

Around

Energy survey posted online

East Hampton Town officials are seeking community input through an online survey as part of its effort to advance energy sustainability goals.

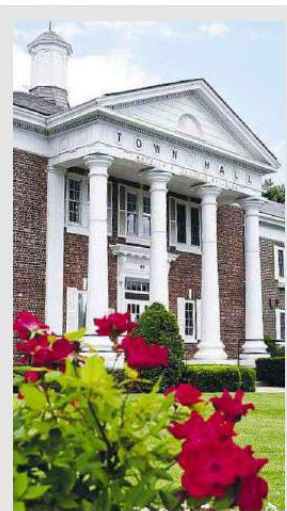
Residents are encouraged to complete the renewable energy survey “to help inform future clean energy projects and policies that will shape our community’s future,” according to the town’s media release.

The survey can be accessed at the town website at ehamptonny.gov.

In 2014, East Hampton began an aggressive push to use renewable sources such as solar panels, wind turbines and other green technology within the town.

The town adopted a climate action plan in 2015 as the coastal community confronts effects of climate change from rising seas to coastal erosion and the threat of more frequent weather events as the ocean warms.

The town has adopted some policies to meet its goals such as in 2021 when it approved a resolution requiring electric heat pump systems in the design of all new municipal buildings as well to replace existing HVAC systems. — JOE WERKMEISTER



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BROOKHAVEN TOWN

TRADING SPACES

Land swap lets town preserve woodlands, developer build more units

BY CARL MACGOWAN
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Brookhaven Town has acquired 152 wooded acres in Manorville that officials said will remain undeveloped — protecting great horned owls, white-tailed deer and other creatures.

The town’s acquisition of the parcel, on the northwest corner of Moriches-Middle Island Road and Weeks Avenue, completes a swap with a Yonkers developer that was key to development of the Meadows mixed-use project on the former Parr Meadows horse racing site on William Floyd Parkway in Yaphank.

Brookhaven acquired the land without paying for it — a process known as a transfer of development rights.

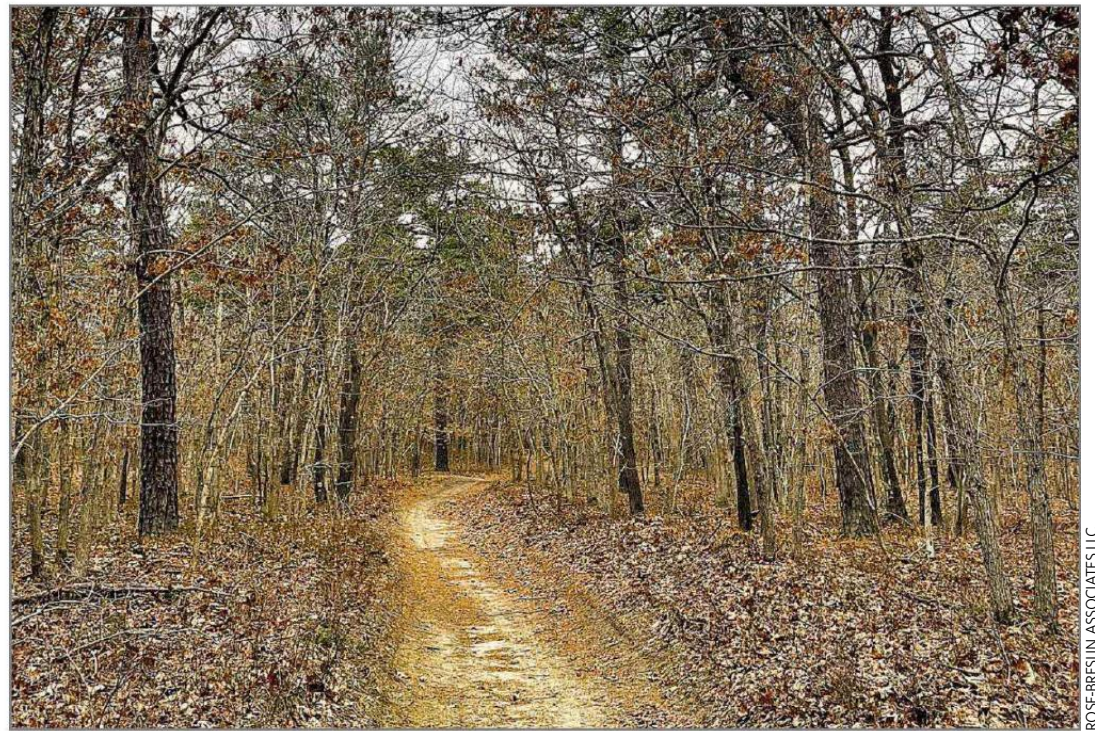
The arrangement helps the town preserve environmentally sensitive land while permitting developer Rose-Breslin Associates to complete the Meadows, Brookhaven Councilman Dan Panico said.

“We have videos of screech owls on the property and fox drinking out of a watering hole,” Panico said, adding the cost of buying the land would have been “astronomical.”

“It’s a beautiful piece of property that we can preserve long into the future without a capitalized cost to the taxpayers.”

Rose-Breslin spokesman Brian Ferruggiari said the company never had any plans for the property, which is in the compatible growth area of the pine barrens, where development faces strict limitations under state law. Panico said the company could have built a warehouse on 60% of the land.

The swap enabled Rose-Breslin to build an additional 152 housing units at the Meadows, Ferruggiari said. The project, which is nearing completion, will include a total of nearly 1,000 homes, a hotel, assisted living facilities,



Part of the 152 acres of wooded land in Manorville that Brookhaven acquired in a land swap.

ballfields and a retail center.

“Our project is a prime example of how responsible development and preservation can coexist,” he said.

The Manorville property is one of 15 major parcels included on the Pine Barrens Society’s “Best of the Rest” list of land that should be permanently preserved for open space protection, said Richard Amper, the Riverhead nonprofit’s executive director.

While grateful to have the property protected, Amper said he worries it is vulnerable to the spate of illegal dumping that has plagued similar remote pine barrens properties.

“We have to take care of the land,” he said. “This is going to have the biggest impact on the East End that we’ve had in a decade, so it would be useful to get it right.”

The pine barrens sprawl over 105,000 acres in the towns of Brookhaven, Riverhead and Southampton. A state commission supervises the area and coordinates patrols from its own officers as well as state, Suffolk County and town law enforcement agencies.

In addition, the Brookhaven Town Board on Thursday voted 6-0 to boost fines for illegal dumping in the pine barrens and elsewhere.

Panico said town staff would keep an eye on the Manorville property, adding there’s a town Highway Department depot nearby.

“It’s a credit to the town that we have so much open space,” he said. “We have taken steps to curtail illegal dumping, and we will take more. It’s an issue that is not limited to only the town of Brookhaven.”

Dumping fines

The Brookhaven Town Board voted 6-0 on Thursday to impose stiffer fines for illegal dumping in public areas such as the pine barrens. Here are the new penalties:

First offenses

- Minimum fines increased from \$500 to \$5,000.
- Maximum fines boosted to \$10,000 per occurrence and a prison sentence of 15 days.

Second offenses

- \$10,000 minimum fine
- \$20,000 maximum fine, plus 15 days in jail.

SOURCE: TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN

ROSE-BRESLIN ASSOCIATES LLC

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