Brookhaven Demands Action on Port Jefferson Station "Superfund" Site

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Supervisor Romaine and Councilwoman Cartright Announce Land Use Plan timeline and new law to protect the health and safety of residents

Farmingville, NY - Supervisor Ed Romaine (center) and Councilwoman Valerie M. Cartright (second from left) held a press conference today at the former location of Lawrence Aviation in Port Jefferson Station, a designated Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "Superfund" site. Brookhaven Town placed a moratorium on the site in 2008 as part of the Comsewogue Hamlet Comprehensive Plan study, extending the moratorium until December 2014.

Joining the Supervisor and Councilwoman at the press conference were Port Jefferson Station-Terryville Civic Association President Ed Garboski (left), Town Planning Commissioner Tullio Bertoli (third from right), Chief Deputy Planning Commissioner Dave Genaway and Assistant Town Attorney Tara Scully.

During the press conference, Supervisor Romaine outlined the Town's next steps in the clean-up and redevelopment

of the property, including:

• The demand for an immediate clean-up by the New York State Department of Labor of asbestos that has been located and encapsulated on the property since September of 2013.

• Announcing a new local law that will require testing for soil vapors of volatile organic compounds for all newly constructed houses prior to being issued a Certificate of Occupancy.

• Joining with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in demanding that the owner clean up the oil spills, leaking machinery and transformers that remain on the property.

• Presentation of the timeline for the Town's Land Use Plan and Environmental Impact Study (EIS) proposed SEQRA timeline for the property (see attached).

"This property has been allowed to deteriorate and contaminate the environment for more than 25 years and it's time to clean it up," said Supervisor Romaine. "The Town has zero tolerance for those who disregard our codes and threaten the health and safety of our residents. These unsecured buildings have become an attractive nuisance and the conditions are a scar upon the community. I demand that the owner secure the site, and abate the environmental problems that have existed for too many years so we can start to plan for the future."

Councilwoman Cartright said, "We call for an immediate, expedited, thorough, and transparent cleanup of the asbestos on the Lawrence Aviation site. Each day that this hazardous condition remains, it poses a risk to people in the surrounding residential and commercially zoned areas. Brookhaven residents are at risk and as their representative, I am extremely concerned about their health, safety, and well-being. I urge the owner to comply with the demands of the Town. We must make every effort to prevent additional long lasting negative effects of the pollutants and allow for the use of this location to reflect the desires of the community upon the completion of the Land Use Plan."

Throughout the years, Brookhaven Town, the New York State DEC and a host of other agencies have issued numerous violations on the property to the owner, seeking to have the property cleaned of hazards and have the buildings on the site secured.

About Lawrence Aviation

Lawrence Aviation Industries was established in the 1950s on 160 acres of property located on Sheep Pasture Road in Port Jefferson Station. The company manufactured titanium parts for advanced military aircraft such as the Grumman F-14 fighter jet until it closed in the late 1980s. Later, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that the soil and groundwater at the site had been contaminated with volatile organic compounds, potentially harmful chemicals that were used and disposed of at the site. EPA added the Lawrence Aviation, Inc., site to the Superfund National Priorities list in 2000.

After the plant closed, the EPA performed soil remediation on-site, and installed two water treatment facilities. One treatment site is on the Lawrence Aviation property, the second is a building at the corner of Caroline Ave. and Brook Rd. in Port Jefferson, about one mile away from the Lawrence Aviation property

On March 30, 2013 a fire deemed arson broke out in one of the buildings, causing considerable damage and sending one local firefighter to the hospital.

In addition to determining that the contamination plume extends from the site to Port Jefferson Harbor, the EPA found evidence of volatile organic compound intrusion into the slabs of four homes in the area, and the basement of the Port Jefferson High School wrestling room.

One section of a building on the southern portion of the property has been boarded to encapsulate a pile of asbestos that had been scraped from metal parts that were being illegally removed from the site for scrap, in violation of a court order.

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