

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

KATE BROWNING

County Legislator, 3rd District
Public Safety Committee, Chair



COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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Suffolk County Approves Open Space Appraisals in 3rd LD

Browning Targets 172 Acres in Yaphank and 2.68 Acres in Mastic Beach for Acquisition

Hauppauge, NY – Today, Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) continued to build upon her strong record of open space preservation at the Suffolk County Legislature’s general meeting with the passage of Introductory Resolutions 2028-12 and 1113-13. Combined, the two resolutions initiate the process of purchasing a total of 174.68 acres of sensitive land. IR 2028-12 adds 25.5 acres owned by Avalon Bay Communities Inc. to an already targeted 146.5 adjacent acres in Yaphank, also owned by Avalon Bay, which lies within the Carmans River Watershed. IR 1113-13 authorizes appraisals for 2.68 acres of vacant land in Mastic Beach along the banks of Pattersquash Creek. Both parcels are in jeopardy of being developed, which would negatively impact these two vital watersheds.

Avalon Bay Communities Inc. owns a total of 172 acres of land along the north side of Mill. Rd in Yaphank. Of the 172 acres, 146.5 acres are already on the County’s Master List, which authorizes appraisals to be completed without a legislative resolution. With today’s approval of IR 2028-12, the remaining 25.5 acres will also be appraised, allowing Suffolk County to move forward with the acquisition of all of Avalon Bay’s developable holdings in the area. These 172 acres are located adjacent to Suffolk County owned property where development rights have already been purchased, and any development of the 172 acres would jeopardize the health of the Carmans River, which is a New York State designated Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The protection of this property would preserve one of largest remaining tracts of privately owned land located in the river’s watershed. Brookhaven Town has pledged to partner up to 20 percent on the acquisition.

The second resolution consists of four parcels totaling 2.68 acres in Mastic Beach. These properties are located in the Mastic/Shirley conservation area, within the 100-year floodplain, adjacent to other County holdings and located on the banks of Pattersquash Creek. The parcels are also located directly across from the Town of Brookhaven’s newly created “Bayview Park”. The preservation of this environmentally sensitive land will not only protect the water quality of Pattersquash Creek and Great South Bay, and the integrity of Bayview Park’s natural beauty, but it will also serve as a buffer to flooding in the low lying areas of Mastic Beach.

“The preservation of environmentally sensitive parcels within these vital watersheds is critical,” stated Legislator Kate Browning. “The acquisition of these 174 acres is my number one priority. Even during these times of limited resources, we cannot waiver in our resolve to preserve our drinking water and protect personal property within our flood zones. I thank my colleagues for recognizing the importance of these purchases.”

Recently, Suffolk County approved a new three-step process for open space purchases due to dwindling funds for acquisition, and a need to better prioritize taxpayer resources. IR’s 2028-12 and IR 1113-13 are only the first step in this new process, which is the appraisal step. Once the values of the parcels are determined, the two acquisitions will be considered by a committee charged with recommending which properties should receive offers. Due to the high rating of both these properties Legislator Browning is confident these acquisitions will continue to receive the support of the Suffolk County Legislature.

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