

THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF EAST HAMPTON

FALL NEWSLETTER
2022

the Village
Preservation
Society of East Hampton

Annual Meeting and Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony rescheduled to 11/25/22 at 11:00 a.m.

at Town Hall, 159 Pantigo Rd. featuring a talk by

Sarah Kautz, Executive Director, Preservation Long Island.

RSVP to 631-324-3524 or Kathy@VillagePreservationSociety.org

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL BOND WITHIN REACH

By Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele, Jr.

This November, East End residents will have the opportunity to vote on two critical ballot proposals. The first proposal would enact the \$4.2 Billion Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act (State Bond Act). The second proposal in the Town of East Hampton, (as well as Southampton, Shelter Island, and Southold) would create a Community Housing Fund (CHF).

The State Bond Act is the first environmental bond act in New York State since 1996. The proposal would authorize \$4.2 billion in funding for climate and environmental projects across the state. Not less than \$1.1 billion would be dedicated wetland restoration and flood risk reduction, not less than \$650 million for water improvement infrastructure, up to \$650 million for open space conservation and recreation, and up to \$1.5 billion for climate change mitigation. 35% of the bond act is required to be used for environmental justice. These state dollars will help to supplement our local funds from the Community Preservation Fund for important local environmental initiatives. On the East End, our environment is our economy.

The Community Housing Fund ballot proposal would

authorize the Town of East Hampton to create a Community Housing Fund financed by a 0.5% real estate transfer tax. The current exemption from the tax would also be increased from the first \$250,000 to \$400,000. The proposal would generate an estimated \$250 million for affordable housing in East Hampton before it expires in 2050.

We face a housing crisis on the East End, which has only been made worse by the pandemic. Every issue in our community is impacted by the housing shortage, including volunteer emergency services, staffing shortages for local businesses, and increased traffic congestion. Local families should have the choice to stay here. Those who work here should be able to live here. This fund would help nurses, teachers, volunteer firefighters, and local businesses by greatly expanding housing opportunities for local residents.

The ballot proposals are on the back side of the ballot. After voting for the candidates for federal, state, and local offices on the front of the ballot, please remember to flip over the ballot so your voice can be heard on both propositions.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD

In 2018, the Village Preservation Society established the Historic Preservation Committee. The objective of the new committee was, and remains, to raise awareness regarding the preservation of historic structures, and to help maintain the neighborhood character and quality of life in the Village of East Hampton. The committee is charged with promoting the value of, and appreciation for the historic buildings of the Village and vicinity and with that mandate in mind, established annual Historic Preservation Awards. As was stated at our inaugural awards ceremony, "The projects selected exhibit many critical restoration principles demonstrating archetypal preservation practices... Each project chosen is unique, unusual or pioneering, and serves as an example that influences others in proactive protection of historic structures and settings."

This is the fourth year that we will be giving awards for an outstanding private and public structure. In 2020, during



Photo by Kathleen Cunningham

Third House at Main Street, c. 1685, also known as the Isaac Miller House, said to be the third residence built in East Hampton Village and so named by Aymar Embury when he owned the home while working on the design for Guild Hall.



Image of Third House painted tile by Aymar Embury courtesy of East Hampton Library.

the pandemic, no awards were presented. Each of our choices possess a special character of historic or aesthetic interest as part of the Village and vicinity. In 2022 the private award goes to The Third House, c. 1685, owned and meticulously restored over the course of multiple years by Frank J. Jackson, the



Photo by Kathleen Cunningham

The Brooklyn and Montauk Railroad built in 1895 created easier transportation to the East End for travelers.

owner, and the Strada and Baxter Design/Build firm. This historic building, one of the first to be built on Main Street, has a number of interesting features in its history and was also the home of the noted architect Aymar Embury, designer of the East Hampton Library and Guild Hall.

The award for a public project goes to the Long Island Railroad Station, 1895, originally known as the Brooklyn and Montauk Railroad. This is one of 16 stations in Long Island that is still standing, and it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in June of 2000. In 2017, the MTA announced the restoration of the station, part of a \$120 million New York State reconstruction program for the Long Island Railroad stations in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The station was restored to its original brick exterior after having been painted white in the 1940s.

These awards will be presented at our re-scheduled Annual Meeting on November 25 and the awardees will receive beautiful bronze plaques suitable for placement on the exteriors of their structures.

We hope you will join us that day to honor the award winners as their foresight and investment in our past maintains our sense of place and identity in a rapidly changing landscape.

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

By Joan D. Osborne

Village residents are hard pressed to keep abreast of the many changes, not only in government practices, but the visual aspects of Village life. A large, reflective sculpture placed at Herrick Park, with no selection process other than a personal reference from a Board member, large and expensive trash bins, among other changes along with the basic abandonment of codified procedures to review and approve such amenities are glaringly absent and hard to understand.

continued on 3rd panel

THE WIZARD OF APAQUOGUE

By Averill D. Geus, Historian

On the corner of Jones Road and Apequogue Lane, on the outskirts of East Hampton Village, is an old cape farm house with an equally old barn. Obviously relics of a by-gone era, their simple lines define the farmer's shingled homestead, once a common feature, but as the town became a popular resort, they were, over time, replaced with mansions, swimming pools and tennis courts. A strange contrast to the old house, perhaps, but so would be the former owner of the place, whose reputation once was world-wide. Unlike Henry Ford and other American inventors, his name today has almost been forgotten and yet during his lifetime he was known and honored for his work in physics throughout the world.

In the late 1800s, Apaquogue Road was considered far out of town, but was populated by those who chose to stay in a large boarding house run by Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Candy. Their accommodations were comfortable and near an ocean beach while located across the road from the old Miller house and barn. In 1908, Robert Williams Wood acquired the buildings and spent almost every summer there until his death in 1955. Dr. Wood (later Professor Wood) was probably attracted by the large barn which soon became his laboratory. It was here, in 1912, that he built the

world's largest spectroscope, a long wooden tube 42-feet in length and 7-inches in diameter. Few people understood the work Professor Wood was doing, much less his interest in optics, physics and science. He made an impression on local farmers on Apaquogue Road, however, when he was seen running up and down carrying a large kit with a 'gizmo' attached. The gizmo was a camera and it was in this the first aerial photographs were invented.

Robert Williams Wood was born in Concord, MA on May 2, 1868. The son of a physician in Maine until 1838 when he became a pioneer in the sugar industry in Hawaii in 1866. Wood attended the Roxbury Latin School, intending to become a man of the cloth, but his ambition was altered when he saw an aurora one night. The glowing light influenced him to pursue the study of optics instead. His studies resulted in several degrees in Physics from Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and University of Chicago.

While in college, he swallowed marijuana in a self-experiment, and recorded the hallucinations he experienced in a psychology report. After receiving a chemistry degree from Johns Hopkins University, he moved on to

the University of Chicago and in 1894 traveled to Berlin to study chemistry and physics there. His career took a different turn when he returned to the U.S. two years later and became an instructor at the University of Wisconsin for four years. He was later appointed a full time professor of optics at Johns Hopkins University. It was at Johns Hopkins that Wood met Alfred Loomis, who became his close friend and partner.

Wood continued his research through his years of teaching. In 1902 he found unusual phenomena which became known as Wood's Anomalies and a year later developed Wood's glass that filtered visible light and permitted ultraviolet and infrared light to penetrate. It is used in modern black light. He identified an area on the dark side of the moon which continues to be called Wood's Spot.

In addition to his great quantity of work in physics, Dr. Wood authored several science fiction novels, two books for children and amusing verse. He also worked in Criminology, helping to solve several crimes that baffled police.

Dr. Wood was the recipient of numerous awards and medals, including the Rumford Medal of the royal Society for his work in physical optics in 1938. During WW I, he invented tear gas,

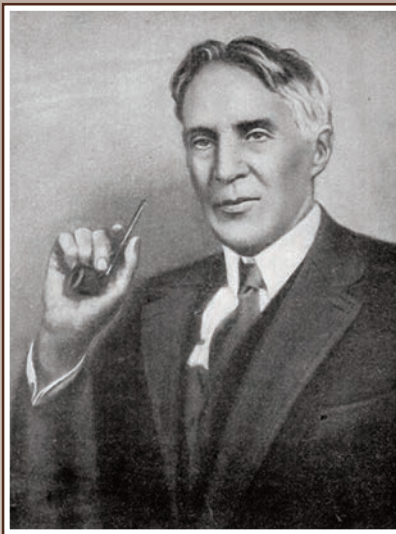
which was used in France. Towards the end of his life, he worked as a consultant on the Manhattan Project which developed the atomic bomb that ended WWII.

He died on August 11, 1955, age 87. His delightful old house and his laboratory barn still stand as they did 100 years ago. Professor Wood's life and achievements earned many medals but missing on his barn is recognition of his work. The Wizard of Apaquogue has surely earned a plaque along with those of other luminaries of our town.

Asparagus

*The Sparrow, from flying, is quite
Out of breath
In fact, he has worked himself
Almost to death,
While the lazy Asparagus –
So it is said
Spends all of his time in the
'Sparagus bed.*

From "How to Tell the Birds From the Flowers: A Manual of Flornithology for Beginners". By Robert Williams Wood



WATER AND WATER QUALITY IN EAST HAMPTON

By Kathleen Cunningham

Particularly concerning are developments within the Main Street Historic District by for-profit and not-for-profit organizations alike, that are not following the proper protocols for development within these districts for which practices have been codified for decades.

The Village Board recently established an “Aesthetics Committee”, an effort initiated by the Board’s perceived need to govern Village lands apart from the purview of the Design Review Board (DRB), which previously conducted review of Village properties for relevant design elements. There seems to be a misunderstanding that the Design Review Board has no jurisdiction over Village-owned properties, a new concept. Previously, the DRB provided guidance on all Village properties, including, as stated in the Village Code, the responsibility “to preserve the character and quality of our heritage by maintaining the integrity of those areas with discernible character or are of special historic significance.” Of particular concern is an effort by a private individual to landscape and maintain publicly owned land, purchased through Community Preservation Funds (CPF), because municipal reclamation of that land as a meadow for the benefit of all offers an open view of the Main Beach parking lot to one resident. The meadow is a natural feature and an important environmental improvement that also helps to filter surface water runoff into Hook Pond, an endangered water body. If the new Aesthetics Committee approves this proposal, it will set precedent that public land purchases can be used for private benefit, never the intention of the CPF legislation. One hopes the new Aesthetics Committee will also work hard to preserve the character and quality of our heritage.

In an encouraging move, the Village Zoning Board of Appeals, has convened the Historic Preservation Committee for advice on several applications before that Board that are within Historic Districts. While the Historic Preservation Committee has no voting power and serves in an advisory capacity only, their review will likely be directed by the Village’s Historic Preservation Policy, formerly performed by now-retired Village Historian, Robert Hefner. The purpose of the Village’s Historic Preservation policy, as stated on the Village website, is to “... 1) ensure the harmonious, orderly, and efficient growth and development of the Village, 2) foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past, 3) protect and enhance landmarks and historic districts, and 4) protect and enhance the Village’s attractiveness to visitors.” Each historic district has its own specific guidelines, as well.

Concerned residents should continue to monitor applications before all the local agencies and participate in the public process to help guide decision making by these Boards, both appointed and elected.

Water was a topic of dinner table conversation this past summer, as drought dried up local ponds and limited pumping resources prompted requests by the County Health Department to curtail the watering of lawns, gardens and residential landscaping. Water quantities appear to be sufficient, but our water is in various aquifers across the South Fork, sometimes making delivery where it is needed challenging. For instance, many residents are unaware that the hamlet of Montauk sources its water from the aquifer in Wainscott. This kind of routing of the water supply can’t always meet demand, particularly with the uptick in development and watering demands for lawns and other landscape plantings that are not drought resistant.

Our local Ponds continue to be challenged by dangerous algal blooms due to nitrogen loading often associated with fertilized lawns and landscaping. A report by Dr. Christopher Gobler at the annual meeting of The Friends of Georgica Pond in August, indicated that the predominant nitrogen source polluting that water body is still from outdated septic systems - 50% - that leach nitrogen into the Pond and ultimately into groundwater. Other contributors are lawn fertilizers at 27%; atmospheric (acid rain) contributions at 19%; and Agriculture at 3%. Pet waste registers at 1%, as it appears resident mitigation of pet waste helped to reduce that number which was reportedly much higher in the past.

The Friends have had a success in diminishing harmful algal blooms with a pond weed harvester that is positioned at various places in the Pond to pull the micro algae covered pond weed from the water. The algae seem to grow well on this aquatic plant, so removing it from the Pond yielded good results in diminished algal blooms. Last summer over 25 tons of pond weed were removed from the Pond, concurrent with a reduction in algal blooms. Thus, considered a successful effort and one that might be applied elsewhere.

Oysters, filter feeding shellfish, can also help to control the magnitude of algal blooms by filtering out the phytoplankton that create them. This had the added benefit of improving water clarity. Various oystering projects at other surface water bodies and bays have yielded good results and may eventually be an effective supplement for Georgica Pond.

The primary action that can immediately improve water quality at Georgica and Hook Ponds is for residents to replace their septic systems with a low-nitrogen, sometimes referred to as Innovative/Alternative (I/A) system. These will produce an immediate reduction of nitrogen in the waste flow. Rebates from the Town of East Hampton and Suffolk County are still available for residents who wish to change out their systems. Former income thresholds have been raised and other requirements that slowed the process have been lifted, so the rebate process is easier than it once was. For more information, see this link: <https://ehamptonny.gov/587/Details-and-Forms>

MEET OUR NEW TRUSTEE - JOSEPH B. ROSE

By Georgia de Havenon

Joseph B. Rose has been engaged in planning and real estate development in the public, private and non-profit sectors for four decades. He has worked in New York City as Executive Director of Citizens Housing and Planning Council, served three terms as Chairman of Manhattan Community Board #5, and was Special Assistant for Urban Affairs to U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

As Chairman of the New York City Planning Commission and Director of the City's Department of City Planning for eight years, Mr. Rose was the public official with primary responsibility for the physical redevelopment of the city.

As a private sector real estate developer Mr. Rose has partnered in a wide range of office, residential and recreational properties throughout the United States.

Mr. Rose is a Visiting Lecturer at the Yale School of Architecture and was Adjunct Assistant Professor at Columbia University's School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

and a Visiting Scholar at NYU's Robert Wagner Graduate School of Public Service.

Joe Rose's family has been coming out to East Hampton since 1964, transitioning to year-round residents in 1971. He has owned a home in the Village since 2002 and currently divides his time between East Hampton and New York City. An alumnus of Yale College, he did his graduate work in the Department of Government at Harvard University's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Currently, Mr. Rose serves on the Village of East Hampton Zoning Board of Appeals.

We are pleased to welcome Mr. Rose to our Board of Trustees, and as a member of the VPS Historic Preservation Committee.



**Please fill out, cut along the line and mail to THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY
P.O. Box 2015, East Hampton, NY 11937 • 631-324-3524 • www.villagepreservationsociety.org**

Please enroll me as a member of The Village Preservation Society of East Hampton
for the Membership Year from January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

Number of Members in this Membership _____

For year round Newsletters and information, please print winter address

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Contributors of:

\$ 25,000.00 will be listed as **Chairman's Circle**

\$ 10,000.00 will be listed as **Visionary**

\$ 2,500.00 will be listed as **Advocate**

\$ 500.00 will be listed as **Patron**

\$ 100.00 will be listed as **Friend**

\$ 15,000.00 will be listed as **President's Circle**

\$ 5,000.00 will be listed as **Champion**

\$ 1,000.00 will be listed as **Benefactor**

\$ 250.00 will be listed as **Supporting Member**

Regular Membership (\$50) _____

The Membership Year runs from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

I would like to be active. My special interests are: _____

I (We) support VPS principles but do not wish to be listed as a member.

Enclosed is a contribution of \$ _____

THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

P.O. Box 2015

East Hampton, NY 11937

www.villagepreservationsociety.org

We note with sadness the passing of former VPS Chairman, Robert B. Loughead this summer. He served the Village Preservation Society for many decades and led the group with distinction for several years. A remembrance of his life will be featured in the Spring newsletter.

EAST HAMPTON AIRPORT UPDATE

By Peter M. Wolf

On Wednesday, October 19, just as this piece was going to press, the Suffolk County Supreme Court issued an order enjoining the Town of East Hampton from “deactivating or closing HTO Airport.” Peculiar that the Court is unaware that the Town has already changed the call letters at the airport, formerly known as HTO, at the direction of the FAA, and it is now JPX and will be hence. The Town Board issued this statement: “The Town Board is conferring with outside counsel to assess any effects of the decision, to maintain the Town’s continued compliance with all court orders, and to consider the Town’s legal options, including appeal. The Town remains firmly committed to ensuring that its airport best serves the community.”

Here is the background:

All summer long, the East Hampton Town Board was mired in litigation in its effort to control our publicly owned airport. The Town Board conducted a months-long process collecting public input about the future of the airport, good faith efforts to gather input from the various hamlets affected by aircraft noise, including outreach to Montauk where fears of spillover from diverted flights once the Town’s plan for a Prior Permission Required (PPR) airport were in place were expressed and acknowledged.

Through close coordination with the Federal Aviation

Administration (FAA) the Town airport formerly known as HTO ceased to exist at midnight on Tuesday, May 17th and reopened on Thursday, May 19th as “JPX”. Those call letters have been used since and will continue to be how the airport is identified by the FAA. It appeared that the Town would succeed in *actually* closing the airport for this coordinated transition, providing a brief 36-hour respite to neighbors suffering from aircraft noise, but in a last-minute decision, Justice Paul R. Baisley, Jr. of the New York State Supreme Court granted a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) to aviation interests, striking a blow against local governance of a public facility.

This left the Town with no options to govern this public asset during the heavily trafficked summer months pending the Judge’s decision to find for the plaintiffs or defendants. The Town’s plan to operate the airport by Prior Permission Required (PPR) status would enable the community, through its elected representatives, to set the standard for how much aircraft, what types of aircraft, what numbers and concentrations of flight, as well as enforceable curfews.

Our elected officials need our support to continue to represent the best interests of the residential community. Keep filing aircraft noise complaints and contact the Town Board with your support to resolve this situation for the benefit of the community.