

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



KATE BROWNING
County Legislator, 3rd District
Health and Human Services, Chair

1120 Montauk Hwy., Suite G
Mastic, NY 11950
Fax: (631) 852-1303

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COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Contact: Joshua Slaughter
631-852-1300
631-456-1718

OPEN SPACE ACQUISITIONS APPROVED FOR MASTIC BEACH AND BROOKHAVEN HAMLET

*Good News Undermined by Levy's Decision to Auction Parcels to
Speculators*

Mastic, NY – What would have been an otherwise good week for the third legislative district of Suffolk County ended on a sour note with news that County Executive Steve Levy denied requests from Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) and local civic organizations to withhold parcels from the Suffolk County tax lien auction. The legislature passed three resolutions on Tuesday to preserve environmentally sensitive properties in Mastic Beach and Brookhaven Hamlet, and on Thursday the legislator received news that County Executive Steve Levy denied requests to withhold parcels from the Suffolk County auction scheduled for October 20 and 21, 2010.

The Suffolk County Legislature passed Introductory Resolutions 1932, 1933, and 1934 at its monthly legislative meeting on October 12, 2010. These three pieces of legislation will acquire environmentally sensitive parcels in key areas of Legislator Browning's district. Resolutions 1932 and 1933 added to the ongoing preservation efforts in the Beaver Dam Creek watershed about one month after the county solidified the preservation of 57 acres in Beaver Dam Creek wetlands. IR 1934 preserves land in the Mastic/Shirley Conservation area, which has been a major focus for preservation during Browning's tenure in office.

"The Beaver Dam Creek watershed and the Mastic Beach wetlands continue to be a priority for preservation in Suffolk County," stated Legislator Browning. "I am pleased my colleagues in the legislature continue to support this important effort. The protection of our vital resources will ensure our future generations will continue to enjoy the beautiful communities of Brookhaven and Mastic Beach."

Unfortunately, the passage of these important resolutions was followed by a controversial decision by County Executive Levy to deny Legislator Browning and several civic organizations their request to remove certain parcels from the Suffolk County auction on October 20 and 21. In a letter dated September 17, 2010, Legislator Browning on behalf of the Greater Bellport Coalition, Victory Housing Inc., Osprey Pointe Civic Association and Mastic Beach Property Owner's Association, requested that ten parcels in North Bellport and all parcels in Mastic Beach be withheld from October's auction. Each organization also requested to have the parcels removed from the auction in writing.

Victory Housing Inc., a local organization in North Bellport, requested ten parcels on the auction list to be removed. The organization would rehab or construct homes on these properties and then make them available for homebuyers. The Mastic Beach parcels were requested to be pulled from the auction in light of the recent incorporation of the Village of Mastic Beach. The village was formed in an effort to take local control over

zoning and code enforcement. Legislator Browning and local civic organizations feel the new village government should have the opportunity to review these parcels in an effort to utilize them for the betterment of the community. County Executive Levy directed his Division of Real Property to decline both communities' requests. The administration would rather auction the properties to the highest bidder in order to receive revenue from the sales.

“We all know that the auction has been a tool for speculators to buy up properties cheaply and turn them into rentals,” stated Browning. “We fight everyday to enforce town housing code and absentee landlords are the worst offenders. By auctioning these parcels we are only adding to this vicious cycle and undermining the efforts of revitalizing these communities.”

The County Executive can still decide to withhold these parcels from the auction up until the first day of the auction on October 20, 2010.

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