

Supervisor Romaine and Councilwoman Kepert Oversee Demolition of Vacant and Vandalized House Located in the Overton Preserve in Coram

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Farmingville, NY - Earlier today, Supervisor Ed Romaine (center) and Councilwoman Connie Kepert (left) and E. James Freeman, President of the Gordon Heights Civic Association, oversaw the demolition of a vacant house located on the more than 550 acre Overton Preserve in Coram. The long vacant structure has deteriorated over the years and become a target of vandals. The land is owned by the Town and County and preserved as open space. The Town's Department of Waste Management is handling the demolition and removal of the debris to the Town's landfill. The County will pay 50% of the cost of demolition.

"This demolition is another example of the progress we are making by removing old, vacant structures and cleaning up our communities," said Supervisor Ed Romaine. "As I travel throughout the Town, I see many structures like this one and I am working with our Building, Law and Waste Management departments to increase our efforts to eliminate dangerous eyesores that threaten the quality of life in the neighborhoods."

Councilwoman Connie Kepert said, "I have been working with communities all over the 4th District to remove blighted homes which serve as attractive nuisances. The house demolished this morning has long been a attraction for drug dealers and prostitution. This ecologically valuable property will be restored as part of the great Overton Preserve."

E. James Freeman, President of the Gordon Heights Civic Association said, "Over the course of the past year, a Council was formed to combat illegal rental housing, drugs, prostitution, and homelessness in the Gordon Heights community. The Council consists of Rev. Beresford Adams, Rev. Thomas Gortman, Rev. Jeffrey Saunders, Legislator Calarco, Councilwoman Kepert, Supervisor Ed Romaine, SCPD Deputy Commissioner Risco Mention-Lewis, Inspector Palmeri, Deputy Inspector Fasanelli, DSS Director Oneill, DOL John Sarno, Pax Christi's Micheal Chiappone, Town Assistant Chief Law Investigator Paul Degen, the Town of Brookhaven Law Department, and myself. We have worked successfully together to bring into compliance a number of homes in the community, while assisting numerous individuals in finding better and safer housing conditions and treatment for substance abuse. We have as a team also had two pieces of legislation passed to protect and assist persons in the Community and have become the model for other communities in Suffolk County in how to better serve our community residents suffering from these issues."

The Overton Preserve contains fields, wetlands and woodlands within the compatible growth area of the Central Pine Barrens. It is located in a Special Groundwater Protection Area (SGPA) and overlies the source of some of Long Island's purest drinking water. It is identified in the New York State Open Space Plan as a Regional Priority Conservation Project, and is home to hundreds of plant and animal species including forest interior birds, American Woodcock, Great Horned Owls, and the state endangered Tiger Salamander.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor

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