

Harbor Road debate heats back up

Head of Harbor deputy mayor takes case to Suffolk County legislative committee

By Tom Allegra

Four concerned Head of the Harbor residents, including the village's deputy mayor Lisa Davidson, visited the Suffolk County legislature in Hauppauge Tuesday, June 17 seeking remedy for the Harbor Road dam that collapsed 10 months ago, as the concrete road and dam beneath it continue to crumble further into the mud-flat area that was once Mill Pond.

But whereas their initial lobbying centered on public safety issues such as delayed emergency response time resulting from the road's collapse, the deputy mayor quickly turned her focus on Ward Melville Heritage Organization (WMHO) president Gloria Rocchio, who she blamed for stalling the progress of a plan for remediation between the WMHO and Town of Brookhaven (the non-profit WMHO owns the Mill Pond property, including the land beneath Harbor Road).

"I thought I would help clarify one issue that we keep hearing over and over again: Brookhaven owns the top layer of the road; Gloria owns the bottom portion of the road. And Gloria insists that she will never sign any documentation that implicates her as the owner, because she is concerned about litigation and lawsuits and liability," Ms. Davidson addressed the legislature. "So that's why we are here, because we are absolutely desperate."

During a telephone interview with **The Smithtown News** later in the day, Ms. Rocchio said a reconstruction plan for the road and dam is already being discussed with the towns of Brookhaven and Smithtown as well as the villages of Stony Brook and Head of the Harbor.

"First of all, the title search showing that Harbor Road is a public road [and therefore the responsibility of the Town of Brookhaven] is already up on our website today, and secondly, we did send a proposal to the municipalities as far as how to resolve this measure, and we would like to work with them," said Ms. Rocchio, who noted that Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement is rarely available to non-profits and therefore would have to be applied for and obtained at the municipal level.

"I'm acting in the best interest of the WMHO. We reached out to the municipalities on this matter and we are waiting for everyone's response," Ms. Rocchio said. "We hope to get the responses from everyone and be able to meet and put a final agreement together."

"The trustees and the staff of WMHO could not be working harder than we are to get this matter resolved. It's very complicated."

Ms. Davidson dug in even deeper against both Ms. Rocchio and the Town of Brookhaven after the meeting, even though it was the WMHO that already funded and completed the reconstruction of Mill Creek Road in Head of the Harbor, which runs perpendicular to Harbor Road and also collapsed during the rainstorm of August 18/19.

"If that's true—if the surface [of Harbor Road] is owned by Brookhaven and the land underneath is owned by Gloria—and Gloria refuses to sign and Brookhaven refuses to sign again, what do we do?" Ms. Davidson told **The NEWS**. "It's incredible that one woman has the ability to completely paralyze an entire community."

"It's incredibly frustrating to hear over and over



FOR ARGUMENT'S SAKE: Head of the Harbor residents (from left) Elizabeth Closson, Beth Zweig, deputy mayor Lisa Davidson and Dan Dresch lobbied the Suffolk County Legislature in Hauppauge Tuesday, June 17 to step in to help finalize a plan to fix the collapsed Harbor Road and dam beneath it.

- Tom Allegra photo

again from all of these different government entities that 1) it's not their problem, and 2) that Gloria needs to step up," she said. "To have Gloria keep reiterating that, no, she's not going to sign leaves us nowhere."

"Both entities are creating an epic problem for the community. It's both Gloria and the town of Brookhaven who are just refusing to work together."

Any combined effort to fix the dam and the road above it, however, will have to be the work of more than just WMHO and the Town of Brookhaven, Ms. Rocchio revealed Tuesday. The village of Head of the Harbor and Town of Smithtown may bear some fiscal responsibility for the public road as well if their geographic portion of Harbor Road—which begins less than 40 feet west of the dam break—must be excavated. Ms. Rocchio said this is a likelihood because there is a concrete structure under the road that carries water from the pond to the historic grist mill just north of the road collapse (the grist mill has been inoperable since the August 19 dam break emptied all of Mill Pond into Stony Brook Harbor).

"The grist mill could be in jeopardy if the road is excavated because the wall in the basement [of the grist mill] is part of the [Head of the Harbor section of the] road," Ms. Rocchio said. "We're working as quickly as possible, and we invite the people from the Department of Homeland Security to come down and see the building and the whole matter as well as anyone from FEMA to see if we can sit down and resolve these matters."

The first person to speak in front of the legislature was Mill Creek Road resident Dan Dresch, who called upon Suffolk County Executive Edward Romaine to take charge.

"For 10 months, we have been in a perfect storm of too many involved parties, political boundaries, vague or contradictory, historical documents and a fear of future litigation. For 10 months, we've been stuck between a nonprofit organization [WMHO], the largest town in Suffolk County [Brookhaven], and their respective lawyers who have dug in for a long, drawn-out battle," Mr. Dresch said. "It's been 10 months. It's time for the county step up and take the lead [to] change the tone of the negotiations."

"Without the Harbor Road connection, public safety is in danger. There are limitations to response time and equipment, therefore requesting that this committee draft the resolution for professionals to study the direct and mutual aid emergency response issues with Stony Brook and St. James

fire departments and recommend short-, mid- and long-term solutions and most importantly, responsibilities. It's time for a high-profile, direct engagement by the county the legislature and the county executive."

Next to speak was Emmett Way resident Beth Zweig. "Because this is a meeting about fire rescue and emergency services, I won't dwell on the dangerous driving conditions on the narrow, curving side roads we must now take on a daily basis. And I won't speculate on what might happen if we have another major storm and the road and land disintegrates further," she said. "But what I do want to say clearly for the record is that the destruction of Harbor Road and the failure of the county to take any action to rebuild this road has resulted and will continue to result in delayed response times for emergency vehicles

in our neighborhood. The county is now on notice. A five-minute delay here and a seven-minute delay there could be the difference between a house saved or a house destroyed by fire, or a person resuscitated by EMS workers or found dead on arrival. It is only a matter of time before the failure to fix Harbor Road leads to some type of catastrophic injury that no amount of money and no number of thoughts and prayers will ever repay," Ms. Zweig said.

Head of the Harbor police chief Chuck Lohmann, who was not at the meeting, spoke with **The NEWS** Tuesday as well. Chief Lohmann, who said he will soon vacate his current trustee designation with WMHO due to any perceived conflicts of interest, noted the changes to traffic patterns and risks that automobile traffic poses to resident pedestrians of Saddle Road and Rhododendron Drive, which cars now must traverse in order to reach the Harbor Road thoroughfare connecting Stony Brook to the rest of Head of the Harbor.

"[The road collapse] has dramatically altered the traffic patterns for residents of the east end of Head of the Harbor on roads not intended for heavy traffic, in particular along Saddle and Rhododendron," he said. "A lot of people walk in that area. Parts of Rhododendron are no wider than 15 feet, and then it's right into the woods. There's no shoulder."

Chief Lohmann said the Head of the Harbor police department has fielded between eight and 12 complaints from pedestrians walking in that area, but that there have been no accidents involving pedestrians.

"There's nothing we can do to limit the volume of traffic," he said, "so we've just increased enforcement to make our presence felt."

The biggest concern he said, though, is the increased emergency response time.

"Time is of the essence, and the most expeditious way [to get to eastern Head of the Harbor] would be Route 25A to Harbor Road," Chief Lohmann said. "This has an impact on response time, there's no question about that. And, as you know, minutes and sometimes seconds can make a difference."

"Thank God we haven't had any serious issues to date, so we've been very fortunate," he said. "Anything that can be done to move this problem forward and come up with a resolution would be very constructive, and the sooner the better."

Ms. Rocchio said the fact that WMHO's proposed plan to work with the municipalities in fixing the

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Father’s Day was last Sunday. I hope all the incredible fathers, grandfathers and father figures out there enjoyed a beautiful day surrounded by love, gratitude, and the people that matter most. Whether it was a big celebration or a quiet moment of appreciation, this day is a special reminder of the strength, guidance and the unconditional support that fathers provide.

To all the dads and granddads that show up every day with patience, wisdom and love, you are appreciated. Wishing you continued blessings, good health and the love you deserve, not just on Father’s Day, but every day.

Summer officially begins Thursday, June 20 and for many of us on Long Island, it is truly the best season of the year. From beach days to bonfires to farmers markets, and outdoor concerts, there is something about summer on Long Island that simply can’t be matched.

With all the traveling I try to do throughout the year, I try to make a point of not leaving Long Island in the summer. It’s just too special. There’s nowhere I’d rather be during the summer months. Summer is a gift on Long Island and I hope you each make the most of it. Wishing you a summer filled with joy, safety for your families and many wonderful memories made



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along the way.

A big thank you to Rob Von Bernewitz and Walter Scott, who is a trustee at the Smithtown Cemetery Association, for their ongoing dedication to preserving the beauty and history of the Smithtown Cemetery. Every Wednesday you’ll find Rob, Walter and a group of dedicated volunteers hard at work in the Smithtown Cemetery, carefully cleaning and restoring the headstones with an organic, non-damaging solution that brings new life to these important markers.

So far, they’ve cleaned 80 stones and as you drive along River Road or Route 25A, you can actually see the difference, the stones are slowly turning white again, a quiet but powerful sign of respect for those who came before us. If you’re available on Wednesdays at 10 a.m., they are still looking for volunteers to join this important work. No experience is necessary, just a willingness to help and learn. All are welcome! Come be a part of honoring Smithtown’s history, one stone at a time.

New York State Parks is holding a Pollinator Festival this Saturday, June 21, 2025 at Sunken Meadow State Park from 11 a.m till 3 p.m. in parking field 1. This exciting event will feature vendors, beekeepers, games, live music, food

trucks and lots of great educational opportunities about the importance of pollinators. It’s a fun and interactive way for all ages to learn how to support our local environment and protect the bees.

As someone who just became a beekeeper this year, I can tell you

Keep up pressure over Harbor Road redo

(Continued from page 9)

road and the dam beneath it has been leaked to Ms. Davidson and the public interest group “Save Harbor Road” will only delay negotiations for a fix.

“This proposal—a written proposal we never did before, and a document that can be used to settle everything—was sent to the county, towns and villages and was always meant to be a document that would help us come together and resolve matters,” she said, noting that she is unaware how it was leaked. “What concerns us is that a confidential report we sent to elected officials and their attorneys has somehow gotten into this [Save Harbor Road] committee’s hands, which really delays coming to an agreement. And on top of it all, pieces of it are being publicized that are incorrect.

“For instance, they are saying we’re not going to give the entity [contractors] doing the work access to WHMO land. We did not say that,” Ms. Rocchio said. “We said there would need to be a plan to gain access to both areas [the road and Mill Pond]... all we wanted is an access plan.”

Ms. Davidson made some serious allegations against Ms. Rocchio, claiming she refuses to apply for FEMA assistance because it would put

firsthand how fascinating and vital the world of bees is. The more we learn about pollination and the simple ways we can help support our bees, the more we realize how essential they are to the health of our planet. So head on down this Saturday and learn something.

WMHO under greater scrutiny.

“I don’t think Gloria is taking too much heat. I think... there are probably reasons that she doesn’t want to be exposed. She doesn’t want people looking into her 501(c)(3). She doesn’t want people doing an audit and seeing the books of the Ward Melville Heritage Organization. And that’s my suspicion as to why she doesn’t [sign an agreement assuming any liability for Harbor Road],” Ms. Davidson said. “[The Town of] Brookhaven, I understand, could do more. I feel they could do more. But I really put this on Gloria. I really do.”

“[WMHO] has got millions and millions and millions of dollars in liquid cash assets, and she didn’t need to go to FEMA for that money, and [not doing so] protected her organization,” Ms. Davidson added. “It didn’t open them up to any kind of scrutiny, whereas signing a FEMA contract would. She keeps saying, ‘Oh, let’s just raise the money privately and have private citizens fix the road.’ Why is she saying this when FEMA will pay for it?”

But, as Ms. Rocchio explained, FEMA does not often offer funding to non-profits, anyway, and Harbor Road is technically a public road.

Legal Notices

Notice of formation of LEMAY CANDLES LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York SSNY on 5/16/2025. Office located in Suffolk County. SSNY has been designated for service of process. SSNY shall mail copy of any process served against the LLC 34 EAST MAIN STREET, #232, SMITHTOWN, NY 11787 Purpose: any lawful purpose.

90568 5-4

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF SUFFOLK THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON F/K/A THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE HOLDERS OF THE GE-WMC ASSET-BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-2, -against- MARIE G. CHURILLA, ET AL. NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Suffolk on April 22, 2025, wherein THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON F/K/A THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE HOLDERS OF THE GE-WMC ASSET-BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-2 is the Plaintiff and MARIE G. CHURILLA, ET AL. are the Defendant(s). I, the undersigned Referee, will sell at public auction at the SMITHTOWN TOWN HALL, 99 WEST MAIN STREET, SMITHTOWN, NY 11787, on July 10, 2025 at 10:00AM, premises known as 3 DOVER HILL DRIVE, NESCONSET, NY 11767; and the

ALL THAT CERTAIN PLOT, PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING AT NESCONSET IN THE TOWN OF SMITHTOWN, COUNTY OF SUFFOLK AND STATE OF NEW YORK Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index No.: 612397/2019. J. Gary Waldvogel, Esq. - Referee. Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC, 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 310, Westbury, New York 11590, Attorneys for Plaintiff. All foreclosure sales will be conducted in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines including, but not limited to, social distancing and mask wearing. *LOCATION OF SALE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DAY OF IN ACCORDANCE WITH COURT/CLERK DIRECTIVES. -against- 90597 6-1

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF SUFFOLK DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR FREMONT HOME LOAN TRUST 2006-3, ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2006-3, Plaintiff AGAINST RAMAKRISHNA KARIBANDI, ET AL., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly entered April 26, 2017, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Smithtown Town Hall, 99 West Main Street, Smithtown NY 11787 on July 16, 2025 at 10:00 AM, premises known as 3 Supreme Court, Smithtown, NY 11787. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate,

State of New York, District 0800, Section 154.00, Block 01.00, Lot 062.008. Approximate amount of judgment \$729,299.52 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index #020759/2013. Valerie S. Manzo, Esq., Referee Gross Polowy, LLC 1775 Wehrle Drive Williamsville, NY 14221 00-297040 85851 90617 6-2

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF SUFFOLK THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON F/K/A THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE HOLDERS OF THE GE-WMC ASSET-BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-2, -against- MARIE G. CHURILLA, ET AL. NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Suffolk on April 22, 2025, wherein THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON F/K/A THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE HOLDERS OF THE GE-WMC ASSET-BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-2 is the Plaintiff and MARIE G. CHURILLA, ET AL. are the Defendant(s). I, the undersigned Referee, will sell at public auction at the SMITHTOWN TOWN HALL, 99 WEST MAIN STREET, SMITHTOWN, NY 11787, on July 10, 2025 at 10:00AM, premises known as 3 DOVER HILL DRIVE, NESCONSET, NY 11767; and the following tax map identification:

PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING AT NESCONSET IN THE TOWN OF SMITHTOWN, COUNTY OF SUFFOLK AND STATE OF NEW YORK Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index No.: 612397/2019. J. Gary Waldvogel, Esq. - Referee. Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC, 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 310, Westbury, New York 11590, Attorneys for Plaintiff. All foreclosure sales will be conducted in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines including, but not limited to, social distancing and mask wearing. *LOCATION OF SALE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DAY OF IN ACCORDANCE WITH COURT/CLERK DIRECTIVES. 90618 6-2

HAUPPAUGE FIRE DISTRICT PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the fiscal affairs of the HAUPPAUGE FIRE DISTRICT for the period beginning on January 1, 2024 and ending on December 31, 2024 have been examined by an independent public accountant. A copy of their independent audit report and management letter has been filed in my office, with the Town Clerks of the Town of Smithtown and the Town of Islip, and the New York Office of the State Comptroller where it is available as a public record for inspection by all interested persons. Said report is available as a matter of public record for all interested persons, who may obtain access to it at said firehouse, during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 855 Wheeler Road, Hauppauge, New York, pursuant to Section 35 of the General Municipal Law. The Board of Fire Commissioners may, in its discretion, prepare

independent public accountant and file said response in the Office of the District Secretary of said Fire District, as a matter of public record for inspection by all interested persons. Hauppauge, New York BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS HAUPPAUGE FIRE DISTRICT Michael Buturla, District Secretary 90645 6-3

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT SUFFOLK COUNTY THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON, AS TRUSTEE FOR CIT MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2007-1, Plaintiff against CHRIS ROMANO A/K/A CHRISTOPHER M. ROMANO, et al Defendant(s) Attorney for Plaintiff(s) Fein Such & Crane, LLP, 28 East Main Street, Suite 1800, Rochester, NY 14614. Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered October 16, 2024, I will sell at public auction to the highest bidder at Smithtown Town Hall, 99 West Main Street, Smithtown, NY 11787 on July 23, 2025 at 10:00 AM. Premises known as 104 Meadow Road, Kings Park, NY 11754. District 0800 Sec 027.00 Block 07.00 Lot 010.000. All that certain plot, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the Town of Smithtown, County of Suffolk and State of New York. Approximate Amount of Judgment is \$360,824.31 plus interest, fees, and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index No 627855/2023. The foreclosure sale will be conducted in accordance with 10th Judicial District’s Covid 19

rules. The Referee shall enforce any rules in place regarding facial coverings and social distancing. Deposit by certified funds only, made payable to the referee. Andrea Denicola, Esq., Referee File # SPSNY904

90646 6-3

INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF HEAD-OF-THE-HARBOR NOTICE OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a work session for the Inc. Village of Head of the Harbor by the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Village Hall located at 500 North Country Road, St. James, NY 11780. Village Hall is handicapped accessible. Dated: June 12, 2025 BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES VILLAGE OF HEAD-OF-THE HARBOR Margaret O’Keefe Village Clerk

90647 6-3

PUBLIC NOTICE INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF NISSEQUOGUE 631 MORICHES ROAD

ST. JAMES, NEW YORK 11780 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Zoning Board of Appeals will meet to hold a public work session on Saturday, June 28, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Nissequogue Village Hall, 631 Moriches Road, Nissequogue, New York. Dated: June 17, 2025 By Order of Michael Fazio, Chairman Zoning Board of Appeals

90663 6-3