Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld Holds Nassakeag Girl Scout Gathering Field Trip at the Historic Merritt Hawkins Homestead & Environs
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First step in building long-term stewardship relationship between Town and the abutting Nassakeag elementary school and related scouting troops of the Three Villages

Farmingville, NY - On Saturday, October 8, Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld joined Girl Scout Troop #141 during a field trip at the historic Merritt Hawkins Homestead on Pond Path in East Setauket. The group was lead by Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld in terms of the walk through of the interior of the historic (c. 1802) Merritt Hawkins house and by tour guides John Turner and John Lessler and from the Town's Division of Environmental Protection & Land Management in terms of the ecological walking tour of the surrounding environs of this Brookhaven holding. The Girl Scouts visited the preserve with troop leader Marilyn Sloan to learn about the Merritt Hawkins House, observe the natural habitat and discover and learn about the wide variety of plant and animal species that are found there. Through the Girl Scout's participation during today's event and future work at the preserve, they can earn a number of merit badges, including ones for Eco-Explorer, Watching Wildlife, Earth Connections, Animal Habitats, Your Outdoor Surroundings and more.

Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld said, "My thoughts when I first resolved to have our town board purchase the Merritt Hawkins Homestead from the kindhearted Selleck family was foster the natural synergy of having Three Village School District property abutting this historic property by Nassakeag elementary. It was a long term vision to see students utilizing this precious and wondrous ecosystem for educational purposes. I'm so grateful to have the Girl Scouts of Nassakeag step up, under the leadership of Ms. Marilyn Sloan, and be passionately interested in a long term use of our town's historic open space at this location for earning merit badges and look forward to the spring and the expansion of this program."
Ms. Sloan said, "Today is just the first step in our new relationship with Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld and the Town. The Girl Scouts are hoping to be able to come back to the house often to help keep it clean and the trails clear. We would like to help keep track of the wildlife and plants that grow and live here at the house. Some of our girls are interested in using the Merritt House as a way to achieve their Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards."

The historic Selleck Homestead Preserve is located in Setauket along the west side of Pond Path, south of Upper Sheep Pasture Road and it abuts the Nassakeag Elementary School. It is part of one of the earliest farms in Setauket and County records show that it originally belonged to the Hawkins family with the first house being built there in 1774. In 2007, Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld’s strong advocacy led the Town to acquire the property and preserve it as open space. This action prevented it from being purchased by developers and allowed the house and land to be preserved.

Girl Scout Troop #141 includes 5th grade girls from the Nassakeag Elementary School. Ms. Sloan is also the co-coordinator of Service Unit 56 of the Girl Scouts of Suffolk County. The Service Unit covers three of the five Elementary School’s in Setauket - Nassakeag, Minnesauke and Arrowhead and has 45 troops ranging from kindergarten (Daisy level) through 9th grade (Senior level). The entire Service Unit was invited to participate in the day’s events.

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