Brookhaven Quality of Life Task Force Continues Enforcement Efforts
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Farmingville, NY - Supervisor Mark Lesko announced the initial results of the Quality of Life Task Force's 2010 crackdowns on flagrant code violations throughout the Town of Brookhaven.

"The Quality of Life Task Force will be just as relentless in enforcing our Town Codes in 2010 as they were in 2009," said Supervisor Mark Lesko. "The recent efforts of the Task Force prove that there will be no safe haven for slumlords and egregious code violators in Brookhaven Town."

The Quality of Life Task Force was formed in 2009 by Supervisor Lesko and the Town Board to aggressively enforce the Town's codes and take on the worst-of-the-worst violators across Brookhaven. The heightened level of investigation, enforcement and prosecution has resulted in, hauling tons of garbage and debris out of yards and homes, pursuing absentee landlords, and generating a 170% increase in fines issued.

The Town has recently taken action against properties that have been plagues on their communities. A search warrant was executed on one of these properties, 806 North Ocean Avenue in Patchogue, as recently as Tuesday, February 16th.

"These properties were blights on their communities, and a hazard to the health and safety of area residents. If you are a suburban slumlord or serial code offender in the Town of Brookhaven, the Task Force will be paying you a visit in 2010," said Supervisor Lesko.

Four properties targeted by the Task Force during January and early February resulted in search warrants, a condemnation, and the issuance of town code and state code violations leading to numerous judgments and fines.

Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld applauded the Task Force effort that took place on January 7, 2010, at 28 Lynx Lane, East Setauket. "The community’s complaints have been heard, this property has been condemned by the Town Building Department, and its absentee owner will be going to court." said Fiore Rosenfeld. The non owner occupied single family home was condemned because it was unfit for human occupancy. The house had been broken up into three illegal apartments. Investigations by the Town Attorney's Office revealed that the interior had garbage, human and animal feces-filled toilets and sinks, no running water and open electrical outlets.

On Friday January 22, 2010 the Quality of Life Task Force coordinated a field inspection at 1131 Station Road, which resulted in an immediate cease-and-desist order being issued. Town Investigators, Fire Marshals and Building Inspectors uncovered a makeshift recreation center being housed in a warehouse without proper permit and approvals, which included volleyball nets, bleachers, a concession stand and two changing areas. There were 200 people found inside a building without proper exits. The structure had a legal maximum capacity of 35-50 people. Councilwoman Connie Kepert expressed concern saying, "This warehouse did not have any of the proper permits necessary to conduct a sports complex and the safety of everyone inside was compromised. The Task Force did a great job to ensure that everyone got out safety and the owner has been put on notice."

On Tuesday, February 16, a search warrant was executed, and investigators found an illegal three family non owner occupied rental at 806 North Ocean Avenue, Patchogue having three separate living spaces and an illegal garage conversion. In addition, there were no smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors. Multiple appearance tickets are being issued to owner Diane Schaefer. "When we have illegally divided single family homes the whole community is negatively affected. What if there had been a fire in this house? Its occupants, firefighters, rescue volunteers and the neighboring homes would have all been at risk, and the consequences could have been deadly," added Councilman Timothy Mazzei.

A search warrant was also issued for a property at 43 Lama Drive, Shirley based on information from investigations and inspections, and resulted in numerous Town Code and State Code violations being issued. On the evening that Town Investigators and Town Building Inspectors arrived to gain access to the Lama Drive property, the owner Randy Hyland was in the process of removing door locks, appliances, and mattresses. Mr. Hyland, a local fuel-oil company owner and owner of eight additional rental properties within Brookhaven Town, was cited with severe violations of Town Codes and New York State Property Maintenance Codes. The illegal apartment had no smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors, and had numerous safety deficiencies of the oil burner, which was
additionally surrounded by flammable cardboard. "This house could have gone up like a tinderbox," remarked Supervisor Lesko.

"Our Quality of Life Taskforce will take on the worst-of-the-worst violators and use every tool available at the town level to eradicate blights such as these," concluded Deputy Supervisor Kathleen Walsh.