

Supervisor Romaine, Town Board Announce Restoration of Brookhaven Community Housing Court

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Farmingville, NY - Supervisor Ed Romaine (at podium) today announced the restoration of the Brookhaven Community Housing Court, a special court that is part of the Sixth District Court. This Community Housing court, which will hold proceedings on Thursdays, will deal exclusively with charges against those who have allegedly violated the Brookhaven Town Code. The first day that court will be in session is Thursday, September 4. Also in attendance were Brookhaven Town Attorney Annette Eaderasto (third from left), Councilwoman Jane Bonner (fifth from right) and Councilwoman Valerie M. Cartright (fourth from right), along with civic members, including those from the Stony Brook Concerned Homeowners.

The Brookhaven Community Court will be dedicated to handling violations issued by town inspectors. The court is a response to cases such as overcrowded housing, dilapidated abandoned homes, health violations, noise and nuisance violations and violations of zoning. Operating out of the Suffolk County Sixth District Court in Patchogue, the court will handle all quality-of-life cases brought by the Town of Brookhaven and provide monitoring of compliance with court orders.

"This dedicated community court will be an effective tool in enforcing quality of life violations that impact the lives of Brookhaven residents who work hard and take pride in their neighborhoods," said Supervisor Romaine. "This court will allow for swifter justice on cases important to the residents of the Town of Brookhaven, to protect the health and safety of their families."

"Our administration and the entire Town Board are dedicated to ensuring a high quality of life for all areas of the Town of Brookhaven," commented Brookhaven Town Councilman Dan Panico. "To meet this goal we must hold those who chose to profiteer at the expense of others accountable. The expeditious handling of Brookhaven Town cases helps with this accountability. I thank District Court Judge Glenn Murphy for his willingness to meet the needs of the residents."

Councilman Tim Mazzei said, "I commend Supervisor Romaine for re-establishing the Brookhaven Community Housing Court. It provides the Town with another tool to help enforce our codes and keep our neighborhoods safe."

Councilwoman Jane Bonner said, "The restoration of the Community Housing Court sends a clear message that the Town will continue to aggressively prosecute those who violate our codes in order to help preserve the quality of life

in our communities."

Councilman Kevin LaValle said, "The Community Housing Court will allow for more efficient prosecution and hold violators accountable. It will help improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods and I commend Supervisor Romaine for bringing it back to the Town."

"This dedicated court, which will allow for Brookhaven housing cases to be exclusively heard on Thursdays, will address violations that directly affect the quality of life of the entire neighborhood," stated Councilwoman Connie Kepert. "The implementation of a Brookhaven Community Housing Court as part of the Sixth District Court will be a powerful new instrument in efficiently bringing violators of the Town's housing codes to justice and into compliance."

Councilwoman Valerie M. Cartright said, "The reestablishment of a Brookhaven Community Housing Court is a great example of the branches of government working cooperatively to achieve justice. This Court will create a more efficient and streamlined process for handling violations discovered through the efforts of the Town's Investigators and Law Department. This step will enable the Town to better address some serious quality of life concerns of our residents."

The idea for a Brookhaven Community Court began with former Sixth District Councilman Keith Romaine, the son of Supervisor Romaine who passed away in 2009 at the age of 36. Councilman Romaine had urged state legislators to pass a bill that would have allowed the Town to form its own community court to oversee quality-of-life code violations, with the court being located within Town Hall with its own judge.

Several years ago, a day had been set aside for Brookhaven Town code violation hearings at the Sixth District Court. Over time, however, this arrangement was discontinued. Earlier this year, Supervisor Romaine contacted the Administrative Judge and Supervising Judge of Suffolk County District Court, requesting a Brookhaven Community Court be established in Sixth District Court, where Town cases would be heard exclusively on Thursdays. The court granted this request, which will begin later this month.

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