



SWORN IN: The Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council held its annual installation and awards ceremony Friday, March 12 at the East Farmingdale Fire Department headquarters. Thomas Kriklava (center right) of Hauppauge Fire Department was installed March 12 as the association's new president along with executive board members (from left) Irene Bodkin Treasurer (Ocean Bay Park Fire Department), Michael Bodkin sergeant at Arms (Medford Fire Department), John Coughlin Second Vice President (Deer Park Fire Department), Chip Bankroft outgoing president (Eastport Fire Department), Chief Kriklava, Kevin Fitzpatrick Recording Secretary (Smithtown Fire Department), and Robert Crane Corresponding Secretary (St. James Fire Department).
-Joseph Sperber photo

Local fireman, ex-chief to head county council

By DAVID AMBRO

Hauppauge firefighter Thomas Kriklava is the chief of all chiefs.

Mr. Kriklava was elected November 13 and he was installed as the new president of the Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council during a special ceremony March 12 at the East Farmingdale Fire Department.

"The biggest goal that I have is to work along with my fellow organizations that are out there in the emergency medical services (EMS) and firefighting fields to ensure that the firefighters and EMS workers of Suffolk County have the right tools to protect our Suffolk County residents and transient residents," Chief Kriklava said during an interview this week.

Chief Kriklava said the work of the Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council is a group effort and he offered kudos to his executive board for their work and commitment to the fire service. "Even though I might be the president, it's not me doing all the work. It is the hard work of my executive board and the committees in our council that are able to keep us thriving and moving forward to do the right thing for all the firefighters and fire chiefs of Suffolk County," he said.

Born and raised in Bohemia,

Chief Kriklava first joined the Bohemia Fire Department when he was 18 years old, as soon as he was eligible in 1979. After five years there, he married his wife Kim. They moved to Hauppauge and he joined the Hauppauge Fire Department in 1984. After a year, the Kriklavas bought their first home in Islip. Mr. Kriklava joined the Islip Terrace Fire Department, where he rose through the ranks to captain of Engine Company #3. In 1989 the Kriklavas bought their current home in Hauppauge and Mr. Kriklava rejoined the Hauppauge Fire Department.

He once again rose through the ranks of the department and became the chief of the department in 2010. He has served as president of the Smithtown Fire Chiefs Council. He is an active Suffolk County Fire Coordinator in the Third Division in the Town of Islip.

As an ex-chief, Mr. Kriklava was elected in November as president of the Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council, a one-year term to which he was sworn-in at an installation and awards dinner March 12. He started with the Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council as the secretary and rose through the ranks to sergeant at arms, second vice president, first vice president and now president.

"I have the responsibility to ensure that the volunteer fire service has the proper tools it needs to continue its function throughout Suffolk County to protect and serve the residents of Suffolk County," Mr. Kriklava said.

About becoming the president of the council in the era of the coronavirus (COVID-19), Mr. Kriklava said it is an extremely difficult time for the county and town fire chief councils and for firefighters in general on Long Island. "Departments are attempting to keep their members as safe as possible, whether it be canceling meetings and training sessions or doing virtual meetings and training sessions," he said. "Trying to keep everything moving forward in today's environment is a very challenging aspect. The fire service has a very strong camaraderie and one of our best attributes is the camaraderie we all share among one another, whether it be individual members, department-to-department, chief-to-chief, or county-to-county. We work very hand-in-hand with Nassau County trying to make sure we have the right protection for our members, whether it be personal protective equipment or vaccinations."

"Vaccinations is something
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Environmental Gyrodyne study into final stages

By DAVID AMBRO

The Smithtown Planning Board voted 3-0 March 10 to accept the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) for the controversial development of the 75-acre Gyrodyne property at the southeast corner of North Country Road (Route 25A) and Mills Pond Road in St. James.

At the onset of last week's meeting, Planning Board Chairwoman Barbara DeSorbe announced to anyone on the Zoom call about Gyrodyne that the board was not accepting any public comments or questions about the Gyrodyne application. "This is not a public hearing on Gyrodyne so if you are waiting to speak on that or to add your comments you will not be able to be heard," she said.

Village of Head of the Harbor Trustee Judy Ogden, spokesperson for the St. James-Head of the Harbor Neighborhood Preservation Coalition and a leader of the Gyrodyne opposition, said given the controversial nature of the development plan and formal opposition by the adjacent village government and other elected officials, the town's failure to provide prior notice to the public regarding the action to be taken by the Planning Board March 10 is "mind-boggling."

"I would say that I'm shocked, but I shouldn't be surprised," Ms. Ogden said. "It's been clear for a long time that the town is not conducting an objective review of the project as required by law, but is instead engaged in a secretive process skewed towards approval of the project, excluding the public and acting as a cheerleader for the developer."

Ms. DeSorbe announced that the vote to accept the Gyrodyne FEIS will trigger a final "public consideration" period through the close of business March 31, during which the public can submit questions and comments. Comments can be sent to Smithtown Department

of Environment and Waterways, P.O. Box 9090, Smithtown, New York 11787.

Copies of the FEIS are available for public review at the Smithtown Department of Environment and Waterways, 124 West Main Street, Smithtown, 11787; at the Smithtown, Nesconset, Kings Park and Commack libraries, or online at smithtownny.gov.

At the end of the planning board meeting, the resolution to accept the Gyrodyne FEIS was read by Smithtown planner Matt Calado, with information about the final public comment period. He said the acceptance of the FEIS completes the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process but does not imply agreement with the FEIS nor does it imply any position the board is taking related to the final decision on the development proposal.

The Planning Board now has 30 days to develop and approve a final "findings statement" about the environmental review of the project. Once that is done, the board can vote on the development proposal, which is a subdivision of the site into nine lots, six of them for new light industrial development and a 100,000-gallon-per-day sewage treatment plant and the others for already developed sites on the property as well as land that is being preserved.

Prior to the Planning Board accepting the FEIS last week, Gyrodyne made modifications to its subdivision and development plan. That information was not disclosed at the Planning Board meeting prior to the vote to accept the FEIS. As a result of those modifications, however, there is a possibility that the subdivision application must go back to the Suffolk County Planning Commissioner for its reconsideration.

Voting to accept the FEIS last week were Ms. DeSorbe, William Marchesi
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Planning Board advances Gyrodyne plan

(Continued from page 3)
and Thomas Unverzagt. Tina Paris was not at the meeting and Desmond Ryan abstained from voting after earlier having recused himself from the Gyrodyne deliberations for having lobbied for the development plan prior to being appointed to the planning board.

According to the FEIS accepted by the Planning Board last week, several revisions have been made to the plan. They include a reconfiguration of the proposed number of lots, the most significant part of which is that the preservation of 15.2-acres of open space, including a 200-foot vegetated

buffer along Route 25A will be its own separate lot. The proposed sewage treatment plant will be on its own separate 7.3-acre lot. In the original plan the open space and the sewer plant were proposed to be one lot.

In addition, the revisions include an increase of 45,000-square-feet in proposed medical office building space, from 130,000-square-feet in the original plan to 175,000-square-feet in the proposed FEIS; and an increase of 30 units in the assisted living component of the development plan, from 220 units in the original plan to 250 units in the proposed FEIS.

The revised plan also calls for a modification of the proposed hotel. The number of rooms will be reduced from 150 in the original plan to 125 rooms in the FEIS. In addition, the 150-seat restaurant, the 10,000-square-foot day spa, and the 500-seat conference center associated with the hotel have been eliminated from the plan and in their place there will be a 4,000-square-foot, 133-seat multipurpose room.

According to a traffic analysis included in the proposed FEIS, the morning weekday hourly peak trips to the site will increase by 7% as a result of the revisions, from 357 trips under the original development plan

to 382 trips under the revised plan. It is expected, though, that the evening peak will decrease by 6%, from 538 to 507, and the Saturday peak will decrease by 6%, from 323 to 308. "The PM peak hour is the critical hour for traffic analysis, so the slight morning peak hour trip increase is not a significant change that warrants further analysis," according to the proposed FEIS.

According to the FEIS, the proposed revisions will result in a reduction in the amount of nitrogen loading into the groundwater from 32.4 pounds per acre per year to 32.1 pounds. The project also calls for the development of 269 more parking spaces than the town requires. The town code requires 2,255 spaces, the most of which, 1,021, are associated with the medical office buildings. The project calls for the development of 2,524 parking spaces, most of them, 1,027, for the medical office buildings. The existing buildings account for 1,012, the assisted living facilities 293 and the hotel 192.

According to the proposed FEIS, the full development is expected to generate 87,591 gallons per day of wastewater that will be treated on-site, of which 20,292 gallons per day is associated with the existing uses on the property and 59,336 gallons per day is expected from the new development. There will be an estimated 12,409-gallons per day of excess capacity in the plant.

School board developing building bond

(Continued from page 7)
the community," Mr. Rollins aid of Mr. Cascone.

During his presentation to the school board last week, Mr. Rollins said the \$240 million five-year building condition survey (BCS) includes needs and wants, everything from building systems, roofs, HVAC units, exterior side work and interior building components, to security and internet technology upgrades. According to Mr. Rollins, the committee used a four-phase strategy to cut the work to a more manageable five-year plan for the purposes of a bond.

The first phase was to categorize the projects: life/safety; parking lot, driveway, sidewalk, and asphalt work; exterior and interior building components; roof replacements; HVAC replacements, athletic and performing arts needs. The second phase was to prioritize the projects based on

needs versus wants and useful life calculations to reduce the project list to a more manageable amount.

In phase three there was a further prioritization of the projects into the five-year phases of the capital bond plan. "Further breakdown of the capital items into repair vs. replacement is necessary to identify items that need to be addressed immediately, Mr. Rollins said. "In order to maintain the original integrity of the \$240 million, we have added years six-to-10-plus into the plan."

The fourth and final phase of the committee work is to break down the project list into a more detailed scope of work through building visits and meetings with building principals. "We anticipate beginning that process immediately," Mr. Rollins said.

"While the projects that are included in our five year plan must improve our infrastructure and protect our

building's physical conditions, projects must also include items that our principals and administrators feel are necessary to improve our students' educational experience," Mr. Rollins said. "We must spend our dollars wisely and make certain that we have community buy-in."

Moving forward, he suggested that the board form a committee with a charge and goals, one of which will be to solicit community input about a proposed bond. "As the plan moves forward, we will provide periodic updates to keep the community informed," Mr. Rollins concluded.

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