Supervisor Lesko and Councilwoman Kepert Announce Open Space Purchase of 7.5 Acres in Middle Island located in Carmans River Watershed

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Acquisition is the first purchased pursuant to Long Island Solar Farm Natural Resources Benefit

Farmingville, NY - At the November 22 Board Meeting, the Brookhaven Town Board unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the acquisition of 7.5 acres in Middle Island to be preserved as open space. This is the first land purchase as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) that provides the Town with $2 million for the purchase and preservation of open space in the 0-5 year groundwater contributing area of the Carmans River, which lies within Long Island’s Pine Barrens region.

The MOU, which was approved by the Town Board on June 15, 2011, is part of the "Natural Resources Benefit" associated with and designed to enhance the environmental benefits of the development of the 32 megawatt Long Island Solar Farm at the Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL). This solar energy facility began operating earlier this month.

Supervisor Mark Lesko said, "Working with LIPA, we were able to achieve a win for the environment and the residents of Brookhaven Town. This piece of property is in the most sensitive area of the Carmans River Watershed and will now be forever protected from the development. Because of our partnership with LIPA, the Town was able to protect open space without spending any additional funds."

Councilwoman Connie Kepert said, "I have been diligently working with our Town Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to identify critical parcels of property along the Carmans River Corridor to acquire and preserve. The acquisition of the Holy Trinity property will add to the wealth of protected and preserved lands which lie within the contributing area of the Carmans River. These past, present and future acquisitions will ensure that this great river remains protected."

"The acquisition of this land is consistent with the Natural Resources Benefits package provided for the Long Island Solar Farm and allows LIPA and its partners to fulfill its commitments, which was to not only advance renewable energy on Long Island with the largest solar farm in the state of New York, but to also ensure that we protect the precious natural resources of the Pine Barrens," said Michael Hervey, LIPA Chief Operating Officer.

The 0-5 year groundwater contributing area of the Carmans River was identified by the Carmans River Study Group as the area around the River where it takes 0-5 years for groundwater, or anything that seeps into groundwater, such as nitrogen, to reach the Carmans River.

The property in Middle Island is located on the east side of County Road 21 (Middle Island-Yaphank Road), north of Longwood Road. The current owner of the property is Holy Trinity Church, which will continue to operate on 2.5 acres adjacent to the property that will be purchased by the Town. The cost of the property is not to exceed $567,000.

The Town Board will be accepting the Carmans River Watershed Protection Plan in the coming months and will set a public hearing to solicit comments on the plan. Earlier this year, New York State passed legislation expanding the core of the Pine Barrens Region in the Carmans River Watershed, which was recommended by the Carmans River Study Group. The Draft Carmans River Watershed Protection Plan is arguably the most significant environmental achievement in Brookhaven since the Pine Barrens Act of 1993.
Aerial map of the Holy Trinity property (blue outline) in Middle Island to be purchased by the Town of Brookhaven as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) that provides the Town with $2 million for the purchase and preservation of open space in the 0-5 year groundwater contributing area of the Carmans River.