Supervisor Lesko and Councilman Mazzei Announce Town's Quality of Life Task Force Action at Illegal Four Family Home in Holbrook

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Property owner issued 11 Tickets to Appear in Court for Town Code violations

Farmingville, NY - On January 13, Supervisor Lesko and Councilman Mazzei announced that the Town of Brookhaven's Quality of Life Task Force, assisted by the Suffolk County 6th Precinct Crime Control Unit, executed a search warrant on an illegal four family dwelling at 140 Coates Avenue in Holbrook. During the execution of the search warrant, the Town Investigators also discovered a number of code violations that were hazardous to the occupants and to the residents who live nearby. The living space in the basement, on the main floor, and on the second floor, and the detached garage were all found to be illegal living spaces.

"The Quality of Life Task Force has proven to be a powerful force against property owners who disregard the health and safety of our residents," said Supervisor Lesko. "This recent action sends a clear message that we do not tolerate those who violate our town codes and will prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law. I commend our investigators for the important work they do and thank them for their commitment to improving the quality of life in Brookhaven."

"Illegally converted houses like this one are a danger to the people who live there and a detriment to the law abiding residents that live nearby," said Councilman Tim Mazzei who represents the district where the house is located. "Our Quality of Life Task Force does such a great job and has made such a positive impact on so many neighborhoods across Brookhaven Town. I fully support them and their efforts to crack down on violators and aggressively enforce the law."

Investigators identified living space on the main floor to be the owner's residence that he shares with another individual, as well as other illegally rented rooms. Many of the egress doors and windows on the main floor were blocked and no smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors were found.

The house also contained an illegal two bedroom apartment on the second floor occupied by a family of two. The owner had obtained an accessory apartment permit in 2009 for a one bedroom apartment and then illegally converted it to a two bedroom apartment, which is prohibited by Town code.

Investigators also discovered an illegal basement apartment which was occupied by a family of three. Improper ceiling height and no proper egress windows were observed. The basement apartment had multiple electrical hazards throughout and no smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors were found.

Outside the main residence was a detached garage that was illegally renovated into an apartment containing a makeshift kitchen and bathroom. Investigators observed a number of dangerous conditions and code violations including a portable space heater, piped in propane for a water heater, electrical hazards, no smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors and no true means of egress. Adjacent to the garage apartment was a storage area where a full 20 lb. propane tank was found.

A total of 11 appearance tickets will be served on the property owner, eight of which are misdemeanor violations of Town codes.

Supervisor Lesko established the Quality of Life Task Force in June of 2009. From June 2009 through December 2009, fines levied on code violations increased by 170% compared to the same time period in 2008.

In 2010, the Quality of Life Task Force continued its success. Compared to 2009, fines levied in 2010 nearly doubled to almost $1 million. Fines are levied through tickets issued to property owners with properties that have seriously unsafe or hazardous conditions.

If residents believe that a property is in violation of any Town of Brookhaven codes, they can call 451-TOWN to file a complaint.