

WEST ISLIP ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

February 2009

The Inception of West Islip Association

A meeting of the West Islip Chamber of Commerce on March 13, 2008 was attended by almost 500 West Islip residents. The subject at issue was the proposed construction of a Walgreen's Pharmacy on the grounds of the LaGrange Inn on the northwest corner of Higbie Lane and Montauk Highway.

Although the LaGrange Inn had not been designated as an Historical Preservation site, in the minds and hearts of long-time West Islip residents, it represents what this community was in the history of our country. It is the centerpiece of West Islip. So spoke many on March 13, 2008.

In response to the negative reaction to the plan, Suffolk County Legislator Thomas Barraga proposed the formation of the LaGrange Task Force to research, develop and recommend alternative plans for the future of the site where

the historic LaGrange Inn is currently located. It was energized by the tremendous support and encouragement of Islip Town Officials including Town of Islip Supervisor Phil Nolan, Town of Islip Planning Board Commissioner Gene Murphy and Town of Islip Economic and Development Division Director William G. Mannix.

When local groups approached the Task Force with suggestions of other problems which should be addressed, it became evident that a broader consideration was needed. The West Islip Association was formed to enrich the community to the benefit of its businesses, its visitors and its residents. The Association has still to articulate a set of rules by which to operate and the group is now in the process of doing so.

West Islip Association Members

Joe DeCarlo, Chair
Maria Figalora, Vice Chair
Lynn Luttenberger, Vice Chair
Irene A. Munno, Secretary
Carolyn Agnejo

Anthony Formica
Stacy Kennedy
Jim Lundie
Bob Manley
Kay Manley

Kathy Montgomery
Maria Pecorale
Patricia Romeo
Helen Schick
Ed Vilim

Mission Statement

The Mission statement of the West Islip Association is to work with the community, community groups and local officials to ensure that West Islip maintains its character and remains a comfortable place to live and work.

Goals

1. To provide a voice for residents to maintain a pleasing atmosphere for the Community
2. To promote the common good and general welfare of the residents of West Islip by means communication, and the expression of neighborhood goals and opinions to public agencies.
3. To identify and evaluate needs, disseminate information, and take appropriate action to support West Islip interests with the common goal of improving the economic well-being of our community.

West Islip Community Summit Coalition

On December 1, 2008, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Beth Virginia Blau invited various West Islip groups to participate in a coalition to address community concerns. Following that initial meeting, questionnaires were completed by those who had attended, stating short term and long term goals for consideration. West Islip Association was represented at the initial meeting and the subsequent meeting on January 12, 2009. We will continue to be involved in the Coalition which is dedicated to the Economic well-being and the educational opportunities within our Hamlet.

West Islip Association (WIA) Progress to Date

Walgreen

The Walgreen Pharmacy proposal has been denied by the Islip Town Planning Board. The owners of the La-Grange, Babylon Ford and Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church properties have been sharing their ideas for development with the WIA. WIA, in return, has discussed with the owners possibilities for development.

Stop and Shop

Representatives of Stop and Shop and their Public Relations firm attended the WIA meeting in October and presented an architectural rendering for the Store and Plaza. WIA members suggested that a Colonial theme be incorporated in the design of the Shop and Plaza. After review of the Association's suggestions, the Architect incorporated additional changes to add to the colonial theme and make it even "more interesting than the original design".

Higbie Lane

The Pedestrian Crosswalk Sign in place at the Higbie Bagels site on Higbie Lane, south of the Higbie Lane-Udall Road merge, was struck by a truck making a southward turn at the Oakwood Avenue intersection. The trial placement of the crosswalk sign may not be the answer to pedestrian safety if the road is indeed too narrow for safe turns by large vehicles. The Town will monitor the situation and look for additional means of safeguarding pedestrians in that area.

Babylon Ford

Residents will notice that work is being done on the Montauk Highway property adjacent to the LaGrange. The owner of the property is in the process of razing the building and cleaning up the property and will entertain offers for development.

West Islip Florist

Residents may have noted that the demolition of the burned out Flower Shop has begun. The only thing remaining appears to be the foundation.

Montauk Highway

WIA members had noted that speed limit signs from Brightwaters to West Islip were not consistent. Traffic safety was of concern because of the speed of vehicles entering the final curve into West Islip. As a result of a letter to Governor Patterson from the son of one of our WIA members, the local Traffic Commissioner has initiated a traffic study on that stretch of road.

The Country Deli

One of our WIA members contacted the owner of the Country Deli situated on Higbie Lane and Hawley Avenue. He was kind enough to share, with the Association, the architectural renderings of the planned construction. It appears that a very attractive complex will eventually replace the Country Deli.

Moose Lodge

The owner of the Moose Lodge property has filed the application for the subdivision and the rezoning. He hopes to take down the building by March 1, 2009. WIA has contacted the Planning Board to voice our support of the project as presented by the owner.

Everdell Avenue/King Kullen Area

The vandalism/Graffiti issue that exists between the residential area and the rear of the King Kullen Shopping Center has been targeted by the Suffolk County Police Department (Third Precinct) COPE Squad. WIA has been in communication with King Kullen management suggesting some type of private security to render the area safe from damage or destruction.

Best Yet

The rear of the Best Yet Shopping area has been the subject of some concern. Blighted property in that area has an outstanding code violation related to improper fire and safety security. The violation was posted in late October with a final compliance date of late January. An interested builder/contractor hopes to have the court's approval of a sale within two months.

Situations for further discussion

1. Future use of the Dzus property
2. Restoration of the West Islip Beach
3. Wholesome after-school activities for the Youth of West Islip
4. Value of a "See something, say something" attitude on the part of residents who witness questionable activity. (Please call 911 or contact SCPD COPE Unit at 854-8308 or 854-8390.)

Those parties interested in the West Islip Association may contact us by submitting their E-mail addresses to WIA through wiasociation@yahoo.com.

The West Islip Tribune is the community's online newspaper and may be accessed to learn more about local concerns and the activities of organizations in response to the concerns of West Islip businesses and residents.