Supervisor Romaine, Councilman Panico and Councilman Mazzei Announce Court Victory on Mastic "Crack House," and Patchogue Eyesore

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Councilman Tim Mazzei, Councilman Dan Panico, Supervisor Ed Romaine, Josh Slaughter representing Legislator Kate Browning and Assistant Town Attorney Jennifer Lutzer.

Illegal basement apartment at 22 Lee Place in Mastic.

Farmingville, NY - Supervisor Romaine today announced that the Town has won a hard fought victory in Suffolk County District Court against two properties, one in Mastic and one in Patchogue that have been the subject of resident complaints due to building code violations and in the case of the Mastic house, identified by the Suffolk County Police Department as a "crack house." Supervisor Romaine was joined by Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Dan Panico and Councilman Tim Mazzei in announcing that the owner of the properties pled guilty in regard to the premises located at 22 Lee Place in Mastic and 39 Avery Avenue in Patchogue for a total of $10,000 in fines and six conditional discharges for summonses issued by the Town's Law Department.

On October 22, 2010, the owner/defendant pled guilty to No Certificate of Occupancy and No Smoke Detectors and paid a total of $1500 in fines and two Conditional Discharges in connection with the Mastic house. On October 15, 2010 the owner/defendant pled guilty to an Illegal Accessory Apartment and No Building Permit at the Patchogue house and paid fines of $2500 and on May 24, 2010, pled guilty to No Permit and was given a $2000 fine which has not been paid and remains in judgment. Subsequently, the Mastic house, which was used to place residents through the Suffolk County Department of Social Services (SCDSS), has remained vacant and State Law 143-B is now in effect that orders payments be withheld to the landlord on the premises until all repairs are completed. The Patchogue house has continued to be occupied and is required to be inspected before any rental permit is issued.

"This sends a clear message that we will not tolerate any property owner, especially an absentee landlord who doesn't even live in the Town, who disregards our building codes and creates a dangerous threat to the health and safety of our residents," said Supervisor Romaine. "Our Law Department has been working for many years to secure this victory and now we can finally bring some satisfaction to the Mastic and Patchogue neighborhoods that have lived with these eyesores for too long,"

"This is the latest in a long series of hefty fines issued to an unscrupulous landlord as we take back our communities on a block by block and house by house basis," commented Councilman Dan Panico. "Let me say this as clear as possible, the old ways of doing whatever you wanted around here are over. The bar for what is deemed an acceptable standard of living has been raised and those people who think they can continue to pack people into houses like sardines, and keep their properties in a deplorable condition, are sorely mistaken."

Councilman Mazzei said, "Thanks to the hard work and determination of our Law Department to prosecute those who violate our codes, we have reached a positive outcome in this case. This is a victory by the people of the Town of Brookhaven that will improve the quality of life in both neighborhoods."

"This home has negatively impacted the Mastic community for years, and has been a top priority in our fight against substandard housing," stated Legislator Kate Browning. "Working together Suffolk County, Brookhaven Town and the local Neighborhood Watch we have successfully put an end to the quality of life issues emanating from the home. Suffolk County's revamped "Crack House Law" in conjunction with Brookhaven Town's tough housing codes led to the termination of payments to 22 Lee Place, and the landlord has pleaded guilty to violations. I want to thank Supervisor Ed Romaine, Councilman Dan Panico and local residents for working closely with my office to rid the community of this long standing problem."

The violations that the property owner has pled guilty to are as follows:

<u>22 Lee Place, Mastic</u>

• Violation of No Smoke Detectors (82-6) which carries a $2,000 maximum fine and a Conditional Discharge to keep premises vacant until such time as a Rental Permit is obtained.

• Violation of Neighborhood Preservation (82-3F) which carries a $2,000 maximum fine and a Conditional Discharge to fix all interior and exterior issues at the premises within 15 days with an immediate re-inspection.

• Violation of Litter (45-4D) which carries a $2,000 maximum fine and a Conditional Discharge that defendant clean up all litter at the premises within 15 days.

<u>39 Avery Ave, Patchogue</u>

• Violation of No Building Permit (85-17) which carries a $1,500 fine and a Conditional Discharge that defendant file a demolition permit for the pool within 30 days and obtain a Certificate of Compliance within 90 days.

• Violation of No Rental Permit (82-10) which carries a $2,000 maximum fine and a Conditional Discharge that defendant obtain a Rental Registration within 30 days.

• Violation of No Building Permit (85-17) which carries a $500 fine and a Conditional Discharge that defendant file for a permit for the second story staircase within 30 days and obtain a CO within 120 days.

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