

We would like to thank all of the residents who attended the Strong's Neck Civic Meeting on Friday June 1, 2018. We appreciated the opportunity to hear resident concerns about the Town and State partnership in reference to the acquisition of 18 Dyke Road. We are sending this message and summary as a follow up to the meeting in answer to certain questions raised at the meeting.

Historical Significance of 18 Dyke Road

As stated at the meeting, the project short title/nickname "Culper Spy Ring Farm House" was merely a short title intended to indicate that the town was acquiring a house which is part of the larger historic property footprint known as "Culper Spy Ring Farm." The 1960's ranch house architecture of the structure now on the property reveals its modern construction. Going forward we will ensure that when a short title/project nickname is used that the corresponding street address is also indicated in the body of the resolution.

The subject property was the entrance to the once approximately 80 acre Woodhull homestead and farm complex which was established in about 1655 by Richard Woodhull who was the most prominent citizen of the Setauket Colony and who is credited with helping to establish the Town of Brookhaven. His great grandson, Abraham Woodhull, carried on the family tradition of greatness by volunteering a great a risk to his life to serve as "Culper, Sr.", General George Washington's master spy. From this site Abraham Woodhull entered and left the family farm to venture into uncertainty and great personal danger to conduct espionage that helped General George Washington to win our nation's war of independence. In recent years it has become widely recognized that Abraham Woodhull's efforts as the leader of the Culper Spy Ring performed great service to our nation and he is widely regarded as one of the great patriots of the American experience. By making this property parkland, the tradition of use that the present owners generously allowed for the last 50 years will be able to be continued. That is, organized groups will be allowed to stand on the lawn of the property and quietly in the presence of a historical interpreter be able to turn their eyes towards Setauket Harbor and see essentially the same vista that George Washington's master spy saw as he left this sanctuary to venture into uncertainty in order to secure information that helped secure the victory of our revolution.

18 Dyke Road Acquisition and Public Outreach

In this instance, the location was identified as being historically significant by the cast iron historic marker placed at this site many years ago by the New York State Education Department. It was also reviewed by the Town Historian, Law Department and other historians to confirm the historical significance.

When the Town acquires a parcel or structure either for its historical significance or any other benign public purpose, the public outreach requirement is usually met through standard, and predictable processes, as was the case here. The Town has all of its meeting dates published on the Town website at www.brookhavenny.gov. In addition, through the Town's Meeting

Management Web Portal, the public has access to the Meeting Agenda, Consensus & Resolution Agenda and Public Hearing Information. In addition, Live Streaming and archived videos are available to the public through the Web Portal on the Town's website. The acquisition of this property was mentioned during one of the Town's public Work Sessions and at a Town Board Meeting, both of which are recorded and available through the Town website for the public's access. It should also be noted that Council District One has implemented a Community Connection Campaign wherein community residents and civic organizations can opt-in to receive routine emails related to CD-1 Specific items listed on the Meeting Agendas for Planning, Zoning Board of Appeals and Town Board.

SEQRA

Article Eight of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law and its accompanying regulations (Part 617 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations) contain the prescriptive provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) which the Town of Brookhaven is legally mandated to follow in assessing the potential impact of municipal actions and projects proposed by the private sector.

With respect to the proper SEQRA classification regarding the proposed acquisition of 18 Dyke Road, Setauket, NY, environmental professionals in the Town of Brookhaven's Division of Land Management prepared the required Environmental Assessment Form (EAF). This form, especially Part 2, is critical in assessing the potential individual and cumulative environmental impacts of an action/project and is the primary guidance document used to determine the potential for adverse impacts and to classify the action. The prepared Part 2 indicated that for all 11 thresholds the action would have little to no environmental impact. Thus, the recommendation was to issue a Negative Declaration requiring no further environmental review. Negative Declarations are the appropriate determination for projects that will cause little to no impacts as is the case with the town's proposed acquisition of this historic site. This is in contrast to a larger action/project - such as clearing a forest for the construction of a 25-acre shopping center - that may have one or more large adverse environmental impacts for which a Positive Declaration is issued, requiring the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS provides greater detail on the magnitude and scope of the delineated impacts and requires an analysis of viable alternatives less impactful to the environment.

When the characteristics of this action/project are examined, a Negative Declaration makes sense for a number of reasons including that no additional clearing of vegetation or impacts to wildlife (i.e. nearby blue heron rookery) will occur from the action. Similarly, there will not be any additional impacts to groundwater or coastal water quality. The action will cause no adverse impacts to air quality or generate any additional solid waste. Given these facts, there is no basis to indicate the action will have any significant adverse environmental impact. In contrast, by any objective measure, the impacts of the Town's purchase of the property is environmentally benign.

Future Plans for 18 Dyke Road

As stated at the meeting, the intent of the municipal acquisition of this property is for historical preservation and public education. We would like to ensure that this property is not purchased privately and subjected to the establishment of a "McMansion" or any such intensive redevelopment. The subject property was owned by a private family who has generously and patriotically allowed tour groups, both educational and recreational, to visit the property for over 50 years. We do not intend to change the way in which the property has been used for the past half-century.

Future planning for this parcel will be in partnership with the community consistent with this low-intensity tradition and use.

DASNY/Property Tax Revenues

This parcel is being purchased with long-term bonds authorized by the State of New York and issued by the Dormitory Authority. The property will never become a dormitory. Rather its present use will be allowed to continue and will be paid for at the lowest possible cost to the general public by making use of the low interest rates available to this authority of the state.

While taking any property off the tax roll may have a negligible impact on taxes, whenever another vacant property in the taxing district is improved it offsets property going off the rolls. In this case, the Brookhaven Town Tax Assessor advises that the impact of the Dyke Road purchase is de minimis.

Long Term Plan for the Area

Assemblyman Englebright discussed the long term planning process during his presentation at the meeting on June 1. The number one goal is preservation and continued traditional access for public education. The attached referenced 2017 Setauket Harbor Watershed Memorandum of Understanding outlines the overarching goals for "conserving, improving, protecting and interpreting Setauket Harbor's historic and natural resources and environment through preservation of historic sites, wildlife areas...so as to enhance their overall economic, intellectual and social well being." Additional goals for the area will be determined with the input of the community.

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/s/

Steve Englebright, Member of Assembly

Councilwoman Valerie M. Cartright