westbury Mayor Peter Cavallaro spoke about the work completed for a new incentive zoning code for their train station area along with seven projects underway in the village that have been proceeding during COVID with minor delays. The MTA is constructing a parking garage, a streetscaping project is scheduled to begin this winter and new mixed use development is being proposed.

Supervisor Bosworth remarked on the need for more testing sites and the necessity for different levels of government to coordinate and cooperate. We need to find different ways to reach people. "Each community has its own way, its own culture, so it can't be a cookie cutter solution."



Village of Lindenhurst Mayor Mike Lavorata spotlighted the progress made to improve the walkability of their downtown and help local businesses through the pandemic with outdoor dining. He also mentioned how the community has come together to get through this pandemic.

Village of Lynbrook Mayor Alan Beach mentioned the multiyear effort to bring in new restaurants, renovated movie theatre and transit oriented development housing to improve his downtown area with public support. He noted that the downtown has remained vibrant even though a few restaurants have had to put plans on hold.

Village of Amityville Mayor Dennis Siry noted that things are looking okay in the village. While they lost a couple businesses, a few new ones have opened up. He highlighted new transit oriented development projects and keeping new restaurants operating during the coronavirus shutdowns with outdoor dining. He also spoke about the walking audit completed with Vision and his Village.

Town of Babylon Supervisor Rich Schaffer stressed all town supervisors work together to help meet their towns' health and economic needs. "We continue to work together with our Suffolk and Nassau colleagues," Supervisor Schaffer stated. "We've worked with our chambers of commerce, our IDA, to help our businesses."

Transit Oriented Development Projects



With over 120 transit-oriented development projects approved in the last thirteen years, there are now a sundry of projects from which to draw experiences. This knowledgeable panel discussed the dynamic projects they are involved with in a variety of local downtowns and the impact the Coronavirus has had, and may continue to have, in the future.

Panelists included: Anthony Bartone, Terwilliger & Bartone Properties; Greg DeRosa, G2D Group; Salvatore Coco, BHC Architects; Andrew Zucaro, Zucaro Construction; and Howard Stein, Certilman Balin, Moderator.

As introduction, these boots on the ground local developers described their most notable projects which span across Long Island, from TOD projects in Farmingdale to the re-visioning and redeveloping of long term blighted properties. Salvatore Coco of BHC Architects noted, "Transit Oriented Development has really changed Long Island over the last ten years. Long Island is ideal for this type of development, with a fantastic train line that goes through our villages and downtowns and recent changes in zoning in many areas."

Questions regarding the future of TOD's were raised, as the landscape changes as a result of the pandemic. Moderator Howard Stein inquired, "With the Long Island Railroad ridership down, at least temporarily, is this an impediment to financing and the future development around train stations."

Andy Zucaro answered, "Personally I'm concerned. I don't think it will be a disaster, but I think we have rocky roads ahead." Anthony Bartone of Terwilliger & Bartone Properties had a slightly different view, "Long Island is so starved for luxury multi family, being TOD or otherwise, and even though commuter ridership is down, I am not concerned about continuing to build projects around train stations." Greg DeRosa of G2D Group, agreeing with Mr. Bartone, pointed out, "We have been getting several folks from the city and the boroughs coming out here. Once things start to normalize, I don't see things really changing."

With the assistance of local IDA's, all agreed, TOD projects will continue to move forward.

Coronavirus Health & Social Impacts



The COVID-19 pandemic has led to loss of human life and presents unprecedented challenges to public health, food systems and the economy. This expert panel explored the health consequences of

COVID-19 and examined the social and economic changes that have emerged and how these changes will shape our communities in the coming years.

Panelists included: Jeff Reynolds, Family and Children's Association; and Michele Gervat, American Heart Association Representative, New York State.

Along with the direct health effects of COVID-19, Long Islanders are struggling with a tributary of serious health impacts. "Health is being affected by people stuck at home," Jeff Reynolds of Family and Children's Association stated. "Drinking and drug use is on the rise. Liquor stores and access to alcohol has increased." Mr. Reynolds drilled down further, "Mental health, anxiety and depression, along with uncertainty, is hitting people hard. This includes zoom fatigue and lack of human connection with other people. Children are being hit hard with uncertainty and anxiety. All this leads to an unhealthy cycle of overeating, losing focus on healthy meals, not exercising, increasing depression, and weight gain."

American Heart Association's Michele Gervat advised, "Addiction, heart health, and lack of exercise are all creating issues." Ms. Gervat added, "People are not moving enough, instead they are becoming increasingly sedentary. Downtowns doing better is great, but the shutdown is really hurting people's health."

The panel agreed, people tend to have a lack of understanding of how anxiety and other issues, such as depression, can affect health. The important question of how to break the cycle was considered.

Mr. Reynolds pointed out the need for more professionals, which also requires funding to hire new people. "No elected officials are talking about this, distributing PPE and support, but not providing mental health support," Mr. Reynolds warned. "We need to tie together the notion of economic development and mental health. This needs to be all hands-on deck."

"Services need to be brought to the people," Ms. Gervat stated. "This includes better transportation."

With the ensuing broad access to vaccines, a sense of hope is developing, but the panelists noted, building trust must be a priority.

"A lot of lessons are out there," Mr. Reynolds stated. "One is that we are all reliant on health and safety policy. All community needs are intrinsically linked. We do better when we stick together and talk openly about our needs. We need to move forward with one voice that encompasses all needs."

Ms. Gervat deftly identified the challenge, "There needs to be an ongoing conversation. We all need to be on the same page. We need to build the economy and become a healthier society at the same time."

Keeping Transportation Alive



Making transit investments a priority is critical toward growing our local economy and revitalizing Long Island downtowns, which are being shaped by communities. Transit service, freight rail, bus, and new technologies are a critical piece of this equation. This

experienced panel discussed what present and future steps are being taken to improve transit and what future opportunities exist, especially with a pandemic in the mix.

Workshop panelists included: Phil Eng, MTA, LIRR; Erika Richards, NICE Bus; Aryeh Lemberger, WSP; Jerry Bringmann, The Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council; and Larry Gould, Nelson Nygaard/CNU NY, Moderator.

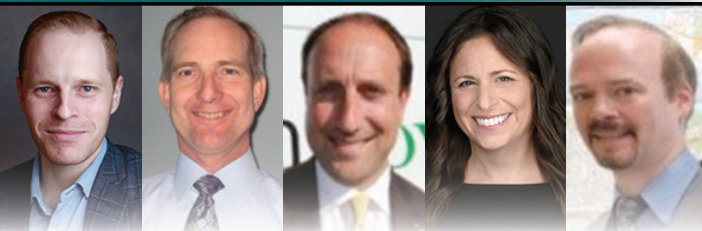
"It's hard to imagine tougher times for transit," moderator Larry Gould remarked. "With the combination of ridership crash and financial crash at the same time, it is really unbelievably taxing to those who are running these systems. Now, we are all looking to the horizon for the recovery that's coming. We are trying to figure out what that recovery is going to look like operationally, financially and ridership wise."

LIRR's Phil Eng discussed recent innovations and how the LIRR sees its future recovery from Coronavirus. According to Mr. Eng, "It is every mode of transportation, whether it's mass transportation, vehicular, walking, biking, that together play a critical role, while working with communities on how transportation supports them and helps them grow. This is the same philosophy before COVID, during COVID and will be after COVID, as we try to rebuild the economy."

"We are entering a time of great uncertainty for the railroad and the riders," Jerry Bringmann noted. However, Aryeh Lemberger of WSP remarked, "The best time to do planning is when things are uncertain." Mr. Lemberger noted, "It is a tremendous opportunity now for suburban networks to update their systems."

The consensus, all modes of transportation must learn to adapt in order for Long Island's economy to grow stronger.

Transit Oriented Development Projects



With Long Island's growing energy demand and the changes impacting solar, wind, geothermal and renewable energy projects, this accomplished panel discussed current and future plans to meet the goals of NYS climate change legislation and actions needed to related building and redevelopment. Discussion included maintaining the capacity to meet energy demand, as well as efforts to conserve and reduce demand island-wide.

Panelists included: Owen Brady, The Future of Heat/National Grid; Mike Voltz, PSEG LI; David Schieren, Empower Solar; Liz Donohue, Eversource; and Neal Lewis, Sustainability Institute at Molloy, Moderator.

PSEG's Mike Voltz' presentation provided an overview the company's mission and programs. "PSEG is working to provide customer service, safety, and reliability for electricity on LI," Mr. Voltz stated. He discussed PSEG's statewide goals to provide clean and responsible energy and storage for New York State. Regarding the forecast of energy use, Mr. Voltz noted the future shows an increase after 2027. Peak demand has decreased in recent years and is expected to continue to trend down. At the same time, the system load factor is expected to increase over time, which signals a more efficient use of the electrical system.

PSEG is also working on developing all-electric homes which have a number of benefits to communities and the environment. Mr. Voltz also discussed electric vehicle programs and smart charger rebates for owners.

Owen Brady of National Grid noted the company is committed to Net Zero greenhouse gasses by 2050. He discussed how the gas network is used and how it can help achieve this goal. A strategy roadmap for the next 50 years was presented. National Grid is also providing a number of options for people to use gas more efficiently and cleanly.

David Schieren of Empower Solar, a solar and battery installation company, explained it's focus is on accelerating energy deployment, having installed almost 100,000 panels across Long Island. "Residential solar is a great value for home owners," Mr. Schieren advised. "Community solar is also beginning to become a viable business plan where communities can sell energy to subscribers. This can include tenants in communities." He explained Empower is seeking to be a community leader on Long Island and is involved in politics to help protect consumers.

Liz Donohue of Eversource noted the company has partnered with Orsted Wind to help New York meet its clean energy goals. "Clean energy is within reach for Long Island," Ms. Donohue stated. The company is involved in the south fork wind farm, which it hopes will provide energy by 2022.

Moderator Neil Lewis reminded Summit attendees that Commercial PACE is now available on Long Island and building owners should take advantage of the program to improve rates.

Keeping Downtown Restaurants Open



With nearly 100,000 restaurants nationwide having already closed due to COVID-19, according to the National Restaurant Association, restaurants need to continue to be creative, community needs to continue to support them, and the various levels of government must do more to help them survive.

Joining the discussion regarding the steps local restaurants are taking to navigate through these challenging times were Evan Chen, Taste of Asian Fusion, Mike McElwee, Local Burger Company, Antoinette Biordi, News 12, Antoinette Burrows, Sweet & Savory Cafe, and Joseph Garcia, Farmingdale Chamber of Commerce, Moderator.

Since COVID-19 appeared nearly ten months ago, in order to just survive, local restaurants have been integrating into their business models everything from tents, heaters, plexiglass panels, to learning how to be creative through the use of such aids as social media, ghost kitchens and delivery services.

When asked how government can better serve their needs as restaurant owners, Taste of Asian Fusion's Evan Chen noted, "Another round of PPP would be helpful." Sweet & Savory Café's Antoinette Burrows added, "The money should be distributed differently in terms of who gets what, how much they receive and how it's paid back."

Discussing innovation, “We have heard a lot about creativity,” moderator Joseph Garcia remarked, “What are some of the ways going forward that restaurants can keep up with the constant changes they face?” Mike McElwee of Local Burger Company easily summed it up, “It’s about staying relevant.” Antoinette Burrows of Sweet & Savory Café added, “It’s all about the pivot.”

methods to increase housing affordability on the Island.

Panelists included: Peter Florey, D&F Development; Ralph Fasano, Concern for Independent Living; Dr. Sharon Mullon, LI Housing Partnership; Dave Gallo, Georgica Green; and Roger Weaving, Huntington Housing Coalition, Moderator.

“This is a vitally important topic,” Peter Florey stated. “Particularly this year when we were hit by the pandemic. We are seeing changes we have never seen before on Long Island, with large amount of folks exiting the city. The demand and supply on Long Island are unprecedented. If there was ever a time to focus on affordability, this certainly is it.” Mr. Florey continued, “The biggest challenge [when it comes to affordable housing] is to fund our projects.” He went on to describe several recent changes in funding that will be impactful, such as the State’s decision to go to a two-year cycle. COVID-19, however, has slowed this process and has affected the amount of soft dollars available.

Ralph Fasano of Concern for Independent Living stated, “There is no question about the need, the importance of what we do, and that is evidenced by the massive amount of applications and phone calls that we get when we open up housing. It’s a life changer for people in today’s environment.” Mr. Fasano went on to state, “We’ve always known there was a shortage of affordable housing and that people could benefit. The focus this past year, including on COVID and racial inequities, has really pushed us harder to try to fill the gaps because the need is so great.”

LI Housing Partnership’s Dr. Sharon Mullon discussed one problem affordable housing developers often encounter, which is the cost of purchasing the property, holding the property. “The LI Housing Partnership has received many properties from Sandy homes and Rebuild LI and they have been put into a community land trust. These properties are being developed with new construction homes. This is a new model for Long Island that is very helpful in getting people into higher opportunity areas,” Dr. Mullon explained. “It is critical to keep the prices affordable to provide fair housing to people.”

Dave Gallo of Georgica Green expressed what each panelist suggested, “Affordable housing does have a place in every community.” He expounded, “Affordable housing makes our children smarter and it makes our communities stronger.” The good news, it continues to become more accepted.

Lines at Pantries: Addressing Food Insecurity



The COVID-19 pandemic quickly exacerbated food insecurity on Long Island and has pushed food pantries to their capacity. This expert panel tackled Long Island’s growing food access needs and what is being done to address those needs.

Speakers included: Randi Dresner, Island Harvest; Kim Skillen, Neighbors Supporting Neighbors; Pastor Roger Blackmore, Genesis Church, Medford; Vanessa Lockel, Cornell Cooperative Extension; Mike Passantino, Trinity Solar, Pink Tie, Moderator.

Addressing the food insecurity challenges on Long Island, Island Harvest’s Randi Dresner stated, “We are all in this together. We ask how can we partner together to expand the strengths of all our organizations. We are a small Island, but it’s also massive. We are made up of so many pockets and communities, and every community is unique. We need to address each community’s unique needs, in the way they need them addressed.”

Moderator Mike Passantino stated, “It’s so impressive to see people and businesses on Long Island, such as Shop Rite in Riverhead, Uniondale and Deer Park, so willing to give.” Mr. Passantino noted he has observed many people in need who don’t know how to get to the bigger organization, so smaller ones that go directly into communities, such as Pink Tie, bridge that gap.

Pastor Roger Blackmore of Genesis Church in Medford highlighted two additional challenges to serving those in need during the pandemic. “Number one,” Pastor Blackmore stated, “our lines got longer and number two, we had to be able to serve our clients in a safe way.” Pastor Blackman credited Long Island Cares with the idea of a drive through food pantry which allowed the Church to provide a no touch food pantry.

Vanessa Lockel from Cornell Cooperative Extension broadened the discussion to include how each region reaches and maintains a sustainable system. Collaboration is key.

Addressing the Crisis of Affordable Housing



The remarkable lack of sufficient affordable housing is a constant issue on Long Island. This skilled panel tackled the different

Main Street Business Survival



Long Island’s Main Street businesses are increasingly being challenged during Coronavirus. This panel of experts explored how local small businesses are managing today and preparing for tomorrow.

The expert panel included: Frank Camarano, Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce; Luis Vazquez, LI Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; Harry Malhotra, South Asian Chamber of Commerce; Elizabeth Wellington, LI African American Chamber of Commerce; John Murray, Kilwins & The Hero Joint; Neil Seiden, Asset Enhancement Solution; and James Madore, Newsday, Moderator.

The panelists identified several common threads running through the difficulties they face navigating COVID-19. The severest challenge being the amount of ever-changing information being disseminated, almost daily, by government.

“The chamber tries to keep businesses informed. There is too much unclear information out there and it is difficult for the restaurants,” explained Luis Vazquez, LI Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. “It’s very confusing, there is no roadmap.”

The discussion shifted to the importance of sharing best practices, such as the need for increased social media presence and current economic assistance available. John Murray, owner of Kilwins & The Hero Joint explained that every day when he goes to work, he thinks about two categories, what he can control and what he can’t control. “I basically try, with my three operations, to focus on what I can control, such as operating more efficiently, pushing social media and using DoorDash and Uber Eats.”

Neil Seiden of Asset Enhancement Solutions outlined the financial assistance sources that are available right now for small businesses, such as the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL).

Expressing every business’ wish, LI African American Chamber of Commerce’ Elizabeth Wellington advised, “We all must support our downtown and local establishments and our small business owners.”

Joseph’s College; Dr. Nathalia Rogers, LI Youth Summit, CVP Training, Moderator.

Sarah Oral of Cameron Engineering tackled the issue of the adjustments that need to be made by the current labor force and the skills that workers now need to be successful and thrive in this COVID environment. Ms. Oral recounted, pre COVID found most employees working in an open office, where employees interacted together easily. Post COVID, however, most people work from home, but the need for collaboration still exists. Platforms such as zoom have proven vital. Ms. Oral stated, “Resiliency, adaptability and maintaining communication are the most important skill sets employees must have right now to be successful.”

Dr. Gail Lamberta of St. Joseph’s College spoke to the post COVID transition for college students and teachers. “Prior to COVID, we were teaching students how to function in a virtual world,” Dr. Lamberts noted. Preparedness made the transition successful.

Mather Hospital’s Alexis DiDonato was at the halfway point of her internship at Mather when COVID hit. Interns were sent home. “It was definitely very scary not knowing when we were going to go back, if we were going to go back,” Ms. DiDonato described. It was skillful communication that made the transition successful. “It’s all about adaptability and being able to transition from one thing to another,” Ms. DiDonato added.

Vanessa Cifuentes from GPI, which engages in student outreach, agreed with the other panelists, “The skills needed to be successful in this time are resiliency, the ability to pivot, the ability to manage change. That is what we see are strengths.”

Broadening the conversation, Dr. Subrina Oliver of O-High Technologies advised Summit attendees that students need to be active participants in driving their careers. “I want youth and young adults to really take ownership of their future,” Dr. Oliver stated. Further, Dr. Oliver discussed the many opportunities COVID has presented in terms of innovation and allowing everyone to think differently.

Students had an opportunity to ask the speakers questions, and in turn, speakers had an opportunity to share information with them. Development on Long Island is challenging, with limited areas that have sewer infrastructure and drinking water that comes from our aquifers below.

Long Island Youth Summit: Workforce Training During COVID-19



The Long Island Youth Summit consists of high school students Island-wide exploring important current socio-medical, environmental and community issues. Framing the Summit discussion, moderator Dr. Nathalia Rogers remarked, “We are focused on the recent period that changed the way we work and changed the way we prepare to enter the workforce.” The workshop consisted of student panelists and industry specialists.

Panelists included: Alexis DiDonato, Mather Hospital; Sarah Oral, Cameron Engineering; Dr. Subrina Oliver, O-High Technologies; Natalie Niemann, R.A. Suffolk Community College; Vanessa Cifuentes, Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.; Dr. Gail Lamberta, St.

Water & Sewer Infrastructure



This year’s panel of specialists brought together to discuss the issues around water and sewer infrastructure included Peter Scully, Deputy County Executive, Suffolk County; Kevin Chandler, Suez NY; Gary Rozmus, GEI; Bryan Grogan, PW Grosser; Adrienne Esposito, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Moderator.

The panelists addressed current, pending and future Island wide water & sewer infrastructure projects, as well as funding opportunities for sewer expansion, infrastructure upgrades and projects which improve Long Island’s water quality.

When it comes to protecting LI’s drinking water, “There is actually a lot happening, which is frankly encouraging,” said Ms. Esposito.

Discussion included the need for and challenges of managing growth allowing for economic development, while at the same time protecting our water resources. Gary Rozmus of GEI explained, "Part of what is impeding the progress of downtown revitalization is how do you handle the ground water issue and where are the funds to do so."

Peter Scully, Deputy County Executive, Suffolk County, advised, "Ground water has been a concern for decades. Issues with water quality related to lack of waste water infrastructure were created over a series of decades and will not be solved in one year, or five years, or ten years. The goal has been to turn the tide and to begin to solve the problem in a generation."

Regional Economic Development Projects



Progress is being made on many regional economic large-scale development projects throughout Long Island. This Regional Economic Development Projects workshop provided updates on continued economic development, especially during COVID-19.

Panelists included: John Cameron, Cameron Engineering, LI Regional Planning Council; Chris Kelly, Tritec Development; Steve Krieger, Engel Burman; and David Winzelberg, LI Business News, Moderator.

These knowledgeable speakers provided updates on several significant projects around the Island, including the Ronkonkoma Hub. Regarding COVID's impact on these projects, John Cameron, Cameron Engineering and LI Regional Planning Council, explained, "COVID-19 has slowed things down, but has given us a new perspective on what the next 20 years will look like."

Regarding mixed-use development, Engel Burman's Steve Krieger noted that one of the categories they have added into the equation of whether a mixed-use project makes sense is whether the retail involved is an essential component or not. "We have found that you have to provide retail to provide a sense of place," Mr. Krieger stated. He went on to say, "On Long Island, assisted living occupancy has started to increase again; financing is still available; and retail profiles are doing well... Restaurant tenants are having difficulties, but lenders have been stepping up."

The panel also examined zoning and its often-negative effect on projects. "Zoning authorities need to provide a better certainty on an outcome for developers," Mr. Cameron concluded.

The speakers agreed, TOD's will continue to prove strong on Long Island in the years to come.

The Future of Events: Arts, Music, Movies, Culture



One sector impacted particularly hard by the coronavirus pandemic is that which enriches and entertains us - arts, culture, music and movies. The expert panelists discussed how arts and entertainment venues have transformed their events to meet changing needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The speakers included: Dylan Skolnick, Cinema Arts Centre; Minerva Perez, Latino Film Festival; Lois Howes, Long Island Arts Council at Freeport; and David Kennedy, Patchogue Chamber of Commerce, Moderator.

Multigenerational Impacts of Coronavirus: Seniors, Schools, Families



This group of expert panelists tackled issues of health, economy and lasting impacts on seniors, families and education resulting from the evolving changes and adaptations in daily life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speakers included: Bernard Macias, AARP; Jorge Martinez, Nassau County Office of Aging; Vanessa Baird-Streeter, Deputy Suffolk County Executive; Guy Page, H2M Architects; Dr. Nathalia Rogers, LI Youth Summit; and Michael Sahn, Sahn Ward Coschignano, Moderator.

Regarding schools, Guy Page of H2M Architects discussed the need for companies such as H2M to pivot to meet the challenges the pandemic has brought to school districts. "We needed to change our roles for our clients. We spent a good portion of last summer looking at school spaces and considering issues such as social distancing, in order to bring students and staff safely back into school facilities." Mr. Page remarked, another important issue that needed attention was ventilation in the school buildings.

Moderator Michael Sahn commented that schools are just one sector of the multigenerational impact of COVID, another is the senior population, including those living in senior facilities. Bernard Macias discussed the actions AARP has taken, including quickly pivoting to creating coronavirus virtual tele-town halls. "We found that crisis moves into an opportunity," Mr. Macias noted. "That's exactly what we did at AARP by pivoting to a virtual space."

Vanessa Baird-Streeter, Deputy Suffolk County Executive, discussed the importance of decision makers putting themselves in the minds of families, many of whom live in multigenerational housing, to figure out what's going to work to make them feel comfortable while their children engage in essential extracurricular activities.

Pulling this thread a little more, Dr. Nathalia Rogers, LI Youth Summit, went on to address the important issue of mental health, which she noted spans all generations, but is particularly critical among the older and younger generations. Dr. Rogers pointed to several reasons contributing to the present mental health crisis. These causes include lack of structure and social isolation, both of which are exacerbated during this pandemic.

Like in many other areas, the pandemic has caused considerable uncertainty, but without surprise, creativity has managed to flourish in the arts community. Latino Film Festival's Minerva Perez explained, "We have had to re-calibrate and re-imagine what we can offer."

The speakers discussed ways in which their organizations have succeeded. Ms. Perez discussed the use of crossover events and ways to attract the youth of our communities. Dylan Skolnick, Cinema Arts Centre, discussed virtual performances and events, drive-in movies, and virtual interviews. Mr. Skolnick believes many of these re-imagined events will continue to be part of their programming even after the pandemic ends. Moderator David Kennedy stated, "We have all learned new things that may very well be permanent."

Optimism was high among the speakers, "Over time, people will regather," Mr. Skolnick concluded.



This workshop dove into the importance of corporate philanthropy in communities across Long Island in order to meet a range of needs, such as food insecurity, affordable housing, human services, arts and cultural institutions, managing public spaces, and other critical necessities, especially during COVID-19.

Panelists included: Jeff Gelbwaks, Sidgmore Foundation, Split the Bill; Mike Cave, Pink Tie Foundation; David Garten, RXR Realty; Beth Dalton, Dalton Funeral Home; and Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island, Moderator.

Moderator Eric Alexander opened up the workshop questioning how philanthropy has changed throughout coronavirus and how do we get more out of philanthropy in a creative way. "Typically, small businesses have helped a lot of community-oriented activities, but small businesses now have been hurting due to COVID regulations. A lot of bigger businesses, however, are doing better, but is the money they are getting trickling back to communities," Mr. Alexander queried. "And that's the challenge."

Jeff Gelbwaks of the Sidgmore Foundation and Split the Bill discussed creative ways philanthropy can bring more dollars back to Long Island. "Everyone knows the world changed dramatically late February, early March," Mr. Gelbwaks explained. Looking at the micro level, his sister, Randi Sidgmore, questioned how would small independent local business survive. "She really wanted to target local restaurants in downtowns." Together, the two researched how to make the best impact for both consumers and restaurant owners. This led to the creation of Split the Bill, an inventive initiative where a customer orders out or dines in at a participating restaurant and the Foundation splits the bill with them.

Pink Tie Foundation's Mike Cave discussed the importance of a business having a give back component in its model. "Every business I am associated with, such as Trinity Solar and GivNGo Gas Stations, have a give back component to their business and they grow their business by doing that."

David Garten of RXR Realty shared the company's ethos: "Doing

good in doing well means doing better." Mr. Garten discussed the principle that giving back grows a business. "We are a stronger company when communities are also strong and also successful." During the coronavirus, the company created a platform called RXR Volunteer. "It is essentially a match making platform in which we connect professionals with small business and non-profits throughout the region," Mr. Garten explained. The platform has helped over 200 small business and non-profits with everything from helping them with Federal assistance programs, to assisting them in transforming into a digital format. "Now is time we really need to lean in," Mr. Garten concluded.

One vital message from the panel: Let's keep the philanthropy on Long Island. We have needs here and we also have effective programs that can meet those needs.

Community Leaders Panel



Local civics, chambers of commerce, and neighborhood associations are working on revitalization initiatives across Long Island for the betterment of their communities. This work now includes meeting the needs of community members and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. The tasks they face are daunting and work is needed to connect local communities to information and resources to help manage change.

The 2020 Community Leaders Panel focused on community needs, success stories and future goals.

Speakers included: Clariona Griffith, Hempstead Chamber of Commerce; Bob Kern, Riverhead Chamber of Commerce; Ghenya Grant, Wyandanch Chamber of Commerce; Karen Montalbano, Baldwin Civic Association; Linda Henninger, Kings Park Civic Association; Holly Byrne, Port Washington BID; Patricia Holman, Glen Cove BID; and Tawaun Weber, Vision Long Island, Moderator.

This year's common thread among the speakers was adaptation and cooperation.

Ghenya Grant, Wyandanch Chamber of Commerce commented, "Businesses during COVID-19 are holding their own. Businesses have had to learn quickly how to adapt." Patricia Holman, Glen Cove BID, agreed, "Our Glen Cove businesses transformed overnight and the Glen Cove community supports them."

The panelists stressed how important working together is, be it within the community or outside the community. "The collaboration piece is very remarkable, the end result has more impact," explained Holly Byrne, Port Washington BID.

"Port Washington is my hope right now," Vision's Tawaun Weber stated, "Because they are seriously and anxiously wanting to make

partnerships with other communities.” Ms. Weber remarked, “There is no way we can survive individually.”

Beautification, Parks, Native Plants & Main Streets



Our public spaces can help to support both the community and our environment. While much of our publicly owned space is used primarily for automobiles, the pandemic has encouraged many to look at our paved and green spaces differently.

Panelists included: Mark McAteer, The Laurel Group; Rich Vandenberg, Greenport BID; Tom McAleer, Village of Valley Stream; Anthony Marinello, Dropseed Native Landscapes; Elissa Kyle, Vision Long Island, Moderator

The Village of Valley Stream had one of the largest outdoor dining spaces on the island. Tom McAleer stated, “Once the county decided they were going to streamline permitting for closing the roads, we reached out to all our businesses and surveyed them if they would want them to close down Rockaway on weekends, without even blinking an eye they said ‘Absolutely!’” Using Rockaway as space for outdoor dining and walking instead of traffic and parking helped keep businesses afloat over the summer.

Rich Vandenberg Greenport had a different approach to expanding outdoor dining but with narrow sidewalks on a state road, they had to “figure out a way to utilize on street parking to help us with increasing that space” and developed a system of wooden enclosures for parklets on Front Street. This allowed outdoor dining while still maintain some vehicle access through downtown. There was a great deal of coordination between businesses and government agencies to make it happen and many businesses said they had their “best year” with the expanded dining.

Anthony Marinello highlighted how many of our Long Island communities were shaped by and even named after the natural features and native plants that grew there. He also spoke about the many spaces in our built environment can be planted to support our ecosystem. “We have all these little parks in town, if we just choose to use native plants, it will be beneficial.”

When choosing plants for roadsides, drainage areas, passive parks, parking lot islands and other places, “we can choose them for their functionality, for their ecosystem services, and their beautification abilities.”

Mark McAteer introduced the group to the 1653 Foundation, a 501c3 not for profit who’s “mission is to improve the public spaces in the Town of Huntington,” and EOSPA (Environmental and Open Space Protection Fund Advisory Committee) that purchases and funds improvements to parks and public spaces with limited taxpayer dollars.

As often happens, there is never enough funding to do all that is needed and there is a sentiment that “this is my back yard, and why is it so crappy? I’m willing to pay for it to be improved” and the 1653 Foundations provides a way to do that. It allows corporations or private citizens to make a tax deductible donations to fund specific improvements within the town.

Jobs & Economic Development Outlook



While Long Island’s unemployment rate dropped during the pandemic, there continues to be a need for high paying jobs to ensure residents can afford the Island’s high cost of living. The expert panelists brought together for this important workshop discussed where we were before COVID-19, where we are now and where we hope to be in the future.

Speakers included: Paul Trapani, LISTnet; James Bonner, NY Atlantic Railway; Roger Clayman, LI Federation of Labor; Mitch Pally, LI Builders Institute; Patricia Tutiven, People’s United Bank; and James Powers, Bohler Engineering, Moderator.

Moderator Jim Powers advised Summit attendees, “Long Island’s unemployment rate has almost doubled since this time last year. Last year we were at 3.4%, we are now at about 6.5%.” However, Mr. Powers pointed to some promising news: Industry is booming, as is affordable housing and healthcare. As for retail, Mr. Powers noted, it is changing. Although there are some closures, the smarter retailers are changing. “They are bringing other ideas to their property,” he stated.

“Residential construction was strong pre-COVID,” Mitch Pally, LI Builders Institute, remarked. “After a three-month hiatus, significant progress is again occurring and will likely stay strong.”

The effects of the pandemic have impacted jobs and the economic outlook all over the country in seismic ways, including “where” people work. “The pandemic has accelerated trends that were going on in the industry for a while,” LISTnet’s Paul Trapani stated, “But it sped them up ten times.” According to Mr. Trapani, the idea of working from anywhere has greatly advanced as a result.

There was an optimistic tenor to this workshop, with the hope that Long Island jobs and its economy will come roaring back post COVID, even if in a re-imagined state.

Residential Forecast: NYC Exodus, Demand Rising, What’s Next?



The COVID-19 pandemic is spurring Long Island home sales as a segment of NYC residents seek more space. The suburban demand, driven also in part by city residents who are able to work remotely while offices are closed, raises questions of the impact this exodus will have on Long Island. This expert panel discussed the economic effects of this growth.

Panelists included: Rich Amato, Keller Williams; Steven Dubb, Beachwood Organization; Nick Halstead, Mill Creek Residential; Kevin Leatherman, LI Board of Realtors; and John Chillemi, Ruskin, Moscou, Faltishek, Moderator.

"In the ongoing aftermath of COVID-19 and the statewide shutdowns last spring, the Long Island real estate market hit a stop, or a very serious slowdown," Moderator John Chillemi explained. "So, although the shutdowns hit the market hard, Long Island showed how resilient the market is and we bounced back." Mr. Chillemi noted several reasons for this, including the effects of the pandemic which caused people to reconsider living arrangements.

Regarding leasing and turnovers during COVID-19, panelist Nick Halstead of Mill Creek Residential informed, "When first annual leases were coming due, in the spring of 2020, COVID was present, shelter in place orders were in place, and nobody was really moving. We had no turnover in spring and summer of 2020." By contrast, Mr. Halstead pointed out that there was negative impact from a construction perspective as a result of the shutdowns.

Kevin Leatherman of the LI Board of Realtors, advised during the first ninety days of the shutdown, from the real estate market prospective, immediate attention was placed on getting all of the pending transactions to closing. "That was the immediate crisis," Mr. Leatherman noted. Quite surprisingly, when it came to the buyers' market, Mr. Leatherman remarked, "I found the buyers that first stepped into the buyers' pool were healthcare workers and law enforcement because of job security."

Regarding the impact on the future of transit-oriented development since COVID-19, Nick Halstead commented, "Although transit-oriented development may be less of a focus now because no one is taking the 't' part of transit... we believe in long run trends... we still do believe in it as a long run trend." Secondly, he added, "There still is a demand for quasi suburban/urban type living on Long Island."

Consensus among the panelists: Pre COVID, the coop/condo market was stronger than the single-family home market, and although it still remains strong, post COVID, the demand for single-family housing has increased. Part of the reason is metro area buyers coming out to the Island.

Rich Amato of Keller Williams made an interesting observation, "There were a lot of buyers from NYC buying on Long Island, and that was true when COVID first started, now I'm seeing them start to come back to New York City."

The shift of who buyers are, where they ultimately land, and how they access the real estate market, as we see changes in a post COVID world evolve, is still yet to be determined.

Walking, Biking & Complete Streets



Creating Complete Streets has become more common and necessary on Long Island, especially during COVID-19 restrictions, in order to address the incredibly dangerous roadways that exist and to improve their walkability.

Panelists included: Frank Wefering, Greenman Pedersen, Inc.; Tommy Boston, VHB; Sean Sallie, Nassau County DPW; Jonathan Keyes, Suffolk County; Elissa Kyle, Vision Long Island, Moderator

Sean Sallie began with an introduction of some of the projects Nassau county has been working on this year including the "Shared-Mobility Management Plan" which should be kicking off in January which "will involve lots of community outreach and look at bike share, scooter share...and other services to augment our public transportation and make mobility more accessible to the population. Also providing safe and convenient mobility services to underserved and at risk populations." He also highlighted Salisbury Park Drive, Grand Avenue, Park/Beech Street, Austin Boulevard, Motor Parkway multi-use trail, and Lido Beach multi-use trail feasibility study.

Jonathan Keyes of Suffolk County announced that the bike share program is back in the county with a new, local vendor, Bloom, and located in several downtowns around the county. The North Shore Rail Trail is underway as well. The Hike Bike Master Plan was completed in March of this year which involved significant public input and factored in issues such as destinations, safety, health, equity and other issues when developing the plan which includes 1200 miles of linear projects. "When the plan is built out, 85% of county residents will live within a half mile of a bike facility"

Frank Wefering followed up with a safety perspective of walking and cycling which highlighted the significant increase in pedestrian fatalities in the US since 2009, which has not occurred in European countries. "It's not the love of the car, in Germany we love our cars and are building lots of them, it's the lack of safe alternatives." In addition, higher speed limits, higher vehicle miles traveled, larger vehicles, less driver training, and poor enforcement.

Tommy Boston of VHB highlighted the Southampton Bikeway and Pedestrian Improvements as well as the Route 110 Street Enhancement Project in Huntington Station. He explained the process of designing a complete street by balancing street capacity with future development, matching land use with the transportation network to make sure that everything is in scale, and "capitalize on placemaking and the opportunity to create a unique sense of place."

Financing Future Downtown Development



With Long Island's property taxes as high as they are, financing mixed use and multifamily redevelopment projects can be all but impossible without tax benefits. Many reform efforts are underway to increase communication, public education and transparency of Industrial Development Agency (IDA) operations.

This practiced panel included: Richie Kessel, Nassau County IDA; Tony Catapano, Suffolk County IDA; Tom Dolan, Town of Babylon IDA; and Sean Cronin, Cronin & Cronin, Moderator.

In this difficult time of COVID-19, while local IDAs are helping to advance and support tax positive and mixed-use economic development, they are also focusing on supporting downtown businesses. "IDAs are focusing on our small downtowns," explained Richie Kessel, Nassau County IDA. "IDAs are a life line to economic

recovery and revitalizing downtowns all across New York State.”

Discussion included the myriad of ways in which Long Island IDAs are serving to bring job creating projects to the Island, assisting downtown businesses in prospering, all while attempting to attract new businesses to the Island.

The speakers emphasized the importance of local IDAs as an integral part of Long Island’s economic recovery and growth. As Tom Dolan, Town of Babylon IDA, noted, “It is real, businesses will move if we cannot compete with other states.”

Federal Aid and the New York State Budget: Impacts on our Counties, Municipalities, and Main Streets



Federal aid is a critical component of local government revenue and has become a significant flash point between policymakers in Washington and New York State since COVID-19. The importance of Federal aid and its ramifications to local main streets cannot be overstated.

The closing session of Vision’s three-day virtual Smart Growth Summit culminated with an array of well-versed speakers when it comes to the financial needs of Long Island. These speakers included: Nassau County Executive Laura Curran; New York State Senator Todd Kaminsky; New York State Senator-Elect Mario Matera; New York State Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul; New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli; and United States House of Representatives, Congresswoman Kathleen Rice.

Nassau County Executive Laura Curran discussed the impact of the coronavirus in Nassau County. “We have the health issues we are dealing with, including getting information out to help people make good decisions,” the County Executive stated.

“Along with that, we have the economic crisis. Early on we saw businesses were suffering. We have been tracking both on parallel lines. Early on we set up an economic advisory council which has been helpful for me to advocate to the State on how we can help our businesses.”

“We can really trust our business owners to make the right decisions,” County Executive Curran noted. “Business owners are natural problem solvers and we can trust them vis-a-vis the pandemic.”

On the question of federal aid, the County Executive is circumspect. “There is a lot of dithering going on in Washington right now, it doesn’t make me feel comfortable we are getting federal aid for our local governments,” she disclosed.

New York State Senator Todd Kaminsky, speaking about downtown main streets, stated, “One great way we continue to work together is to fight for funding for our downtown revitalization initiatives. It is a critical pot of money we can’t give up on. We need to continue to prime that pump and make sure Long Island is right at the center.”

“Our whole economy has been affected,” Mario Matera, New York State Senator-Elect, explains. “Infrastructure is key. We need to make sure that our infrastructure is funded properly so we can move forward with our future with the proper growth.”

New York State Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul spoke via video tape to Summit attendees. “We are at a critical juncture in what the upcoming years will look like in terms of our ability to manage the COVID crisis, as well as if we will have a strong recovery.”

“The COVID-19 crisis has been nothing short of devastating to our small businesses, our economy, and our residents all across the State,” Lieutenant Governor Hochul stressed. “We are committed to continue to invest in our communities to help ensure growth and improve the quality of life in a post pandemic future.”

The Lieutenant Governor emphasized, “We need the help of the Federal government. One of our biggest challenges is financial. State and local governments desperately need federal dollars now.” The Lieutenant Governor concluded, “I feel hopeful with leadership changes in Washington, our federal representatives will come through for us.”

“From the moment this crisis hit,” United States Congresswoman Kathleen Rice told Summit attendees, “my number one priority is to make sure Nassau County has the resources it needs to get through this pandemic... While cases are still on the rise, the good news now is that our hospitals feel prepared heading into the winter. Where we need to do better is addressing the economic ramifications of our new reality. Operating a business right now is beyond challenging.”

“The money that was available through [federal] programs only scratched the surface of what is needed,” Congresswoman Rice asserted. “That is why I have been fighting in Congress for a new economic package to help our small businesses, support critical infrastructure and provide relief to our local municipalities.”

Closing out the Summit was New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli. “Now we are facing an extraordinary turn of events with COVID-19. We are facing a public health crisis that continues with COVID-19, and the economic devastation that comes along with it,” Comptroller DiNapoli stated.

Speaking about the economic impact of the pandemic, the Comptroller noted, with regard to the unemployment rate, Nassau and Suffolk Counties are doing slightly better than the rest of the State. As an example of COVID’s devastating economic impact, Mr. DiNapoli highlighted that the State has processed unemployment payments this year of over 55 billion dollars across the State. By comparison, for all of 2019, it was just a little over 2 billion dollars.

“The impact on every day New Yorkers, including Long Island, has been severe,” Mr. DiNapoli underscored. “We are in a recovery mode now.”

Looking at other economic indicators, Comptroller DiNapoli revealed in the second quarter of this year, sales tax revenue on Long Island was down over 24%. Due to all the challenges, budgets gaps are growing. “There is still a lot of uncertainty,” he stated, “but we are managing by delaying payments. The reason for that is we are waiting to see whether or not, if fact, we are going to get additional support from Washington.”

The common thread running through all these discussions: We need much more support from Washington if our local towns and villages are going to recover from the present economic crises caused by the pandemic.

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Let's Talk.

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The 2020 Smart Growth Virtual Awards

Better late than never - the Coronavirus shutdown had postponed this year's LI Smart Growth Awards to Thursday, September 3rd, 2020 at noon.

Vision Long Island has been delivering the Awards to the honorees at their project locations throughout the last month and we were excited to hold the virtual program to bring everyone together. We have some fantastic honorees with projects planned, under construction, or completed in 25 communities across Long Island that cover two cities, 10 villages, and six towns.

This year's event recognized several developers and supportive municipalities, including:

Terwilliger & Bartone and the **Village of Lynbrook** for the **Cornerstone at Yorkshire**

Greenview Properties and the **Town of Islip** for **Westbrook Village in Great River**

G2D Development and the **Town of Oyster Bay** for **WorkSmart in Hicksville**

Southern Land Company for its Garden City apartments with **affordable housing**

D&F Development and the **Town of Hempstead** for the **Village Green assisted living community**

The Gitto Group and the **Village of Port Jefferson** for **The Brookport mixed-use project**

The Town of Huntington and **George Tsunis** for **Hampton Inn Huntington**

The Village of Westbury for their **TOD zoning Master Plan and code**

The Town of Hempstead and **Cameron Engineering** for **TOD zoning in Inwood and Lawrence**

Conifer Realty & the Town of Southold for **Vineyard View affordable housing development**

The Village of Lindenhurst and **Greenman-Pedersen Inc.** for their work on **walkability and revitalizing their downtown**

The Village of Sea Cliff for their **bike and pedestrian improvements**

The MLK Community Center in Long Beach for their decades of **work at revitalizing communities.**

We will also honor:

Don Monti of Renaissance Downtowns for **Regional Leadership** as one of the first developers focused on placemaking and community participation

The Split the Bill NY program of the **Sidgmore Family Foundation** for **Regional Leadership** bringing resources to local downtown restaurants through the pandemic.

Major Charles Roberts of the **Hempstead Salvation Army** for **Community Leadership** for his long history in providing food, housing and programs for some of the neediest community members.

All of these projects were planned with the local community and had more support than opposition at their multiple hearings. They serve as a model for the types of projects, plans and leadership that will need to be in place as we work toward needed economic recovery.

Here are a few quotes about the virtual event:

"Despite the changes that have come with this year, there are so many folks that have not wavered in their commitment to Long Island. Vision Long Island is proud to spotlight these important people and projects that have done so much to add to the fabric of our community. Congratulations to our deserving honorees in 2020, you've really made a difference." – Tawaun Weber, Assistant Director, Vision Long Island

"Even though this year's award presentation may have been different than previous years, there was still a fantastic group of people and projects to honor. Vision was happy to showcase the rezoning projects, walkability programs, diversity of housing projects, community leaders, and others that were deserving of these awards. Being able to present the awards on site and share that experience with the public was particularly enjoyable." – Elissa Kyle, Placemaking Director, Vision Long Island



Transit Oriented Development *TOD Rezoning Project* *Village of Westbury*

Revitalization Efforts a Decade in the Making

Thursday, August 6th, found Vision Long Island at Westbury Village Hall to present the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award for Transit Oriented Development to the Village of Westbury for its TOD Rezoning Project.

The Village passed sweeping changes to its zoning code that allows for more transit-oriented development (TOD) for the approximately 50 acres of land next to the Westbury LIRR station.

Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island's Executive Director began the presentation by reminding everyone, "Westbury has done so much through the years with respect to transit oriented development, and it shows.

"Regarding this award, and why it is so noteworthy, Mr. Alexander stated, "The Village received dollars from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative from NYS, they did a comprehensive planning effort, involving the residents, small businesses, property owners and the development community. Bringing all these pieces of the puzzle together led to an excellent plan."



"What really makes this project stand out," explained Elissa Kyle, Vision's Sustainability Director, "is that it is tailored to the unique conditions in Westbury." She noted, "It is a compliment, not competition, to the Post Avenue area."

Westbury Village Mayor Peter Cavallaro, Second Deputy Mayor Beaumont Jefferson, and Trustee Bill Wise accepted this award on behalf of the Village. "The Village has been working on revitalization for over a decade," Mayor Cavallaro noted. "We have created over 800 units of different types of multi-unit housing. This project is exciting because it's going to allow us to take those redevelopment efforts to the next level. It has the potential to be transformative."

"We took 52 acres of underutilized property near the train station and we rezoned it and created a comprehensive state-of-the-art transit-oriented TOD zoning code," Mayor Cavallaro stated. "It's meant to be turn key rezoning. It's meant to allow developers to come in, put together a

project, consult with the Village to decide what is right for that property, and then streamline the process. It provides densities and other aspects that are generous in allowing a proper balance between developers that need to make a return and community that wants to redevelop land that needs to be redeveloped."

"Our intent is to make Westbury's downtown the most attractive downtown in all of Long Island," Mayor Cavallaro concluded. "This project allows us to do just that."

Legislator Laura Schaefer defined the project as innovative, forward thinking, and logical zoning that will move Westbury forward.



Revitalizing Communities *Cornerstone at Yorkshire* *Lynbrook, Terwilliger & Bartone*

Transforming an Eyesore into an Asset

Thursday afternoon, August 6th, Vision Long Island traveled to the Village of Lynbrook to present the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award for Revitalizing Communities to developers Terwilliger & Bartone and the Village of Lynbrook for the Cornerstone at Yorkshire apartment complex project at the old site of the controversial Capri Lynbrook Motor Inn.

Expected completion in spring of 2021, this complex is located less than half a mile from the train station and downtown Lynbrook, thus promoting walkability, green transportation and a healthy lifestyle. Joining Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island's Executive Director, was Anthony Bartone of Terwilliger & Bartone Properties, Lynbrook Mayor Alan Beach, Deputy Mayor Michael Hawxhurst, Trustee Ann Marie Reardon and Lynbrook Chamber of Commerce president Steve Wangler.

Mr. Alexander, describing the importance of this project, stated, "We are at the site of a motel that people didn't want to have around. They are now making it multi family housing, driven by the community and guided by the good work of the Village of Lynbrook." He underscored, "What we like is the



connection of best practices guided by local communities, that's what really matters. You get the best marriages out of that mix and that's what we have here."

"There were issues on this site." Mr. Alexander continued. "We like to see redevelopment transform communities. We like to see the public plugged into the planning process, there were public meetings to guide this project. We like to see adjacent uses come to life. We also like to see development that fuels local downtowns. The revitalization here does all this. Lynbrook has done a great job."

Introducing Steve Wangler, Lynbrook Chamber of Commerce president, Mr. Alexander stated, "Any project not supported by a local civic and a local chamber is usually not worth its salt. In this case, the Chamber has hit a drumbeat for revitalization for years." Mr. Wangler echoed those sentiments and discussed the importance of this project to the community. "What started out as a no tell motel is going to wind up being a luxury rental that's bringing new people into the community; a demographic that loves

to shop locally; a demographic that will really enhance our community. I can't say enough about this project."

Accepting the award for Terwilliger & Bartone Properties, partner Anthony Bartone echoed what time and time again has been the most important lesson learned in good development and redevelopment projects, "A project is doomed for failure if you don't have the support and buy in from the chamber and the civics." Mr. Bartone expressed, on behalf of his whole team, what an honor it is to receive this award.

Lynbrook Mayor Alan Beach accepted the award on behalf of the Village and emphasized there are so many people who deserve credit for this project, including the entire Village Board. It was a long process, and the communication between the developer and the community was crucial. "I want to thank the people of the Village for their support," Mayor Beach stated. "This new Cornerstone building will compliment our Village."

Mix of Uses Westbrook Village Islip, Greenview Properties

A Mix of Uses in the Town of Islip

The 2020 Smart Growth Award for Mix of Uses is presented to Greenview Properties and the Town of Islip for Westbrook Village, Great River. "This award," according to Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island's Executive Director, "is called Mix of Uses and is important. Here, we are talking about planning different developments together."

This development marries Westbrook Green, Villas at Westbrook Village and Westbrook Village. Westbrook Green is a 55+ senior community, featuring 2-bedroom garden style apartments. Amenities include a two-story clubhouse, fitness center, outdoor heated pool, lounge area, bocce courts, and dog park. The Villas at Westbrook Village is a condo and single-family home development.

This 55+ community enjoys a total of 100 units. Amenities include heated pool, yoga room, billiard room, fitness center and clubhouse with kitchen, media area, dining & patios. Westbrook Village features 1 and 2 bedroom, no age restriction, apartments. Amenities include a clubhouse, fitness center, outdoor pool, lounge area, bocce courts, dog park and playground.



This urban and garden style development offers access to parkways, MacArthur Airport, Long Island Railroad, entertainment, shopping, restaurants, golf courses, Bayard Cutting Arboretum, Connetquot State Park, beaches, and educational facilities.

Developer Greenview Properties focuses on smart growth revitalization in downtown urban areas, rental neighborhoods, condominiums and mixed-use and senior housing communities. Larry Gargano, President of Greenview Properties explains, "Our development division focuses on redevelopment sites that are blighted or underutilized, and we target those locations and reposition them for better land use."



Greenview Properties' goal is to provide Long Island with great neighborhoods. To reach this goal Greenview incorporates meeting with community residents and stakeholders, giving back to community, such as upgrading residents' recreational resources, and working closely with local government. The Town of Islip has been a valuable partner in this mixed-use residential development.

Congratulations to Greenview Properties and the Town of Islip.

Strengthening Communities

Huntington Inn

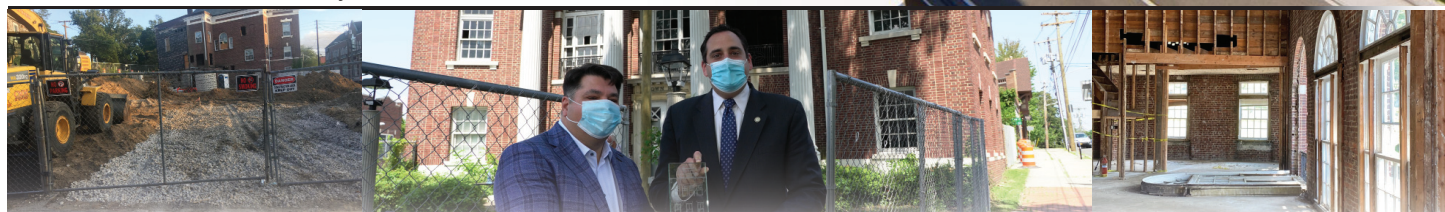
George Tsunis

Transforming a Downtown Landmark

Monday, August 10th, found Vision Long Island in beautiful downtown Huntington, more specifically the old Huntington Town Hall, which is now the future home of Hampton Inn & Suites, to present the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award for Strengthening Communities to hometown hotel developer George Tsunis. The old Town Hall, dating back to 1910, is one of several civic center pieces in Huntington which has fallen into disrepair. Throughout the years, the question of what should be done with this property has lingered. The answer came in the form of a \$24 million, 80 room hotel which is expected to yield at least 100 construction jobs and 14 permanent jobs.

This property will get transformed into a destination, into really a need. With 70 restaurants, theaters, all kinds of activities and retail.

Huntington Township Chamber of Commerce president, Vita Scaturro, was present during the award ceremony, noting that “Along with creating economic development, this project will create jobs, improve our downtown and make our town even more beautiful than it already is,” Ms. Scaturro stated.



Noting that every successful project not only needs strong resident and chamber support, but also strong municipal local leadership, Mr. Alexander introduced Huntington Town Supervisor Chad Lupinacci to discuss the project. “We have the best downtown area on Long Island, or even in the entire state. In order to tie everything together we needed a hotel in downtown Huntington,” Supervisor Lupinacci stated. He talked about all the wonderful existing elements in Huntington, and concluded, “The compliment of having a hotel where people from far and near could spend a few nights and invest back into the community is very important.”

Both Ms. Scaturro and Supervisor Lupinacci congratulated and thanked Mr. Tsunis, and the team he put together, for their commitment to redeveloping this property, while promising to preserve its rich history.

Describing Mr. Tsunis, Mr. Alexander said not only is he the type of builder who is going to build the right product, he is also the type of developer who not only has a vision for downtown, but for all of Long Island. “There is that sense of

philanthropy, that sense of caring for community and sticking with a project,” Mr. Alexander explained.

Accepting the award, Mr. Tsunis said, “It was once said it takes a village and there is no village on Long Island like Huntington.” Calling himself a Huntingtonian, Mr. Tsunis stated that the Village has the balance between intelligent development, conservation, and vibrancy. Discussing the hotel project, he labelled it the most adept, historic, re-adaptation in all of Huntington. The building will have new life. Mr. Tsunis thanked the Huntington Town Board, especially Supervisor Lupinacci for giving his team the opportunity to give this property new adaptive reuse. Noting that the town was uncompromising on the point that the project must be stunningly beautiful, Mr. Tsunis also thanked the Town for ensuring that the project be done the right way.

“We are going to have what I think will be the most beautiful hotel in all of Long Island,” Mr. Tsunis concluded. Construction will start shortly and it is hoped that the hotel will open sometime next year.

Revitalizing Communities

Worksmart Hicksville

Oyster Bay, G2D Development

Another Step Towards Hicksville's Revitalization

Monday, August 17th, Vision Long Island traveled to Hicksville for stop number 11 of the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present the Revitalizing Communities award to G2D Development and the Town of Oyster Bay for the WorkSmart project in downtown Hicksville.

WorkSmart, located at 35 Broadway, is a Coworking Office Space which allows professionals to work together in a common community. The workspace, which has transformed a vacant downtown office building, is adjacent to the LIRR allowing for a quick express train to NYC. It offers small businesses and entrepreneurs furnished office space with flexible terms, private offices, dedicated workstations, collaborative spaces, and conference rooms. Eighteen apartments span the upper floors, including three studios, three one bedrooms, and twelve two bedrooms. Building amenities include a landscaped roof-deck and on-site Wellness Center.

"Hicksville is a really special community," stated Eric Alexander, Director of Vision Long Island. "This is a downtown that is revitalizing thanks to this project we are honoring here today." He noted, "We have spent a lot of time with the Hicksville Downtown Revitalization Committee trying to get projects like WorkSmart going."

"When we started working with the Hicksville Community back in the winter of 2010," said Elissa Kyle, Vision Long Island's Sustainability Director, "this building, which is in the core of downtown, right by the train station, across from a park, was vacant. Getting life and vitality into this building, people and activity on the sidewalk, is part of what can help spread revitalization to other properties around this area and beyond."

Greg DeRosa and Alison DeRosa, of the G2D Group, were on hand to describe the award-winning project and to accept the award. Greg DeRosa stated, "This was a vacant building that we were able to convert to 18 apartments and a shared WorkSmart office concept on the first floor." He continued, "We would like to thank the Town of Oyster Bay for its support of this project. We think that this project will be one step forward in a major effort to increase the vibrancy and



the appeal of downtown Hicksville."

"This project has gone very well," Alison DeRosa added. "Our apartments are fully occupied. We have a waiting list and hopefully we will have other projects like this to serve and support the community."

Accepting the Revitalizing Communities award on behalf of the town of Oyster Bay, Supervisor Saladino stated, "I would like to thank Eric Alexander and his team for their vision for Long Island. It has been exceptional far and near, especially here in Hicksville. I also want to thank and congratulate Greg DeRosa and Alison DeRosa for their foresight, knowing the type of project that is cutting edge, state of art and the type of project the public wants."

"Communities across Long Island will use this project as a template. It is a prime location, just a mere walk to the railroad in Hicksville. It meets all the criteria to create a renaissance in downtown Hicksville." The Supervisor continued, "It's the best of the best of transit-oriented development and offers what millennials to empty nesters desire, a new mixed-use home near public transportation, shopping, fine restaurants, entertainment, and all that Long Island has to offer."

Vision would like to thank G2D Development and the Town of Oyster Bay on receiving this well-deserved award

Housing Choices

555 Stewart Ave, Garden City

Southern Land Company

A Unique Project in Garden City

Wednesday, August 26th, Vision Long Island traveled to the Village of Garden City for stop number 14 of the 2020 Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present the Housing Choices award to the Southern Land Company for its rental development project at 555 Stewart Avenue, Garden City.

This past month, Garden City Village Board of Trustees unanimously approved the final site plan submitted by the Southern Land Company for the construction of a 150-unit residence, that will include two buildings at four stories each, inclusive of 15 affordable housing units, located at 555 Stewart Ave. This project consists of 66 one-bedroom units, 72 two-bedroom units and 12 three-bedroom units. The 4.65 acre site, located on the north side of Stewart Avenue, has been vacant for decades.

“Today we are in the Village of Garden City with a very unique project,” Eric Alexander, Director of Vision Long Island, stated. “We are talking about affordable housing in the Village of Garden City, which hasn’t happened in my life time.”



“This award focuses on housing choices. Long Island has struggled with getting affordable housing in communities, particularly the Village of Garden City which has not built affordable housing in decades,” Mr. Alexander explained.

property. It once was the Roosevelt Field Airfield, then it was owned by Newsday for a long time, and most recently by the Hematian family.” He stated,

“We are excited to see this development by Southern Land Company incorporate affordable housing, at all different levels of affordability, to get built with a significantly positive design, with a mix of incomes in the project.”

“We are planning to build 150 free market apartments, with a 10% affordable component which will be broken up into three different sectors of area median income (AMI), 40%, 60%, and 80%, with an additional two units above that are at 120% AMI, which is considered workforce housing.” All this guarantees the affordability piece of this project is truly affordable.

Family-owned and operated, Southern Land Company is a national multifamily firm, responsible for more than \$3 billion a year in ground-up multifamily development and more than 500 single-family homes annually. They are now building on Long Island.

“This is a great project,” Mr. Rossi stated. “The Village of Garden City has been wonderful working with us, with the affordable component as well. It’s a project we look forward to building. It will be a nice place to live and we hope to create a sense of community for everyone.”

Accepting the award on behalf of Southern Land was Long Island native Joe Rossi, the company’s Northeast director of acquisitions. Describing the project, Mr. Rossi stated, “555 Stewart Avenue is a 4.65-acre parcel of

The project was about two months away from breaking ground when it received the Smart Growth Award.

Housing Choices

Village Green, Levittown

Hempstead, D&F Development

Tuesday, August 11th, found Vision Long Island in Levittown for stop number 6 of the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present the Housing Choices Award to D&F Development and the Town of Hempstead in recognition of the new assisted living facility, Village Green Senior Living.

The location, 100 Schoolhouse Road, is the site of the former North Levittown Lanes bowling alley. This new community will not only afford traditional assisted living to its residents, but also a memory care neighborhood. The property, owned by D&F Development Group, hopes to open the facility this November. There will be 103 beds, with approximately sixty or so people employed, with plans to hire more workers after a few years of operation.

The Village Green will offer activities for residents and provide transportation when needed. There will be restaurant-style dining, which fosters independence, a library, computer lab and a workout room. There will also be a focus on physical therapy and occupational therapy.



Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island's Director, discussing this project stated, "What is exciting about this project is that it is transforming a former derelict property; the developers worked with the public in creating the plan; and it is designed in a way that adds character to the local community while providing housing options so people can stay in the community."

Referring to D&F, Mr. Alexander stated, "These developers have found a way to get affordable housing projects built with a level of excellence that communities really rally around."

Neal Lewis, executive director of the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College and Vision Long Island board member was on hand to recognize this great project. "Long Island needs a diversity of housing," Mr. Lewis acknowledged. "What we are seeing here today is one in great demand," he stated, but was quick to add, "The need is great if the project is good. I am very supportive of today's event."

Elissa Kyle, Vision Long Island's Sustainability Director, noted that it is not only important to have different housing at different price points in a community, but also different types of housing for different stages of life, whether people are just out of college, starting a family, or as they get older, a place to downsize.

Partners in D&F Development, Peter Florey and Leonard D'Amico, spoke about their project. Mr. D'Amico reminded those gathered this plan had been seven years in the making. He stated when he and Peter saw the ability to reuse an existing facility to again meet the needs of the community, they thought it was a fabulous opportunity.

Partner Peter Florey stated, in designing the community, they spent a lot of time getting their neighbors' input. "It was valuable time spent because they offered us insight on how this project would best be put together." He noted there was concern about height, so they ended up building a two-story building, with a three-story courtyard. The community input worked out very well Mr. Florey concluded.

Transit Oriented Development *Lawrence / Inwood TOD Zoning* *Hon. Bruce Blakeman, Cameron Engineering*

A Vision for the Future of Two Communities

Thursday, August 11th, Vision Long Island made its fifth stop on its 2020 Smart Growth Award presentation tour, making its way to Inwood to present the Transit Oriented Development Award to the Honorable Bruce Blackman and Cameron Engineering & Associates, LLP for the Inwood/Lawrence TOD Zoning initiative. Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island's Director, began the presentation by acknowledging the work of both Hempstead Councilman Blakeman and Cameron Engineering.

In May of 2019, the Town of Hempstead, by unanimous vote, established three distinct zoning districts in the communities of Lawrence and Inwood. The zones allow for dense transit-oriented-development by the train station where current industrial use exists, while also creating a mixed-use district and a residential townhouse zone closer to the single-family homes.

Neal Lewis, director of the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College and Vision Long Island board member was on hand to give testament to this significant project. Mr. Lewis enthusiastically stated, "Good things are happening



across Long Island and it's these kinds of projects we want to lift up." Plans like this, he noted, enhance quality of life on Long Island.

Representing Cameron Engineering was planner Dave Tepper, who has been with the firm for eight years. "We have worked on several rezoning initiatives and this project really stood out, going above and beyond a lot of the projects we have worked on," Mr. Tepper stated. Referring to this plan as transformational, he stressed the fact that this project creates meaningful affordable units. He highlighted that built into the code is a preference for locals, first responders and veterans. Additionally, a streetscape initiative will be part of the zoning code, which embraces widening and beautification of the corridors.

Mr. Alexander stressed the importance of political leadership when it comes to leading the way on good projects. "For years Councilman Blakeman took this project on his back and took this plan out to the community," Mr. Alexander explained.

Reaffirming it was a collaborative effort, Councilman Blakeman thanked Vision LI and Neil Lewis for their support and leadership when it comes to this project, Cameron Engineering for being great partners and the entire Hempstead Town Board and Town Staff.

The Councilman also thanked community stakeholders, including the Inwood Civic Association, the local fire departments, the Lawrence Village Board, the Cedarhurst Village Board, the MTA, NICE Bus, Nassau County Police Department, NYS and NYC Departments of Transportation.

About the plan, the Councilman stated, "We wanted to create a vibrant village, a middle class district, a transportation oriented district where people would get out of their cars, shop locally, take the train into the city for their commute, and create a community that is beautiful, environmentally sensitive and one that's commercially viable." He added, "This will be a model for other communities. Let's get it built."

Housing Choices

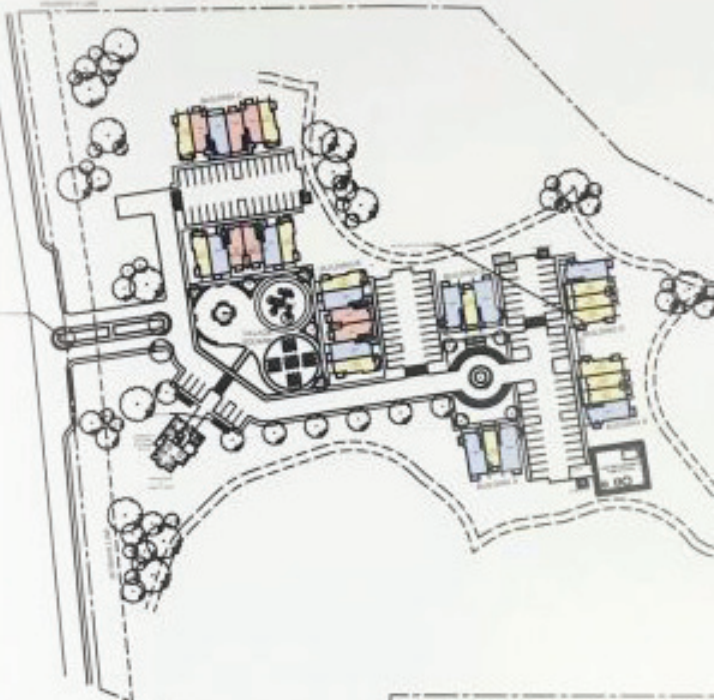
Vineyard View, Greenport

Town of Southold, Conifer Realty

Affordability and Efficiency Combined

Wednesday, August 12th, Vision Long Island staff and board members traveled to Greenport for stop number 7 of the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present a Housing Choices Award to Conifer Realty, LLC and the Town of Southold in recognition of the completion of Vineyard View, a brand-new, energy efficient, apartment community featuring 50 multifamily affordable apartments. Vineyard View includes seven buildings containing 14 one-bedroom, 22 two-bedroom and 14 three-bedroom apartments on a 17.2-acre site on County Road 48 in Greenport. The development offers a playground, a clubhouse, featuring a great room, fitness center, and laundry room.

“This affordable housing project is so needed for the region, for the Town of Southold and for the community,” stated Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island’s Director. “On this Island, housing choices is the biggest challenge and this year we have three honorees that are addressing this significant need.” Conifer Realty, to its great credit, has built multiple projects on Long Island and Vision has supported them all, from Coram, to Copiague, to Riverhead.



With an eye towards protecting the environment, while providing affordable units in the Town of Southold, which is difficult due to rising housing prices, Conifer has been effective in meeting these challenges.”

Accepting the award for Conifer was Sam Leone, Senior Vice President of Development. Mr. Leone remarked that Conifer has been both developing on Long Island and owning and managing affordable apartments for fifteen years. “We are proud to be here,” Mr. Leone stated. “We are proud to have found this site and to have worked collectively with the community to provide 50 more affordable apartments in this area.”

Half of the units are affordable at 50% area median income and half are affordable at 60% area median income.

“We are proud and honored to have been able to work with the Town of Southold to help provide more affordable options here on Long Island,” Mr. Leone concluded.

Also, in attendance for this award presentation was Vision board member and principal at Trinity Solar, Michael Passantino. Vision Long Island would like to congratulate the honorees, Conifer Realty and the Town of Southold, on receiving this well-deserved award.



Mix of Uses

The Brookport

Port Jefferson, The Gitto Group

A New Mixed-Use Building in Port Jefferson

Wednesday, August 12th, Vision Long Island staff and board members traveled to the Village of Port Jefferson for stop number 8 of the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present the Mix of Uses award to the Gitto Group and the Village of Port Jefferson in recognition of The Brookport, a new mixed-use apartment building being developed at 440 Main Street, the former site of Cappy's Carpets, a long time Port Jefferson business.

The 65,300-square-foot, three story building will have stores, office space and a restaurant on the first floor and two floors of apartments above. The development will incorporate 44 units and amenities for residents, including a roof-top deck, fitness center, outdoor courtyard with fire pits and barbecues, and a community room. Foundations are in place and the outer walls are beginning to take shape. The project should be completed by summer 2021.

"We are talking about a mix of residential and commercial uses on a Main Street and that's exactly what this project is," explained Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island's Director.



James Tullo, Brookhaven Industrial Development Agency Deputy Director, was on hand to support both the project and award. "We are very proud to not only help provide housing and mix-use for the Village of Port Jefferson, but also to be able to continue to create jobs and do the things that are necessary from an industrial development agency standpoint; to continue to move forward and revitalize certain areas, villages, and downtowns that really need to undergo certain types of revitalization."

Explaining how important political leadership is to get anything done on Long Island, Mr. Alexander introduced Village of Port Jefferson Mayor Margot Garant. "Not only is she bold enough to advance projects, she has a vision, she put a masterplan together and works with the public consistently," he stated.

Mayor Garant, talking about this vision, stated, "The desired vision is to create safe, affordable housing for the younger generation in a vibrant, downtown Port Jefferson community." Referring to Village government,

Mayor Garant noted, "They are aware of the importance of getting projects like this done; the importance of being an economic engine, providing beautiful new housing, and mixed use opportunity. We want to make sure we always have a retail component to keep our Main Street vibrant and alive. We welcome this project."

Upon accepting the award, Rob Gitto, vice president of the Port Jefferson-based Gitto Group said, three or four years ago, he walked over from his office and asked Peter Capobianco, owner of the property, if he would ever be interested in redeveloping his site. "I asked him the question and he said 'Sure, let's see if it makes sense,' and here we are today."

After thanking the Village, the Brookhaven IDA and Vision Long Island, Mr. Gitto stated, "We are excited about this project. We are going to extend the Main Street of Port Jefferson further south. It's going to be a special project; it's going to be better than anything seen in the area."

Revitalizing Communities

MLK Community Center

Long Beach

Community Comes First in Long Beach

Thursday, August 13th, Vision Long Island traveled to the City of Long Beach for stop number 10 of the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present the Revitalizing Communities award to the MLK Community Center.

The MLK Community Center, a community-based organization that has operated out of its Riverside Boulevard location since 1982, is committed to improving the health, human welfare, and educational attainment of underserved youth, families, and individuals in the Long Beach community. The organization sponsors innovative programming and support services, including cultural enrichment, youth empowerment, and hands-on learning opportunities. Programs also include recreational activities, STEM Education, recidivism training and a variety of adult/senior programs.

“We are so excited to be at the MLK Community Center today,” stated Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island’s Director. “This Center has been the centerpiece of this neighborhood within Long Beach for so long, whether



helping during Hurricane Sandy, the Coronavirus, or administering to its many other community services.”

In attendance at the presentation was Michael Passantino, Vision Long Island board member and principal at Trinity Solar. Mr. Passantino congratulated MLK Center Board Chairman James Hodge on receiving this award, stating, “It is well deserved.” Mr. Passantino, one of the leaders of The Pink Tie Foundation, noted that a week prior, members of The Pink Tie Delivery Donation Program presented to the Community Center a check and hundreds of pounds of food to help the Center support its local community.

Accepting the award on behalf of the Center, Mr. Hodge thanked Vision Long Island for recognizing the work of the MLK Community Center. “We look at things holistically, and try to meet the needs of the community,” he explained. “We engage in need assessments, so when natural disasters or emergencies happen, we shift from the day to day things we do, like afterschool, educational,

and recreational programs, to connecting residents with what they need.” Regarding the pandemic, Mr. Hodge discussed the issue of food insecurity. Food insecurity was already a problem in the community, he explained, and it only grew more drastically as the pandemic took hold. “So, we started feeding hundreds of people, giving them healthy food because of underlying conditions. We wanted to give more vegetables; food that would help build the immune system.”

“We are not just the Martin Luther King Center,” Mr. Hodge clarified, “because we really try to live out the dream and not judge people by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. Like Martin Luther King said, ‘life begins to end the day we become silent about things that matter.’ Life matters to us and we’ve been speaking to the community to try to find out what we can do to help.”

Vision applauds the MLK Community Center for its extraordinary mission and community work.

Community Leadership

Charles Roberts, Salvation Army

A Uniting Voice for Hius Community

Friday, July 31st brought Vision Long Island to The Salvation Army Hempstead Citadel Corps Community Center to present the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award for Community Leadership to Captain Charles Roberts, the Salvation Army's Long Island county coordinator. Joining Vision's Executive Director, Eric Alexander, in celebrating Captain Roberts' remarkable community work was Brandon Ray, Regional Director of External and Legislative Affairs at AT&T, and Vision Long Island Board member, Ray Thomas, Advisory Board member of PinkTie.Org, Clariona Griffith, President of the Hempstead Chamber of Commerce and Town of Hempstead Senior Councilwoman Dorothy Goosby.

Mr. Roberts was lauded by each speaker for his unselfish dedication to the Hempstead community, including his staunch support for food security. Without his work, and partnership with organizations such as AT&T and PinkTie, many local families would have suffered and continue to suffer, through this COVID-19 pandemic. Speaking about Captain Roberts, Ms. Griffith stated, "He is a trailblazer, in every aspect of the word, blazing a trail throughout the entire Hempstead community."



Senior Councilwoman Dorothy Goosby echoed that Captain Roberts has worked tirelessly for the Hempstead community, always there and willing to work with her for the betterment of others. She underscored how well deserving he was of this award.

Although Captain Roberts is leaving Long Island, being transferred to a Salvation Army Center in Syracuse, he has laid a strong foundation which will last for many years. Speaking about Captain Roberts' distinctiveness, Mr. Alexander noted his first questions upon hearing about Captain Roberts was who is this gentleman with the Salvation Army who is interested in revitalization, who is connected to youth, who is connected to seniors, who cares about housing – I have to meet this man.



"Beyond the basic services, Charles is the type of person who has a personal follow through to connect to people," Mr. Alexander noted. "There is so much joy in his heart even when there is so much need coming out of it. He is able to lift up other people."

Accepting the award, Captain Roberts recalled his first time sitting with Mr. Alexander, discussing what it means to possess, to thrive, in a livable neighborhood, "We don't do anything alone, we do everything better, together. Unity is one of the qualities that we sorely need in this community. It takes work to be unified, to marshal it, to maintain it."

Through many partnerships, "We have been able to serve 1.5 million meals on Long Island during the COVID-19 pandemic response," Captain Roberts stated. "It happens because we work together." Explaining further, "Communities can transform because communities themselves have the best answers for what they need. It is our job to empower the people who feel like they have no power to be solutions in their own situations."

Regional Leadership

Don Monti,

Renaissance Downtowns

Leaving his Mark on Long Island

Thursday, August 27th, Vision Long Island traveled to the Pink Tie Studios in Plainview to present the Regional Leadership award to Don Monti, President and CEO of Renaissance Downtowns.

Mr. Monti enjoys over 35 years of diverse experience covering all aspects of the real estate spectrum. He has been involved in over 80 completed projects that cover the full range of the development spectrum including office buildings, apartments, retail, mixed-use complexes, recreation and entertainment centers, hotels, marinas, condominiums and single-family homes.

“Don Monti has done so much for advancing walkability, placemaking and public participation in development,” Eric Alexander, Director of Vision Long Island, stated. “Regional leadership is about pulling together what we hear from communities and elevating it, taking it to another level. This honoree is very special in the sense that for over twenty years people have been talking about smart growth and placemaking, but we didn’t always have the ear of the development community.”



“I’m extremely honored to be the recipient of this award,” Mr. Monti expressed. “I must admit, I am a self-proclaimed recovered developer.... I started my career purchasing surplus schools many years ago, and in doing so, I purchased 14 closed public schools. If anyone wants to know the definition of community emotion, try being involved as a developer with a closed school, but it taught me a lot...”

“Emotions run very high and what I said to the community was if not me, someone else. I did not make the decision to sell the school and what you get with me is you get me from day one, whatever takes place. That resulted in 14 for 14 rezonings for school properties, but I did it the old-fashioned way. I did it with knocking on doors and wearing out shoes.”

“What I am really happy to say is, with the advent of technology, I still have the same shoes that I’ve been wearing for the last three years. I don’t have to walk the streets anymore, but there is still involvement

with community. The important thing is that you go nowhere, and I mean nowhere, without entitlements and entitlements result from community outreach.”

Mr. Monti explained, “In the end, it all comes down to one thing, enter early with the community. Don’t bring them in when it’s too late, when the opposition forms, because you didn’t tell them what you were thinking of doing. They need to be part of the authorship of what happens. When you do that, you end up getting as much, if not more, than what you originally asked for. The reason is because most people are reasonable, just given that opportunity early on. I promise you, the successes on Long Island will continue.”

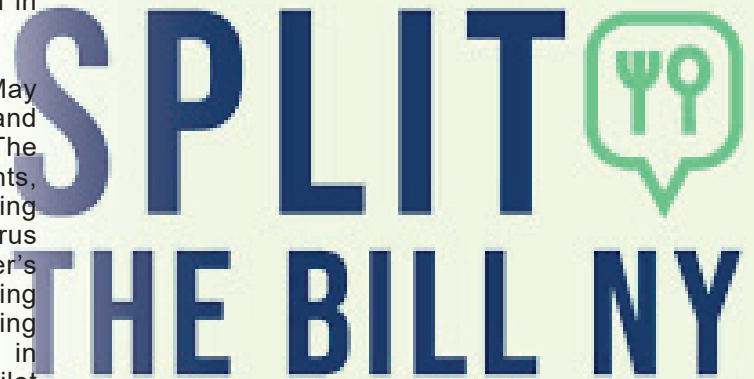
Discussing multiple projects he is presently working on in New York and California, Mr. Monti summed up his guiding principles, “It all comes down to the same thing. Community input, reach out early, do good, and you will do well.”

Regional Leadership *Split the Bill NY* *Sidgmore Family Foundation*

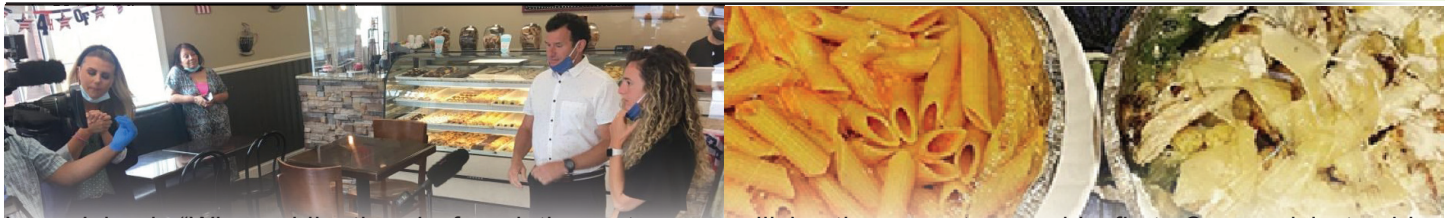
Helping by Partnering with Restaurants

Thursday, August 20th, Vision Long Island traveled to the Village of Farmingdale for stop number 13 of the 2020 Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present the Regional Leadership award to the Sidgmore Family Foundation in recognition of Split the Bill NY.

Split the Bill NY is a not-for-profit launched this past May by the Sidgmore Family Foundation to help the Long Island hospitality industry survive the effects of COVID-19. The mission of the non-profit is to support local restaurants, their hardworking employees and the community during times of economic hardship caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The program reimburses 50% of a diner's restaurant receipt, up to \$30 per order, when ordering takeout, delivery, drive-through or dine-in from partnering restaurants. "Split the Bill" launched in Farmingdale in May, with 20 restaurants signed up to be part of its pilot program. It was wildly popular.



"We are here in Farmingdale to recognize a foundation that has advanced a very innovative program called Split the Bill," announced Eric Alexander, Director of Vision



Long Island. "When philanthropic foundations step up and support people, particularly through a difficult time like coronavirus, that's so important." Mr. Alexander continued, "The Split the Bill program essentially provides resources and dollars for local businesses. It really has been a lifeline to small businesses in Farmingdale, Valley Stream, Westbury and Hempstead."

Village of Farmingdale Mayor Ralph Ekstrand was on hand to give testimony to this program. "The Sidgmore Family Foundation brought \$20,000 into Farmingdale in just two days," Mayor Ekstrand advised. "We thank the Foundation for this." Local business owner John Kanaras of Whiskey Down Diner expressed how helpful the program has been to his businesses.

"When we first thought about doing Split the Bill," Randi Sidgmore, trustee at Sidgmore Family Foundation, stated, "our goal was to say we know that people are really being impacted by this pandemic and the people that are going to feel it the most are on main street. They

will be the ones to crumble first. Our goal is to drive people to these areas."

Jeff Gelbwaks and Jessica Gelbwaks accepted the award on behalf of the Foundation. Called the Dynamic Duo by both Mayor Ekstrand and Mr. Alexander, the Gelbwaks were the driving force behind implementing the program. "We reached out to Eric early on because we knew his devotion to the downtowns runs so deep," Mr. Gelbwaks stated. "The local mayors and local politicians are so connected to their constituents and they care so deeply for the businesses in the local downtowns. It would be nice if we could find other people to join us in providing dollars to these small independent restaurants that may not have access to government assistance."

"It's been such a pleasure doing this," concluded Jessica Gelbwaks. "Our goal has always been and continues to be to help out local restaurants. We hope to keep expanding this program as much as possible. We have heard such wonderful feedback, we hope we can keep doing it."

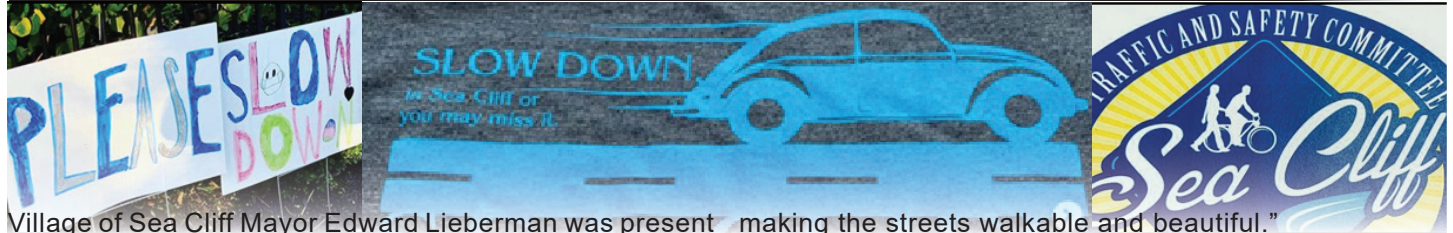
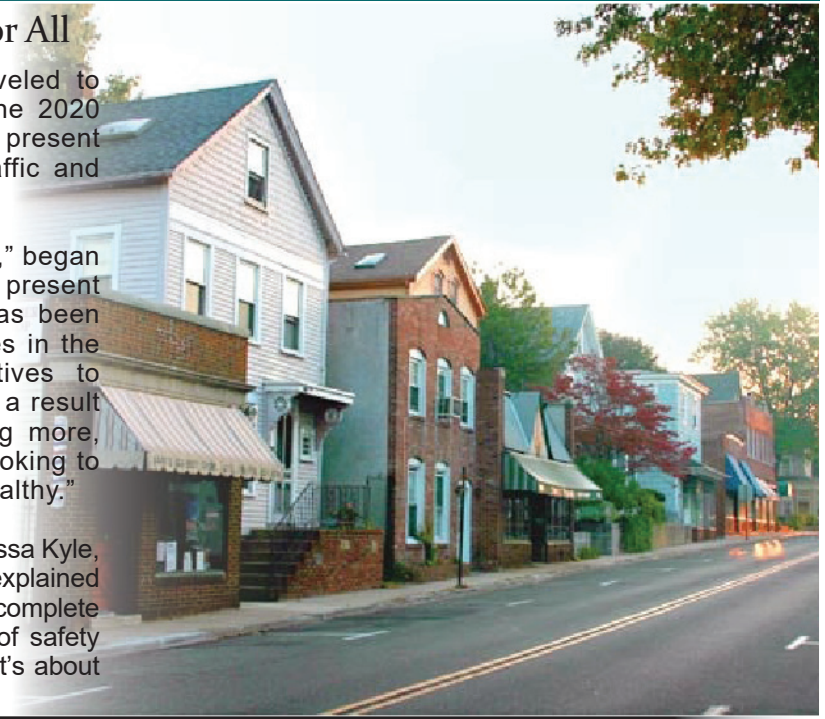
Walkability Sea Cliff Village Traffic & Safety Committee

Making a Village Walkable and Safe for All

Thursday, August 13th, Vision Long Island traveled to the Village of Sea Cliff for stop number 9 of the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present a Walkability award to the Sea Cliff Village Traffic and Safety Committee and the Village of Sea Cliff.

"Today, we are in the beautiful Village of Sea Cliff," began Eric Alexander, Vision Long Island's Director, "to present this walkability award for the great work that has been done by the Village, and some of the committees in the Village, to create walkable, bikeable alternatives to enhance the great village they already have. As a result of the coronavirus, folks are walking and biking more, folks are looking at outdoor dining. People are looking to get out of their homes in a way that's safe and healthy."

Also, in attendance for the award presentation was Elissa Kyle, Vision Long Island's Sustainability Director. Mrs. Kyle explained that one of the main and most important aspects about complete streets and walkability is the fundamental baseline of safety whatever your mode of transportation. Beyond that, it's about making places for people, enhancing lives.



Village of Sea Cliff Mayor Edward Lieberman was present to receive the award on behalf of the Village. Speaking about the history of Sea Cliff, Mayor Lieberman described it as a walking community since it was incorporated in 1883. "Although it's not the same," the Mayor stated, "residents still look forward to walking. Three years ago, when I became mayor, I believed it was very important to create a traffic and safety committee." Village Trustee Dina Epstein was appointed to formulate the committee. Soon after, local attorney Daniel Flanzig was chosen to chair the committee.

The Traffic and Safety Committee makes recommendations and works hand in hand with the Village and the County. "We are trying to encourage and enhance walkability throughout the Village," the Mayor concluded.

According to Village Trustee Dina Epstein, the Traffic and Safety Committee has been involved in all the different streetscapes and walkability features of Sea Cliff. "We have many different committees, run by volunteers,

making the streets walkable and beautiful."

Introducing the chair of the committee, Mayor Lieberman applauded the work of Dan Flanzig, acknowledging his vast knowledge of pedestrian and bicycle safety. Mr. Flanzig is a member of the Board of Directors and legal advisor to the New York Bicycling Coalition, the State's leading bicycle advocacy group.

Mr. Flanzig thanked Vision Long Island for the award and for years of support. He also thanked Mayor Lieberman, noting, "We are very lucky that we have an administration in Sea Cliff that's progressive and open minded. Anytime we go to them with an idea to make it a more walkable and bikeable community, they never say no."

"The Village is one square mile," Mr. Flanzig stated, "so everything in this Village is walkable. The concept is to get people out of their cars. Our goal is to create a safe road, a safe place to walk. We want to be able to say this is one of the best bikeable and walkable villages in Nassau County."

Revitalizing Communities

Lindenhurst Walkability Study

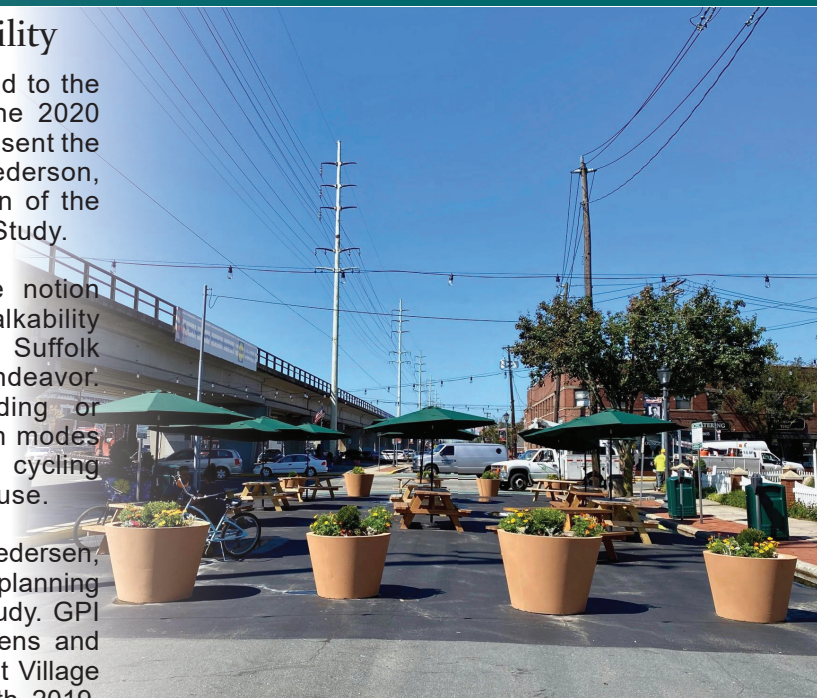
Lindenhurst, Greenman Pedersen Inc.

Engaging the Community in Walkability

Tuesday, August 18th, Vision Long Island traveled to the Village of Lindenhurst for stop number 12 of the 2020 Vision Long Island Smart Growth Award tour to present the Revitalizing Communities award to Greenman-Pederson, Inc. and the Village of Lindenhurst in recognition of the Downtown Lindenhurst Walkability Improvement Study.

The Village of Lindenhurst has embraced the notion of a revitalized downtown. The Downtown Walkability Improvement Study, enabled by a grant from Suffolk County, has played a crucial role in this endeavor. Improving walkability goes far beyond building or widening sidewalks. It relates to all transportation modes and, therefore, includes improvements to the cycling infrastructure and network, public transit and car use.

The Village of Lindenhurst selected Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI), a Long Island-based transportation planning and engineering firm, to develop the walkability study. GPI placed high emphasis on properly engaging citizens and stakeholders in the study process. The Lindenhurst Village Board unanimously adopted that study on August 13th, 2019.



“These honorees are being acknowledged for their work on walkability,” stated Eric Alexander, Director of Vision Long Island. “This is more important than ever with coronavirus. More people are out walking and biking and they need safe spaces to do so... All their hard work has led to new restaurants, new development and safe walking and biking in the Village.”

“Walkability is a key component in revitalizing a downtown,” stated Frank Wefering of Greenman-Pedersen. “How to engage the community was important. We conducted a lot of walk audits, at least six, we held mobility events and public meetings. The community is really on board and supporting this. Overall, it’s a great project and it’s hopefully a blueprint for other towns and villages on Long Island.”

Elissa Kyle, Vision Long Island’s Sustainability Director, affirmed, “This project went above and beyond where a lot of villages go as far as trying to improve walkability, going beyond just safety, but also quality of life issues,

making places safe for people. This project looked holistically at the whole Village and asked how do we make it so people feel comfortable and safe walking around.”

“We are really excited to be here,” Village of Lindenhurst Trustee R.J. Renna stated. “When I got on the Village Board, Mayor Mike Lavorata said let’s provide a plan, a blueprint, for the Village to move forward. One of our first steps in achieving that was our walkability study.” Trustee Renna noted, “We are working with Greenman-Pedersen on our masterplan which has just been completed. We are ready to take Lindenhurst to the next level.”

Deputy Mayor Maryann Weckerle explained, “We are thankful and grateful to Vision Long Island for this award, to working with the great Greenman-Pedersen, to all the sponsors of this award, to all the organizations we work with, the Chamber of Commerce, the BID, and this fantastic administration.”



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