Fiore-Rosenfeld Streamlines the Historic District Advisory Committee (HDAC) Review Process
posted on 2/1/2013 4:58:59 PM

January 31, 2013

With Unanimous support of the Town Board, Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld’s amendment to Town Code
clarifies HDAC protocols, organization and functions to ensure our historic neighborhoods’ streetscapes, property values and architectural heritage preserve our future generation’s sense of place

Farmingville, NY - At a public hearing during the January 23 Town Board meeting, the Town Board voted to adopt Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld’s bill which streamlines the Historic District Advisory Committee (HDAC) by amending Section 85 of the Town Code by amending Article VB and Article XVII entitled HD Historic District.

"These amendments clean up the Town code and bring it in line with the way the HDAC actually functions," said Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld, "Brookhaven has a rich history dating back to the 1600s. There are areas and structures throughout the town that remain as they were many years ago and it is our responsibility to do what we can to preserve our historic identity and sense of place for future generations. My ultimate goal in sponsoring the bill was to clarify the role of the HDAC and to make sure they have the power to maintain the character and quality of the streetscapes within the Town's historic districts and as a result also preserve our property values. This bill accomplishes that goal."

Robert Reuter, Acting Chair and member of the HDAC who represents Dryers' Neck / East Setauket said, "Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld’s amendments to the Town Code regarding the workings of the HDAC have clarified the committee’s organization and protocols. Perhaps most significant is the confirmation of the Brookhaven Planning Commissioner as receiver of HDAC recommendations. Planning staff provide highly knowledgeable and efficient support to the committee, greatly helping to promote consistency of recommendations and fair and fast service to applicants."

"These amendments to the Town Code put forth by Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld help to clearly define the roles of the Historical District Advisory Committee and allow its members to continue to admirably perform their duties. Since its inception, the HDAC has actively worked to preserve our sense of place through the preservation of important reminders of our past. These amendments provide them the ability to preserve our Town's history into the future," stated Councilwoman Connie Kepert.

The amendments in the bill include the following:

• Clarifying the role of the Planning Commissioner as the reviewer and receiver of the recommendations and advice of the HDAC.

• Requiring HDAC members to live within the Council District in which the historic district lies.

• Establishing a functional and clear quorum for the HDAC Board.

• Resetting the staggered terms of the HDAC Board. Three members for a term of one year, three members for a term of two years, three members for a term of three years and all other members for terms of four years.

Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld said, "The amendments have made the HDAC code more user friendly since the functions and responsibilities are more clear cut than before. This will pave the way for the committee to work in an increasingly efficient manner and I thank the HDAC, Planning Board and Law Department who provided me with valuable assistance while drafting the new code amendments."