

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



KATE BROWNING

County Legislator, 3rd District
Public Safety Committee, Chair

Media Release

March 21, 2014

COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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

Contact: Joshua Slaughter

631-852-1300

631-456-1718

Browning Secures Approval to Preserve 171 Acres in Yaphank *Avalon Bay Property in Pine Barrens; Critical to Carmans River Watershed*

Hauppauge, NY – The continued efforts to protect the Carmans River for future generations took a major step forward at Tuesday’s general meeting of the Suffolk County Legislature. Legislators approved Procedural Motion 7 with a 15-1-1-1 vote, which provides authorization for Suffolk County to make an offer on 171 acres in Yaphank owned by Avalon Bay Communities, Inc. The procedural resolution is the first one approved since the County created the “AAA Program”, which changed the process for purchasing open space.

Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) sponsored and gained approval of Resolution 336-13, which directed the County to conduct appraisals on the 171 acres last year. The newly instituted “AAA Program” is a three step process that requires an appraisal, offer and acquisition resolution to be approved by the legislature. The passage of Procedural Motion 7 this week completed step two and an offer will now be made to Avalon Bay Communities, Inc. If accepted, an acquisition resolution will be introduced later this year. Legislator Browning has also forged a partnership with the Town of Brookhaven and a 50/50 cost share has been agreed upon.

“I am happy to see open space purchases moving forward again in Suffolk County,” stated Legislator Kate Browning. “The fact that these parcels totaling 171 acres are the first to be approved under the new program signifies the importance of the preservation of this land and the protection of the Carmans River. I want to thank the Town of Brookhaven for recognizing this purchase as a priority and partnering with us to get it done.”

The 171 acres are located along the north side of Mill. Rd in Yaphank and have been one of the important priorities for preservation in all of Suffolk County. The parcels received the highest environmental rating of any property in the Third Legislative District since the program began are located adjacent to Suffolk County owned property where development rights have already been purchased. Any development of the 171 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.

“This is the most important open space purchase in my district since being elected,” concluded Legislator Browning. “It’s a major win for the Carmans River and I am confident the agreement will be completed.”

###