Supervisor Lesko and Councilwoman Kepert Announce Violations Issued by the Quality of Life Task Force on Illegal Multi-Family Home in Middle Island

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**Kitchen Fire leads to investigation of illegal multi-family dwelling by Town’s Law Department**

Photos show fire damage to the kitchen of the illegal multi-family home located at 14 Half Mile Road in Middle Island and commercial vehicles and landscaping equipment in the rear of the property.

**Farmingville, NY** - Supervisor Mark Lesko and Councilwoman Connie Kepert announced a Quality of Life Task Force action that occurred on March 25, 2012 at 14 Half Mile Road in Middle Island. Law investigators were alerted to the non-owner occupied, illegal multi-family dwelling by Town Fire Marshals, who had responded earlier in the day to investigate a kitchen fire.

"The residents of this illegal multi-family home are lucky that the fire didn't spread and cause serious injury or a fatality," said Supervisor Lesko, "Properties like this are a threat to the public health and safety and we will prosecute the violators to the fullest extent of the law. I commend our Quality of Life Task Force for a job well done and also thank the Fire Marshals for working with our Law Department to investigate this case.

Councilwoman Kepert said, "In this instance, the work of the Quality of Life Task Force has protected the lives of our residents. Clearly, the outcome of this fire could have been a lot worse, but thanks to our Fire Marshals working together with our Law Department, the homeowner will be made to bring the house into compliance with the applicable codes and all hazardous conditions will be corrected."

Upon entering the dwelling, Quality of Life Task Force investigators found that it was divided into two rental units, one on the first floor and one on the second floor. It also had a finished basement that was divided into several rooms and used as office space for a landscaping company operated by the property’s trustee. The rear portion of the property was enclosed by a stockade fence and contained some commercial vehicles, an unregistered vehicle and commercial landscaping equipment.

Five appearance tickets, including one misdemeanor, were issued to the property trustee with a court date scheduled for May 24, 2012. The tickets issued included:

- No certificate of occupancy (misdemeanor)
- No permit for an accessory apartment
- Non-permitted use of a two family dwelling
- Non-permitted use of business from residence and outdoor storage
- Unregistered vehicle
Supervisor Lesko established the Quality of Life Task Force to aggressively enforce the Town code, eliminate blight in neighborhood, and shutdown suburban slumlords. In the past three years, fines levied on code enforcement violations have increased by 332%. In 2011, the Town levied more than $1 million dollars in fines against serial offenders for the first time in its history. In addition, at the request of Supervisor Lesko and the Town Board, the New York State Office of Court Administration established the Brookhaven Community Court in 2010. It is a special court that is part of the Sixth District Court in Patchogue dedicated to handling proceedings alleging violations of Brookhaven Town ordinances and affecting the quality of life of local residents.

If residents believe that a property is in violation of any Town of Brookhaven codes, they can call 451-TOWN to file a complaint. To learn more about the Quality of Life Task Force, visit www.brookhaven.org.