

# Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld's Proposed Amendment to Brookhaven's Apprenticeship Program Requirements for New Commercial Buildings is Unanimously Co-Sponsored by the Town Board

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## ***Public hearing to close loopholes regarding industrial zoned property and foundations set for January 22***

**Farmingville, NY** - At the December 18 Town Board Meeting, Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld introduced and sponsored a Town Code change to amend the Town's Apprenticeship law regarding new construction of commercial buildings to include industrial zoned properties and foundations. Under Section 16-3 of the Town Code, contractors and sub-contractors must prove they have in place an apprenticeship training program certified by the New York State Department of Labor in order to receive a building permit to construct a commercial building of at least 100,000 square feet. Despite this, there has been some confusion as to whether this law applies to industrially zoned properties and foundations.

"With this amendment, Brookhaven would apply the apprenticeship program to the construction of all commercial properties of at least 100,000 square feet, including industrial zoned properties and foundations, to ensure that all commercial construction is safe for the workers on the construction site who are building the structure itself, as well as the end-user tenants; employees who will work within it, and the customers who will visit the buildings when they are completed." He continued, "How else can we ensure the safety, quality of workmanship and durability of our built commercial structures while protecting the laborers who construct these buildings and ensure that the lowest wage earners get the training they need for a sustainable job to help bolster the local economy. Applied properly, the NYS Apprenticeship program requirements under this law accomplish this."

Councilwoman Connie Kepert said, "I'm more than happy to do my part to ensure that all large construction projects require an apprenticeship program. These projects are windows of opportunity to build skills for workers entering the trades and this code amendment will take advantage of such important opportunities."

Supervisor Ed Romaine said, "Historically, apprenticeship training programs have been extremely beneficial and vital to the future development of our construction trade workforce in Brookhaven Town. If programs like this are not available, so many of our best and brightest will find it necessary to move themselves and their families away, leaving us short of skilled, employable workers to help our economy grow."

"The code of the Town of Brookhaven should be congruent and fair, and if we are going to have an apprenticeship training program language in the code then we cannot allow loopholes to subvert the intent." commented Brookhaven Town Councilman Dan Panico. "It troubles me greatly to see out-of-state workers come in and build projects that could and should be built by our neighbors. The name of the game right now is jobs and as an elected official in the Town of Brookhaven I want to put our residents to work - building projects to help our economy grow."

"I am in favor of keeping people employed and growing our local economy," said Councilwoman Jane Bonner. "If an amendment to our Town Code will help accomplish that, then it's something that I can support."

Councilwoman Kathleen Walsh said, "Our construction trade workers have struggled through these tough economic times, so anything we can do to help young people gain experience and get a paycheck is a win-win proposition."

According to State Commissioner of Labor standards for apprenticeship training developed in 1961, the program must be an organized, written plan embodying the terms and conditions of employment, training and supervision of one or more apprentices in an apprenticable occupation; and contain a progressively increasing schedule of wages which must be paid to the apprentice consistent with the skill required and shall not be less than the minimum wage. In addition, the program must contain the equal opportunity pledge and an affirmative action plan. Participants must be at least 16 years of age. The procedures and standards are intended to insure that Apprenticeship Training Programs developed and registered in accordance with the public policy are of the highest possible quality in all aspects of on-the-job training and related instruction and that all apprentice training programs provide meaningful employment and relevant training for all apprentices. Non-union shops can also be approved for the NYS

Apprenticeship Training Program.

The public hearing is scheduled for January 22, 2013 at 6:30 pm. For more information, please contact Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld's office at (631) 451-6963.

**Division of Public Information \* Office of the Supervisor**

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