

October 2009

**progress through
participation**

epoa news

**The Official Newsletter of the Eastern Property Owners' Association
Garden City, New York 11530
www.gcepoa.org**

Public Meeting Tuesday, October 13, at Garden City Library

**School Bond Referendum Summary: [page 4](#)
The Lighthouse Project and our Drinking Water: [page 6](#)**



President's Message by Walter McKenna

As the EPOA begins its 2009-2010 term, I would like to thank the members nominating committee for selecting me to be the EPOA president. I look forward to continuing to work with Judy Courtney, the new EPOA vice president, as well as the other officers and directors on the board, as we have in the past on the very important issues that affect us, with the commitment to work for the benefit of the residents of the East.

The EPOA did not stop working at the end of the last term but continued throughout the summer months, along with Trustees Nicholas Episcopia and Dennis Donnelly, to monitor numerous issues, as well as react to the fast tracking of the Lighthouse Project by Supervisor Kate Murray and the Town of Hempstead.

Trustee Episcopia will speak to the details of this project in his update included in this newsletter. I feel it is important to note that the EPOA recognizes that the proposed site will be developed in some form. However, we object to the massive size of the currently proposed project primarily because of the tremendous negative effect it will have on water and air quality, noise, and already burdened roadways, as well as the retail and commercial districts in Garden City. In all of these areas we feel that the "DGEIS" (Draft Generic Environmental Impact Study) that was submitted by the developers does not provide current, accurate information on these and other environmental issues and therefore cannot be used by the Town of Hempstead as the basis of approving this project.

The EPOA was well prepared and represented at the "DGEIS" hearing on August 4. Prior to that meeting, EPOA representatives met with Mayor Robert Rothschild and Village Administrator Robert Schoelle to determine how the Village and the EPOA would be best represented at this hearing. At the suggestion of Village officials, it was decided that Administrator Schoelle would speak on behalf of the Mayor and the Board of Trustees (BOT) and that Christine Mullaney, in my absence, would speak on behalf of the EPOA and read a letter that I drafted which was approved by the EPOA board. You can see this letter on our Web site, www.gcepoa.org. We continue to monitor this issue and have asked Mayor Rothschild and the entire BOT to continue any efforts possible in objecting to this project, as the consequence of its approval in its current state will have a major impact on the entire Village.

In other very important news, the GC school district Board of Education (BOE) has provided

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epoa officers and directors 2009 –2010

President	Walter McKenna
V President	Judy Courtney
Corporate Secretary	Jaime Gans
Corresponding Secretary	Christine Mullaney
Treasurer	Karl Schmidt
Directors	Mathilde Bellmer Donald Byrne Harold Hecken John Lattuca Anthony Libertella Frank Livoti Thomas Logan Cheryl McAuliffe Harrison Oelrich Neil O'Malley Robert Orosz Allison Sparacino Leo Stimmler Rex Wood

representatives from the east

Village Trustees	<i>Dennis Donnelly</i> <i>Nicholas Episcopia</i>
Acting Village Justice	<i>Brian T. Deveney</i>
School Board	<i>Laura Brown</i>
Library Board	<i>"Libby" Huschle</i>
Architectural Design Review	<i>Barbara Ruggiero</i>
Planning Commission	<i>William A. Bellmer</i> <i>H. Bradford Gustavson</i> <i>Robert Schoelle, Jr.</i>
Zoning Board of Appeals	<i>Brian Paradine</i>
Cultural & Recreational Affairs	<i>Andrew deLannoy</i> <i>James Pratt III (at large)</i>
Environmental Advisory Board	<i>Leo Stimmler</i>

Newsletter Editor
Christine Mullaney

Trustees' Update

The Lighthouse Project

On August 4 the Town of Hempstead accepted the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Study "DGEIS" filed by the developers, and held what was supposed to be a hearing. Prior to attending the hearing, EPOA President Walter McKenna and Corresponding Secretary Christine Mullaney, Mayor Robert Rothschild, Village Administrator Robert Schoelle, GC Chamber of Commerce President Roger Eltringham, and your Village Trustees from the East, Dennis Donnelly and I, met to plan a strategy. Since we were to be limited as to the number of our speakers at the hearing, it was decided Bob Schoelle, representing the Village, Christine Mullaney, representing the EPOA, and Roger Eltringham, representing the Chamber of Commerce, would present our positions, and they did a great job.

The Village's environmental consultant had reviewed the "DGEIS" and found it deficient in the proper analysis of the proposed Lighthouse Project's affects on air, traffic, water, sewage disposal, and the local retail and office markets, not only in Garden City, but all surrounding communities. The affects of traffic on Washington Avenue and Meadow Street were completely ignored, as well as some of the major intersections such as Stewart and Clinton, which is already classified as a "failed" intersection.

The water situation is especially troublesome since Uniondale already exceeds the NYSDEC cap for water usage. The affects of the 5 million sq.ft. Lighthouse Project would be absolutely disastrous for the overall water supply, since the Long Island Aquifer is not an infinite source of water.

In addition to the above problems, the planned one million sq. ft. of office space and 500,000 sq. ft of retail space, which is essentially a mall, would have severely deleterious effects on area markets and business districts. The Lighthouse proposal also includes hotel/condo towers 450 feet in height, which would make them 35 to 40 story buildings—almost three times higher than anything else in Nassau County.

The Village has retained a law firm, as well as an environmental consultant, to advise us on how best to oppose this project. However, we are mindful that we are in a terrible recession and that there is a critical need for new jobs throughout the County. We also realize that there will be some type of development that will include restaurants, and a hotel that will support the new Coliseum, as well as retail space for businesses such as a supermarket and convenience stores to support the housing component.



by Nicholas
Episcopia

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Trustees' Update

However, given the amount of development that can already be built “as-of-right” in Mitchell Field, we are firmly opposed to the deleterious impact a 5 million sq. ft. development, which is tantamount to a small city complete with skyscrapers, will have on all surrounding communities. While Nassau County Executive Tom Suozzi is in full support of the Lighthouse Project, his position is clearly the opposite of his “Cool Downtown” Program which praises improvements made to business districts in surrounding communities, including Garden City. Our opposition is not “NIMBYISM,” it is common sense and stems from concern for the future, not only of Garden City, but of surrounding neighbors as well.

On Sept 22, the Town of Hempstead (TOH) will hold a zoning hearing which is open to the public. A delegation from the East will attend. We will express our discontent with this project as it is presently proposed, and our discontent with the fact that our request for an extension of time to properly review the more than one thousand page “DGEIS,” and what we anticipate will be no time given to the review of a Final Environmental Impact Statement that has yet to be produced. While we can support the TOH in their effort to ensure that certain requirements are included in Nassau County’s lease of the land to the developers, we adamantly oppose their fast-tracking the statutory environmental review process.

We urge all of you to continue to express your opposition to this project by emailing the TOH @ lighthousecomments@hotmail.org or in writing directly to the Hon. Kate Murray, TOH Supervisor, One Washington Street, Hempstead, NY, 11550.

The EPOA Board and your Village Trustees will do everything we can. However, your help and support are very much needed.

The Light Rail System

Although the developers of the Lighthouse Project maintain that *they* are not recommending construction of a Light Rail system which could run along the LIRR right-of-way just east of Franklin Ave directly behind Arthur St, and along the

tracks at St. James St, construction of this public transportation system linking the LIRR Main Line to the HUB at Mitchell Field is actively being considered by Nassau County. Without notifying Garden City, the County Planning Board held a Bid Conference for prospective contractors. When questioned about this, Patricia Bourne, Nassau County Executive Planning Commissioner, averred that no plans or decision have been made by the County, thereby leaving us to wonder how the County could possibly hold a Bid Conference for prospective contractors, if the County “has no plans.” Ms. Bourne has agreed to meet with the entire GC Board of Trustees to discuss the matter.

St. Paul’s

The BOT has decided that an Environmental Impact Study is necessary before we vote to authorize a binding referendum to float the bonds necessary for the demolition of St. Paul’s. This study is now in process and, as required by law, will consider issues such as the historic and aesthetic affects of demolition, and how, if possible, to preserve certain parts of the structure such as the Clock Tower and Port-Cochere. Public health, safety and community character will also be considered.

When the “Draft EIS” is completed, a public hearing will be held and citizens’ comments will be considered. When the “Final EIS” is finished, a second public hearing will be held prior to a BOT vote to hold a public referendum on the bond issue. If holding the referendum is approved by the BOT, the public will then vote on the bond issue, which, according to the Report of the Mayor’s Committee on St. Paul’s issued in 2008, would be approximately \$6 million.

Please note that this referendum would be for an “*authorization only*” – not an absolute order for the Board of Trustees to immediately issue bonds and take bids for demolition. Availability of funds and affect on taxes will be intensely examined by the BOT before any action is taken to issue bonds. In the interim, the BOT will examine any reasonable proposal for development by a third party.

School District Report by Laura Brown



2009
School Investment Bond

On October 27, the Garden City community will be asked to vote on a School Investment Bond to address substantial needs throughout the district's nine buildings. On the ballot: approval to undertake \$36.5 million in renovations to meet present day health and safety code requirements, as well as to reclaim and add learning space for academic program growth. The comprehensive bond proposal, which addresses only the district's most pressing needs, has been reviewed, revised and recommended by a committee of community members who have worked tirelessly during the past two years to put forth the most conservative and cost-effective plan.

Just as a homeowner recognizes that a leaking roof which has outlived its useful life-span and can no longer be effectively repaired will lead to additional problems, the district recognizes that our buildings, the newest of which are 50 years old (our primary schools), face similar situations, but on a much larger scale. Projects range from roof and foundation and window sill replacement to the upgrading of inefficient boilers, single-pane windows, sagging doors and masonry repairs.

"This cost-effective, conservative plan is directed toward addressing safety issues and meeting laws, regulations and code requirements," stated Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert Feirsen. "These items must be addressed. And we will realize the best return on our investment by doing them now while rates are low and construction firms are eager for work."

In addition to health and safety upgrades, the school investment bond calls for recovering learning space and decreasing instruction-time interruptions by reconfiguring areas within several of the schools. "For example, increasing demands for special needs services have put stress on existing facilities, causing us to look in every nook and cranny to serve these students," commented Dr. Feirsen.

"To uphold our tradition of excellence, we must provide our students with a 21st-century learning environment," added Board of Education President Colleen E. Foley. "We want to maintain small class size, grow our academic programs, provide our students with broader experiences and compete with other school districts on Long Island and throughout the country."

To serve the community, the Board of Education arranged for a Town Hall meeting for all POAs on **Tuesday, September 29, 8:00 pm**, at Garden City High School to discuss the School Investment Bond. On **Thursday, October 8, 7:30 pm**, the Garden City PTA will host a meeting with school district officials to discuss the bond and answer questions about planned projects and financing. This meeting will also be held at the high school. Both meetings are open to the public and will include a Q&A session.

Additional presentations and photo displays of the proposed work will be available at numerous district events until the bond vote on October 27. A Bond Referendum newsletter will be mailed to the community in early October. Additionally, a Bond Referendum page has been set up on the district's web site, www.gardencityk12.ny.us, which includes the planned list of projects, voting information and an informational video highlighting the most pressing health and safety needs the district now faces.

SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4 GARDEN CITY FIRE PREVENTION DAY



The statistics are staggering: Each year roughly 3,000 people die as a result of home fires and burns, and more than 200,000 individuals are seen in the nation's emergency rooms for burn injuries.

That's why The Garden City Fire Department is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for Fire Prevention Week 2009—October 4 to 10—to urge Garden City residents to “Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned.”

“The most common types of burn injuries result from fire or flame burns, scalds and contact burns,” said Chief William Graham. “Keeping our homes safe from fire and preventing devastating burn injuries is a healthy change we can make happen by following some simple safety rules.”

- Keep hot foods and liquids away from tables and counter edges so they cannot be knocked over.
- Have a three foot “kid-free” zone around the stove.
- Never hold a child in your arms while preparing hot food or drinking a hot beverage.
- Be careful when using things that get hot such as curling irons, oven, irons, lamps and heaters.
- Install tamper-resistant receptacles to prevent a child from sticking an object in the outlet.
- Never leave a child alone with a lit candle or fireplace, portable heater, hot stove or hot appliance.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Set your hot water temperature no higher than 120 degrees.
- Install anti-scald valves on shower heads and faucets.

The Garden City Volunteer Fire Department will be hosting our annual open house and fire prevention day on Sunday, October 4, from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm at Fire Headquarters. Please stop by for some great demonstrations, fire prevention exercises and refreshments, all free of charge. For more information visit www.gcfndny.com.

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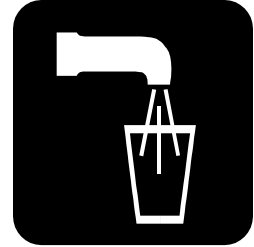
President's Message

notice that it will hold a bond referendum on October 27, 2009. The amount of the proposed bond is \$36.5 million and would serve to make renovations to meet present day health and safety code requirements, as well as to add space for academic program growth. Please read the enclosed article from the GC school district. The BOE will present the details of the 2009 Investment Bond at a public meeting on Tuesday, September 29, at 8pm in the Garden City High School auditorium.

In addition, the EPOA will host a presentation by residents James Carney and Frank Ruggerio, who served as volunteers on the Facilities Committee that surveyed the facilities and made the improvement recommendations to the BOE. This presentation will be held during the EPOA Public Meeting on October 13 in the GC library, lower level, starting at 7:30 pm. I urge all residents to attend the meeting on September 29, as well as the EPOA meeting on October 13, so that you are well informed as to this bond referendum prior to the vote on October 27.

The residents of the East should be assured that your fellow residents who volunteer their time to serve on the EPOA board will remain committed to protecting your interests and concerns in the coming year. Please support our efforts by becoming a member of the EPOA. Joining is easy: just go to our Web site at www.gcepoa.org. You can also go to our Web site for updates on other Village issues and also to e-mail us with your comments or concerns.

The Lighthouse Project: Is There Enough Water for Everyone? Will it be Safe to Drink?



by **Leo Stimmler**
EPOA Liaison to Garden City's Environmental Advisory Board

The Lighthouse Project: Is there enough drinking water for everyone?

What kind of impact will the enormous increase in groundwater withdrawals by the Lighthouse Project and the Covanta Corporation have on the quantity and quality of our drinking water?

Charles Wang, former chief executive of Computer Associates, wants to renovate and triple the size of the Nassau Coliseum and develop 150 acres surrounding the arena. His plan, called The Lighthouse Project, is to erect more than 30 buildings, two of them each 35 to 40 stories, which will provide one million square feet of office space, 500,000 square feet of retail space and 2300 residential units. Wang also wants to add 300 new hotel rooms to the existing 617. The cost is \$3.74 billion with \$700 million coming from stimulus funding.

In addition to the Lighthouse, the Covanta Corporation of Westbury, which uses municipal solid waste to generate energy, is planning to add a new boiler to their facility that is expected to increase groundwater withdrawals by approximately 270 million gallons per year.

How will the quantity of groundwater be impacted?

Garden City's drinking water comes from ten wells that have been drilled into the Magothy Aquifer, the largest of Long Island's three aquifers. Are the projected water use practices by the Lighthouse and Covanta sustainable? Not according to J. Redding, a member of Garden City's Environmental Advisory Board. Quoting the Lighthouse's own environmental impact statement, Redding, a retired professional engineer, says 1,388,250 gallons of water per day will be required for the 30 or so Lighthouse buildings. Annualized this comes to about 500 million gallons of water a year. To determine whether the aquifers under Nassau County can sustain this annual withdrawal, the groundwater recharge rate has to be calculated. The Lighthouse's own current estimate is 150 million gallons of natural groundwater recharge per year. This comes to a net loss of 350 million gallons of water annually. Thus, as currently configured, the Lighthouse cannot function without depleting the Magothy Aquifer.

When you add the Covanta groundwater withdrawal of 270 million gallons of water annually to the Lighthouse's yearly net loss of 350 million gallons, there is a total loss of 620 million gallons of water annually from the Magothy Aquifer. "And the pumpage caps developed by the state are already exceeded," states Redding.

Not everyone agrees with Redding. The Lighthouse's environmental impact statement claims there is a "mathematical deficiency" in calculating the state's five year water pumpage cap. However, Julian Kane, a retired geology professor at Hofstra and science teacher at Garden City High School, says Redding is correct. "The only problem with the groundwater pumpage

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caps is not mathematical but a lack of enforcement by the Nassau County towns and villages,” Kane says.

How will the quality of groundwater be impacted?

Will the loss of so much water have any impact on the quality of Nassau County’s water? “Of course,” says the retired geology professor. “If the water table drops because of excessive pumping beyond a safe yield, the surface contaminants which might have run off as surface water are drawn down into the public supply aquifers. We already have strong evidence that the contaminants at the many hazardous waste sites in Nassau County are affecting the raw, untreated water in the Magothy aquifer. Excessive pumping would effectively concentrate the contaminants into a smaller volume of water,” Kane explained.

Questions to ask your village and other elected representatives:

1. Does the Magothy aquifer have the ability to supply water for the proposed Lighthouse and Covanta developments and, over time, replenish itself?
2. Are the projected water use practices by the Lighthouse and Covanta sustainable or is it overexploitation?
3. Who is managing utilization?
4. Will the massive withdrawals of groundwater by the Lighthouse and Covanta have an impact on the way in which the hazardous waste moves through the Magothy Aquifer?
5. Could this negatively impact the quality of our drinking water?

If you wish to contact Mayor Rothschild about the Lighthouse or any other Village issue, his e-mail address is mayor@gardencityny.net.

The October Board of Trustees meetings are on 10/1 and 10/15, at Village Hall beginning at 8 pm.

Police Emergency: 911

Police Non-Emergency: 465-4100

Village Hall: 465-4000

Fire Emergency: 746-2800

Fire Non-Emergency: 746-1301

Water/Sewer: 465-4020

Your Village Needs Your Help

To successfully deal with the serious issues facing our Village—such as the fast tracking of the Lighthouse Project over the summer—we need informed citizens working through our POAs and in concert with our Board of Trustees. Please join us at our next EPOA public meeting on October 13, 7:30 pm, in the Garden City Library. Become an advocate for your Village. Offer whatever time you can spare to help in specific ways, on projects big and small. Attend Board of Trustees meetings, generally held the first and third Thursdays of the month. Check the Village Web site—www.gardencityny.net—for specific dates.

Save the Date
Tuesday, October 13, 7:30 pm
EPOA Public Meeting
Garden City Library, Lower Level

On The Agenda

Presentation by residents James Carney and Frank Ruggiero on school facilities improvement recommendations, followed by questions and answers. A referendum vote is set for Tuesday, October 27, on the \$36.5 million school bond issue. Be informed!

Trustees Dennis Donnelly and Nick Episcopia will answer questions and update residents on the Lighthouse and other important issues. Bring your ideas and questions. Participate with your neighbors.

FIRE PREVENTION DAY—SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

epoa news

Eastern Property Owners' Assoc., Inc.
P. O. Box 7525
Garden City, New York 11530

DATED MATERIAL

Or Current Resident