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Minutes of a Public Hearing held by the Town Board of the Town of Riverhead, at the Riverhead Town Hall on Tuesday, December 7, 1992, at 7:30 p.m.

Present:

Joseph F. Janoski,	Supervisor
Victor Prusinowski,	Councilman
James Stark,	Councilman
Frank Creighton,	Councilman
Harriet Gilliam,	Councilwoman

Also Present:

Patricia Moore,	Town Attorney
Barbara Grattan,	Town Clerk

Supervisor Janoski called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Supervisor Janoski: "Let the record show that the hour of 7:34 p.m. has arrived. The Town Clerk will please read the notice of Public Hearing."

Barbara Grattan: "I have affidavits of publishing and posting of a Public Notice for a Public Hearing to be held at Riverhead Town Hall, at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 7, 1992, to hear all interested persons who wish to be heard regarding the establishment of a community residential facility operated by the Long Island Developmentally Disabled Services Office to be located at 30 Trout Brook Lane, Aquebogue."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, we are conducting a hearing concerning the recommended placement of a group facility by the office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. The Town Board under the provisions of state law known as the Padavan Law, has the ability to conduct the hearing in order to gain from the public, their opinions, give them an opportunity to raise their concerns, and to express themselves freely. Padavan Law governs the placement of group homes in the state of New York and it gives the Town three directions-- three choices: (1) we can accept the recommendation as it is before us, (2) we can make a case for oversaturation,

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and (3) we can make a recommendation for an alternate location. In the last proposal which was made, which seems like just a couple of months ago, as a matter of fact it was August 25th that we held the Hearing, the Town did have the Hearing and did make a recommendation for an alternate location. We are advised officially today that one of the alternate locations has been accepted by the state of New York, so that the placement at Terry Place will not take place. It will be on Corwin Street in the Town of Riverhead. I always like to point out, because a Hearing like this brings to the meeting room, a number of people who have never taken part in a Hearing or a Town Board meeting in the past. I want to point out that this is a Hearing, which is meant to provide you with the opportunity to express yourself; to agree, disagree, and tell us why. However, it is not an arena for conflict. We certainly don't want to have that kind of atmosphere prevail in the room. The representatives of the Office of Mental Retardation are here to listen to your comments, and the Town Board is holding the Hearing. I would appreciate it if you would-- if you wish to be recognized, raise your hand, come up to the microphone. Because this is a Public Hearing, you must identify yourself by name in the microphone and tell us where you're from. That is for the official record. Because the microphone does not have eyes and it cannot identify you and there is an official record that is put on paper as a result of this Hearing. And, please, when a person is speaking, don't interrupt them, don't disagree or agree, because that only starts a back and forth kind of situation which we want to avoid. Everyone who wants to speak, will certainly be recognized and given the opportunity. The Town Board is here to hear your comments and the representatives of the state, and I think I will recognize Bob Lopez, who is the Assistant Director, to give a presentation on what is being proposed."

Robert Lopez: "Good evening. Thank you Supervisor Janoski for inviting us to attend your meeting this evening. My name is Bob Lopez, I'm Assistant Director of Program Development for the Long Island DDSO. In a few moments the two staff members here, Ms. Evette Milliner to my right and Mr. Bob Ball, will give a brief presentation. Ms. Milliner will do a brief presentation describing the development process and aspects of the site selection law which has brought us here this evening. Mr. Bob Ball will give an overview of the program operations unit and description of a typical day or week in a residential facility. First, we'll go

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to Ms. Evette Milliner. Evette?"

Evette Milliner: "Good evening. My name is Evette Milliner and I'm employed as a Program Developer for New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability. I'm also a resident of Long Island. I also wish to thank the municipality of Riverhead for inviting me and my colleagues to this public information meeting. I'm going to make my presentation brief, because I feel that people are here who would like to ask questions and that really is our purpose for being here. I will just give you a few facts. New York State Office of Mental Retardation is responsible for planning, administering, and providing residential services for the developmentally disabled throughout the state. We've developed over 200 homes serving well over 2,000 individuals in Nassau and Suffolk Counties during the past 15 years. We're currently in the process of closing the Developmental Center in Melville. There are approximately 200 individuals left that are still living there to be placed in community residential facilities in Nassau and Suffolk County. Mr. Ball, who is sitting to my right, is going to explain the operation of the group homes. I was going to go into details about the site selection law, however, your Supervisor seems to know the law quite well, and there are pamphlets here, and rather than repeat something that you're going to be able to read, I'm not going to do these other pages that I had brought, because it's right here if you want to. I also want to say, Robert Ball and I went into your community on November 5th, and it was a very, very nice experience. People who were home, opened their doors to us. They listened to what we had to say and that's why we're so glad to be here tonight, because many of the things that people thought was going to happen, were not really-- they might have been half truths or partial truths, and when we got through, it was-- we've been in many communities and Bob will say that this was really a good experience for us. You are a good community. We appreciated you letting us in that night, and we appreciate being here tonight to answer any of your questions. Bob, go ahead."

Robert Ball: "My name is Robert Ball. I'm a Treatment Team Leader with the Office of Mental Retardation Developmental Disabilities. During the late 1970s and through the 1980s, the policies of OMRDD have been guided by the premises of de-institutionalization and the development of comprehensive

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community based care systems. The Mental Hygiene Law and certain federal and state orders, such as the Willowbrook Consent Decree, mandate that a deinstitutionalization system be focused on the community as opposed to one center around an institution. In addition, in 1990, the federal government enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act. This Act clearly protects the disabled from discrimination in housing and services and strengthens their rights at the federal level. In 1991, Governor Cuomo announced the closure of developmental centers throughout the state, including the closure of Long Island Developmental Center by March 31st, 1993. As a result, the Long Island DDSO will seek to place the remaining 200 developmentally disabled individuals into the least restrictive environments which are capable of meeting their needs throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The Long Island DDSO community based residential program has been providing services to the developmentally disabled since 1980, and has since grown to 22 homes in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. There are six homes in Nassau and 16 in Suffolk County. Our homes meet a variety of residential needs by providing structured and supervised community residences designed specifically for the designated group of individuals. These homes include barrier free residences for persons with developmental disabilities who may also be blind or deaf. These homes are designed to ensure that developmentally disabled are afforded the same opportunity to live in the community as their non-disabled peers. The community residences are beneficial because they provide the development of new skills and the opportunity to experience community activities and to learn to travel. We are also committed to make these homes available to serve individuals who have resided at home with their families when circumstances prevent the family from continuing to provide that care. Once opened, we provide the opportunity for community input through the development of the Community Advisory Board. We encourage participation of our neighbors in the development and operation of our programs. We would also like the opportunity to provide you with a tour of any of our existing group homes at your earliest convenience. You can sign up for visits at the end of the Hearing. I would like to present a brief overview of day to day activities or weekly activities within the home. Generally, the people living in a home arise early in the morning for shower, breakfast, and ADL training. ADL is activities of daily living, where the people may learn to dress themselves, to shower themselves, to eat. Those kind of things. Then they

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prepare for program. All will attend an off site work setting. They leave for the work setting probably between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. The transportation will be provided by our own vehicle. We will have a station wagon assigned to this home. They return from the work setting, between 3:00 and 4:30 p.m. In house program will include recreation, again some ADL training, dinner preparation. Dinner is usually between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. In the evening, the people that live in the house may work on some goals which, again, may be ADL or some other type of goals, like speech goal and things like that. After dinner, there's leisure time activities, trips, movies, bowling, dances, swimming, those kind of activities. Preparation for bed is usually about 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. Typical weekend schedule focuses on leisure time activities. Barbeques at homes or at local parks, trips, Town programs, Special Olympics, sporting events and religious services. Staffing in the house. There is at least one person on duty at all times, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Supervision is provided at all times to the people living in the house. The Treatment Team Leader and management staff assume overall responsibility for the supervision. Clinical services are provided as needed through community licensed service HMOs, through health clinics as well as state personnel. Support services such as maintenance and grounds, we like to contract out for some of these. Grounds, we'll probably have a lawn service contract out and other services like oil burner repair and electrical repair, we'll contract out. The training of the staff. Staff are assigned to the homes from the Center and have many years experience, some as many as 20 years. They are knowledgeable of the individuals and have worked with some of these individuals in their present setting. All are qualified and trained and meet the eligibility requirements for Civil Service title in which they serve. And finally, again, I would like to present about the Community Advisory Board. It is part of our regulation and we encourage neighbors to become part of our Community Advisory Board. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you. Because the Town Board serves as the hearing officers in this case, as we do in all cases of Hearings, but because the Town has a position and a point of view concerning the placement of residences in the community, I have asked the Deputy Supervisor and the Town Attorney to make a presentation on behalf of the Town. So Monique and Pat."

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Patricia Moore: "Thank you Mr. Supervisor, Board members and guests, and community. We are here as the Supervisor said-- "

Supervisor Janoski: "Tell us who you are."

Patricia Moore: "Sorry about that. I'm Patricia Moore. I'm the Town Attorney. As the Supervisor mentioned for those of you who may not have heard, the Town does have a position regarding the location of these group homes and other sites, and what we did was we went through the facility-- on the map we are going to show the location of the facilities, the nursing home and the group homes in the Town of Riverhead, which is according to the New York State Department of Social Service listing of licensed residential facilities. So this information comes from-- the material that is supplied to us from Social Service. Monique is going to point to you the locations as I go through them and on the blue paper that seems to be falling over, we listed the individual sites that are numbered on the map. So between the two, you should be able to see all the different sites that are within the Town. On that sheet that Monique is working on, you will see that the institution is shown. The information of the facility, the tax status, which is exempt or non-exempt. In other words, if it's exempt, it does not pay taxes; non-exempt, it does pay taxes. Also, a code so that we can locate it on the map. On the map, we show the institutions which are represented in blue dots; the group homes in green dots; nursing homes in orange; apartments or group homes, those are smaller group homes, in yellow; and the proposed facility, we have two dots there, Terry Place which has been replaced with Corwin. At the time, we did not have that information, so what is there is the Terry Place, and this proposed site. The first facility is a group home which is located on South River Road in Calverton. This site has a capacity of nine and is a group home which is non-exempt, therefore, does not pay taxes-- does pay taxes, pardon me. Does pay taxes. The information will be provided on the site there on the map. The second facility is Central Suffolk Hospital, also, so you know, this is coming from-- the licensing information from Social Services, so you will have institutions there such as the hospital shown. Central Suffolk Hospital-- this has listed two nursing homes and one institution in that facility. The nursing home has a capacity of 60 and it is non-exempt. The third facility is the Henry Perkins Home. This is classified

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as a nursing home and it has a capacity of 128 and is non-exempt. Fourth is the Hilton Court site in Aquebogue. It has a capacity of 10 and is exempt from taxes. Five is South Jamesport Avenue. South Jamesport Avenue facility is a group home with a capacity of eight and is non-exempt, so it does pay taxes. The sixth facility is Little Flower. This has several designations. It's listed as an institution and has several cottages which are licensed as group homes. In this particular location, we have 10, a capacity of 10. This will appear later on. Seven is Riverhead Nursing Home. The facility, again, has several designations. This is an institution and nursing home with a capacity of 60. Eight is a group home located on Sound Shore Road. This facility has a capacity of eight and is a group home which is an exempt facility. Nine is, again, Riverhead Nursing Home which is categorized as an institution with a capacity of 181 and is non-exempt. Number ten is a group home on Middle Road which has a capacity of 10 and is exempt. Going back to Central Suffolk Hospital, is number eleven. This designation is institution and has a capacity of 150. Number twelve going back to Little Flower, has a capacity of 92 as an institution and is tax exempt. Thirteen is Riverhead Nursing Home. It has a capacity of 181 and is non-exempt. Am I going too fast? Sorry. Number fourteen is located at 542 Roanoke Avenue and is categorized as a group home with a capacity of seven and is also tax exempt. Fifteen is Lincoln Avenue. It is a group home with a capacity of eight and is exempt from taxes. Sixteen and seventeen is the Correctional Facility. It is listed in the licensing paperwork as a Riverhead Facility. It is the Suffolk County Honor Farm and it is shown in blue. We recognize that the two facilities are not within the Town of Riverhead, however, it is in the Riverhead School District and does directly impact on our services. It has a capacity of 155 and the Honor Farm has a capacity of 410. Timothy Hill Childrens Ranch is number eighteen. This is a group home which is currently at a capacity of 10. However, they have sought special permit approval to increase their capacity through a phase construction, up to 72. Number nineteen is located at 510 Washington Avenue in Jamesport. It has a capacity of three and it is non-exempt. Twenty is 15 Elton Place. This group home has a capacity of three and is non-exempt. Number twenty-one is located at 719 Harrison Avenue and it has a capacity of three and is non-exempt. That also is a yellow and it's an apartment. Some of these we did acquire through Freedom of Information request which we sent to all the different

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agencies and up through today, we were receiving information. So we hope that it is complete. Love-m Shelter is number twenty-two. It is a group facility located at West Main Street with a capacity of 26, is a non-exempt facility. Aid to Developmentally Disabled has a group home located at Main Road in Aquebogue. It's number twenty-three and has a capacity of 10, which is an exempt facility. Number twenty-four is what we know as the Bayview Hotel. It is a group home for disabled veterans located in Jamesport. The facility has a capacity of 27 and is a non-exempt facility. Number twenty-five is Little Flower on North Side Road. This listing has a capacity of 10 and is exempt. Number twenty-six is a group home for young adults known as Madonna Heights. The facility has a capacity of eight and is tax exempt. Twenty-seven is a recently established facility where we show in red the 25 Terry Place, and that has now been relocated-- the alternative has been chosen and it's Corwin Street which is right down the street here next to the mobile home sales."

"Can we move the dot, please?"

Patricia Moore: "I'm sorry, what?"

"Can we move the dot to where it is, just to show that there is even more of a central location?"

Patricia Moore: "I don't think that we have that capacity there, so-- "

"Well, if we had another dot-- "

Patricia Moore: "If we had another dot, it would be showing there. That's right."

"So we see the clustering."

Patricia Moore: "All right. The other red dot, is 30 Trout Brook Lane, which is what we're here for today, and it will have a capacity of five and would be classified as exempt from taxes. We added the following sites which we got most recently through the Freedom of Information request. One is the Arnold House, what is called the Arnold House, number twenty-nine, it's part of Timothy Hill Ranch and it's located

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260 Middle Road. The home has a capacity of 12. Finally, 30 is Madonna Heights, another Madonna Heights facility which is on North Side Road in Wading River and it has a capacity of nine and is tax exempt. Why we would believe that 30 sites may not be a significant number and we would differ on the Judge's interpretations of whether or not it's saturation, when you look at a total population, a percentage of the population, it is significant. We show there that-- we show first the Town, then the capacity of facilities in the Town with the population in that Town, and show the percentage of the population which is in a group home or institution use. In Riverhead, we have 2,009 people that are in an institutional setting that is licensed through the state. The population of the Town is 23,011 and percentage is 9.08. Shelter Island has zero, has no group homes or other facilities; has a population of 2,263 and a percentage of 00, there are none. In East Hampton, they have a capacity of 58. The population is 16,132 and it comes to .36 of the population. Southampton, 468 is the capacity and 47,000 people, and 1% of the population. This number of population probably does not account for the summer population. Brookhaven has a capacity of 5,430. Population of 410,000, a population percentage of 1.32. And, Southold, finally, is 341 people that are in institutions funding and a population of 19,836, 1.7. So it is significant difference between the Town of Riverhead bearing the burden of all these group homes and similar institutional facilities when compared to other east end Towns, and we include east end Brookhaven, even though maybe technically east end would exclude Brookhaven, if you talk to east enders. When we talk about the real numbers that affect the Town, we talk about loss of assessed value and that would be what we lose in their paying the taxes that if these facilities were, in fact, residences that you and I live in and pay taxes on, the assessed value we all wouldn't have to carry any of the load in paying the taxes. We've estimated that about 30,400,000 which we revised today is in loss of assessed value, so that's a significant number when you and I have to pay for it out of our pocket. When you look at the proposed site and the nature of the clients that you'll be servicing, these clients will be ambulatory. They will be able to get out of bed, they will be without assistance, my understanding is with minimal assistance, and they will be able to use facility sidewalks and so on and be a part of the community. Our concern has always been when you site these group homes and you place them in what are somewhat remote settings, it seems

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that it's not in the best interests of your clients. What we have tried to do is in suggesting alternatives and in the last case when we offered Corwin as an alternative, we tried to suggest that when you site a group home, that it be sited in the downtown area where it be-- the clients can enjoy some of the benefits of living downtown. Our first argument, and we believe very strongly that the Town has been saturated with group homes or similar facilities, if you must, if we must bear the burden of additional group homes, we hope that you will take this into account when you are siting group homes, and firstly, go somewhere else and secondly, try to locate them in less remote areas. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you, Pat and Monique. Now, it is your turn. Let me just remind you that you have the opportunity to express your opinion, ask some questions, get answers, but let us keep it on a basis that we are here as citizens and residents of the Town and that there should be no conflict. Warren McKnight."

Warren McKnight: "Warren McKnight, Wading River. I'd like to start off by saying something that I said to Supervisor Janoski in his office. I said to him one time that our Town has refugees. And the reason why I call people refugees, people who are economically and educationally disadvantaged and developmentally disabled. And the reason why I call them refugees is the fact that our Town lacks empowerment to help them. We have no tax base. We have no industry to help them. And we don't have the facilities to help them. We don't have the transportation like is up west. We don't have a movie theater, we don't have bowling alleys like you said. We don't even have an Oc Ed Center here. I know you have one down in Westhampton Beach. The amount of people who fit this category is way out of proportion to the rest of Suffolk County. We have the lowest income per capita in Suffolk and Nassau County. In order for you to suggest a home here, I think it should be responsible that you should petition first the county, the state, and the federal governments to help us take care of them. This Town itself, our Rotary, which is the largest in Suffolk County and perhaps Nassau County, has a camp for developmentally disabled people which you know about and mentioned. Right. The Kiwanis, (inaudible) Special Olympics in Shoreham. The problem is it's very frustrating for people in this Town to see people and not

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be able to help them. And this is what our Town is plagued with. Tomorrow, the Seafield Clinic, they're opening up an alcoholic clinic. We have more alcoholic clinics, more drug clinics, more people getting here at nighttime-- we'll be stopped on the street sometime and somebody will say from the prison, just got out of prison. Where can I get a train to get back to where he comes. We have people coming here, coming and going, transient housing. This is not a place-- our library, which is a nice library and people, you know, I go there and everything else. A person who I assume was developmentally disabled couldn't use the facilities because they were broken and small. I'm talking about our audio and visual facilities there. I do happen to have a friend who is developmentally disabled and one thing I noticed about him, he can't talk, but would communicate. And he has very, very clear lovely interests. Sometimes I have him for dinner. He has interests the same as the Supervisor. He loves fifties and sixties music. And the reason why he comes to my house and the reason why I invite him, is to break the routine. And he lives in this Township. And it is a routine. The person (inaudible) especially when you put him out there. And, you know, when you look at the Long Island Railroad in Nassau County, a handicapped or disabled person can get on those third rail trains and go some place. And make their life richer. But not out here. They can't get on a bus out here, they can't get on a train out here. It's hard. They have to go every place. And, like I said, another thing that you have to take into consideration, we have a large senior citizen population out here who face getting older. And they're on a fixed income. And also the fact that, you know, what really disturbed me over here is one thing that the Town Board is trying to do and Andrea Lohneiss is trying to do, they were giving flu shots back in November. And the people had, or was lining all the way down the block, I was glad it wasn't raining. But we have a little nutrition center over there was renovated, we don't have the capacity to do these things, and yet it seems that people want to make us a refugee center. We don't want to be a refugee center. We love people. We have a soup kitchen, we have different things, we have Townscape to give concerts to people. Developmentally disabled people come to these concerts, they look for it. They go here. Especially the ones that live downtown. So the only thing I can say is this, it's incumbent upon you if you want to give people who are disadvantaged and send them into Riverhead, it should be your conscience to give us the funds from state, federal and

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local money to help us to help him. To give them the empowerment and developmentally disadvantaged people can develop, and you know that because you have dedicated your life to that. They can grow but they can't grow to their potential in this Town because we don't have the facilities. We try to give the concerts, we try to have bowling alleys and movie theaters. We just don't have the money. And we all find it hard making a living. And we don't even have that much time. Most of us, husbands, wife, have to work, and what can I tell you? The thing is we need help and it seems that the poorest Town gets most of the problems. And it's not that we don't like people. We love people. And the people who are volunteers in this Town show it. The community organizations, the individuals, themselves, churches. So the only thing I'm saying is, why? You know, it's not that we don't love people, but it's just that we feel that we are overwhelmed. So, is there anything you could say to this?"

Robert Lopez: "Okay. You've raised a number of concerns and many of these concerns, if not all of them, have been responded to in various ways during the past year, as we've developed in the eastern end of Long Island. New York State Office of Mental Retardation and its regional office, Long Island DDSO makes a concerted effort to work with all municipalities throughout Nassau and Suffolk County. We schedule annual meetings with the Town Supervisor's office of every municipality. And we extend our hand to every Town official to help us site all homes in Long Island. Despite this effort, there remains a tremendous need for residential homes. This evening, we're talking about establishing one home for four persons who have, I'm sorry, five, who have developmental disabilities, with a major effort to close down Long Island Developmental Center, which currently has a population of 200. This does not truly reveal the magnitude of the need of the persons with developmental disabilities. As of several months ago, we did a survey of Long Island, Nassau County, Suffolk County. You speak of the need of individuals in Riverhead and we certainly respect that need. However, I must inform the group here that the responses that we received from the survey of Nassau and Suffolk County, revealed over 1,000 families in Nassau and Suffolk County who are in crisis. That's in addition to the 200 people we're discussing from the Developmental Center. There are currently as we speak here tonight, 1,000 families, many of them you could

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use the popular term, 'baby boomers', the consumers, the 'baby boomers', with parents who are aging. They're Long Island citizens, they've grown up on Long Island, their parents have had jobs on Long Island. Many of them worked at Grumman, in local places throughout Long Island. They're in need and New York state has an obligation and a moral responsibility to find homes for them. Our attempts are earnest, our attempts are sincere. We dedicate our efforts to finding homes throughout Nassau County. Riverhead is one area we are looking in, many towns, actually all towns, are currently feeling the need to develop homes. My response is specific. There is a tremendous need-- we're doing our-- we're providing our efforts in various towns. We extend our hand to any neighbor, any community that is willing to work with us. I think it's evidenced here tonight where we propose a home at Terry Place and we met with the municipality, we met with the neighbors, and an alternative site was submitted by the Town. It was reviewed in a very open and honest fashion by our office and, in fact, was accepted. So, I can only speak to our efforts."

Warren McKnight: "Okay. The only thing I don't want to belabor the point, I do have for the record, I do have an old statistic showing that Riverhead is the poorest Town. The other thing is, I just wanted to mention that unfortunately since we lack empowerment in this Town and we have a lot of people on Public Assistance and we have a lot of people who cannot get jobs, we do have a crime problem, we do have a drug problem, because of the clinics and everything else, we do have an alcoholic problem, so these are other things that you have to face in this Town besides that and it's not that we're not to solve it, but we need money to solve it and we're getting less and less money by putting people here we're getting less and less money. That's the only thing I could say and I'd like to give this to Barbara Grattan, the Town Clerk, and I'm not mad or anything else. I just want, I think we all want to help. And I don't know whether this is going to help people."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you, Warren. Let me point out that the door to my left in the rear, the exit door, is a handi-capped door. And I've been watching people struggle with that door, trying to push it open, especially with children. It opens automatically, if you push the plunger that is to the right of it with the handicap symbol of the wheelchair. This one over

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here just pushed open, but this one is motorized which makes it very difficult to open. But if you just push the plunger, it will open automatically, and it will make your life easier if you are trying to get out with children in tow. Sheri."

Sheri Patterson: "Hi, my name is Sheri Patterson. I live at 3 Waterview Court in Riverhead. I am a realtor in the area, and over the past few years our office has placed 15 of these homes on the east end, six of them in Riverhead. We have, all of them have been published, the Town has been given their 30 day notice. We have never had a group like this show up for any home that we found. And the key here is finding the proper site. I feel in this case that, I don't know if these people didn't do their homework, but I don't feel that they found the proper site to site a group home. I don't feel Terry Place was the proper site. I've received, and I know a number of brokers in the area have received letters from the Town, asking for sites that are more appropriate. And I would hope that the group here from the state would take a look at those sites. Because I really think that this is not a place for a group home. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you, Sheri."

Stuart Tobin: "Mr. Supervisor, my name is Stuart Tobin. I live at 33 Trout Brook Lane, Aquebogue. Referring to the New York State Site Selection Law, a municipality does have three options regarding this property: to approve the site, suggest alternatives or reject the site based on saturation. The site 30 Trout Brook Lane is not suitable for the following reasons. The backyard has a stream and marshland which is certainly a possible dangerous hazard. The proposed site is not on a through street, the area has not public transportation. Banks, pharmacies, grocery stores, meat markets, etc., are not within walking distance. Physicians no longer make house calls and the cost of transportation would ultimately be borne by the state. And apparently there are similar facilities in the area as we see on the map, and the area does look saturated. A closer look at the Town of Riverhead would show other houses and other locations that are ideally suited for such a facility. I'd be pleased to put you in contact with persons who could expedite such a choice. I believe the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities should not

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choose a house because the owner is unable to sell it on the open market as this house has been on the market for over four years. The owner does live in the house, not in Patchogue as was previously reported in the media. But because the owner works for a government agency and perhaps has some inside advantage. I respectfully suggest that the New York State Office of Mental Retardation reconsider this choice of site. I respectfully ask the Riverhead Town Board to reject the application and further ask that the Town Board work with the New York State Office in choosing a more suitable location. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you. Let me say that we don't have the power to reject the site. We have the ability to make a case on oversaturation which has been done, and we have the ability to suggest an alternate location. But this is not a special permit hearing in which the Town says yes or no. We simply must follow the prescribed procedure of the Padovan Law. The alternatives I've already mentioned. The lady with the-- did you have your hand up before? Yes, you. I don't know you."

Pauline Halikias: "Hi, I'm Pauline Halikias and I'm a resident of Trout Brook Lane. And I'm just here on behalf of the children. I don't feel it is a proper site for the group home because Trout Brook Lane has consisted of children from newborn to age five. And these children here are representative of Trout Brook Lane, and half the people are not here because they are home with their children and don't have somebody to watch them. But our street does not have sidewalks, you have to excuse me, I'm nervous. And, you know, the emotions involved in this are-- that 30 Trout Brook Lane is the bus stop and it is all small children there with their parents, some are not, and if you have small children, you yourselves would be concerned about this home. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you."

Tom Pfalzer: "Good evening. My name is Tom Pfalzer. I'm a resident of Riverhead. I just want to address some of the things I've heard tonight that concerns the group home. Concerning some of the reasons against it. We are talking about children, the last speaker. I don't know what you're worried about. I lived next door to a group home for three years."

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There were children in the home. The residents of that group home never had any ill effect on those children. I think in a society where we live and you have people who are disadvantaged and they are the weakest part of society. The only way to sensitize people to their plight is to expose them to it. And I don't think it's a bad thing for children to be exposed to this. I feel, ma'am, I'm just making my comments, I'm not here to answer questions. I'm not here to answer your questions, ma'am. I make my comments and you can raise your hand after this."

Supervisor Janoski: "Excuse me, Tom. Ma'am you weren't here when I gave the do not interrupt the speaker. I'm not going to have discussion going back and-- he has the floor."

Tom Pfalzer: "Thank you, Supervisor. The other point about -- the gentleman raised about having a swamp in the backyard, well, then why are you people there if you have children? If it's unsafe. Because we're talking about adults that have the mind of a child. They are supervised, I know this for a fact. If it's so dangerous a place to live, then why do you live there with your children? The other point I just want to make before I sit down again, is I do not understand any of this. You have places which are dots on a map and you've said saturation, and you've said words such as, well, basically saturation was the main term you used. I'd like to see a map if I could of all the churches in Riverhead Township and let's see the saturation of these exempt, non tax paying institutions. And maybe we should be outraged by the number of churches that are in our Town that aren't paying taxes and are taking up valuable real estate, that aren't paying taxes that we have to support. We get businesses or taxpayers in there and this, I find, personally, offensive. Prejudice is unacceptable in any form. For those of you who are clapping, you should be ashamed. Yesterday, the East End Arts Council put on a presentation of A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens and in that play, if you remember, Charles Dickens had Ebenezer Scrooge before his repentance saying, are there not work houses? Are there not prisons? I have to tell you, there are. There are institutions. And these people have committed no crime, but we as a society don't want to see them. We don't want to look at them. We just want to put them away. Not in my backyard. I don't want to see it. I don't want to deal with it. And so this Christmas

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season we should be opening our hearts. We shouldn't be thinking are there not prisons and are there not work houses. Thank you very much."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you. Please, while I did interrupt Tom, characterizing a person's position, I wish that we wouldn't do that. Everyone has the right to feel the way they feel about this and saying someone should be ashamed of themselves certainly is not something I'd like to hear here tonight. So let us continue, Mrs. Halikias, I've already heard from you. The gentleman sitting next to you."

Charles Johnson: "My name is Charles Johnson. I'm a resident of Trout Brook Lane, 28 Trout Brook Lane. I've written to the LIDDS, you know where I stand as far as oversaturation. I'm a long time resident of the east end, moved to Trout Brook Lane, full time, about two years ago. Riverhead has always been a Town that has been in need on the east end. We've had our fair share of bad breaks, of trying to do things to make the Town more acceptable. When you look around at our neighbors, the Hamptons on the south shore, over the years from high school, elementary school on up, you know, Riverhead always had a connotation attached to it. The Town has tried over many years, to try and improve that image by redoing the parks, having concerts. And this is not just for the townspeople, this is for people of all the east end. Unfortunately, we continue, continue, to get facilities like the one that you are proposing and the ones that were shown up here on the map. I think Riverhead has shown oversaturation. I don't understand what your organization, how you actually define saturation. I don't know if anybody has ever won on a saturation issue. Has anybody, I mean, I'd like an answer, I'm sort of asking a question here. Do you have a definition for what saturation is and has anyone been able to oppose this and effectively win on a saturation issue?"

Robert Lopez: "The question as I hear it is has anyone actually won a case by demonstrating-- "

Charles Johnson: "Town."

Robert Lopez: "-- a municipality, that is-- a municipality is the only legal body that can demonstrate a case of over-

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concentration. But I'm not an attorney. An attorney is present by the Town. I will give my answer and if you would like to add to it, certainly you have that opportunity. In my recollection in this field I believe there have been two cases in which over-concentration was successfully established by a municipality and a Commissioner's ruling upheld that position. Your Town Attorney can certainly research it and give you the actual case law on it and the legal briefing that went along with it. But it has been completed on two occasions that I'm aware of."

Charles Johnson: "Can I ask you also, as far as your organization is concerned, how many of these types of facilities do you have operating presently?"

Evette Milliner: "I'm sorry, when you say these type, do you mean this is-- "

Charles Johnson: "Group homes."

Evette Milliner: "No, no, this is run by the state, but we do have voluntary organizations like Association for Help of Retarded, so that within Nassau and Suffolk County, we have -- oh, was it just the state or was it all of the group homes?"

Charles Johnson: "Well, I'm really asking, you have two arms of your own organization. I'm asking about your organization, the LIDDS."

Evette Milliner: "Okay. The LIDDSO develops homes with voluntary organizations and the state organization which is the one that we are proposing tonight. Okay."

Charles Johnson: "Okay. Well, let me rephrase it then. How about state group homes? How many of those do you have operating presently? On Long Island?"

Evette Milliner: "On Long Island, go ahead."

Robert Lopez: "On Long Island, presently there are 22 homes operated by the state. Six in Nassau County, 16 in Suffolk County."

Charles Johnson: "Why is there not more-- if you're operating

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22 homes like this, why are more homes not operated in the Nassau County area? Is there a particular reason why there aren't? I mean it seems that if we're talking fair and equitable distribution, six versus 16 out of 22 is not equitable distribution when you look at the population. I would think 11 and 11, 12 and 10 is equitable distribution. And then I want to ask you one other question."

Evette Milliner: "Okay. When we go to look for a home, it's not a science so we don't say, we're putting four here and six here because this is what it is. So that when you look at the map and you see where we proposed the home, we do try-- I mean when you talk about over-concentration and how many people have won, we're very careful when we do our homework. So that we were careful when we put the home there, to try to see that that home would not cause an over-concentration of these types of homes in that facility-- you know, in that area."

Charles Johnson: "Well, I mean you still haven't answered the question-- "

Evette Milliner: "Which is?"

Charles Johnson: "What is the equitable distribution when you look at six homes in Nassau and 16 in Suffolk County? There are just as many homes for sale in Nassau County, and probably more, and in a market like it's been in the last three years, I'm sure there's no problem finding homes for sale."

Evette Milliner: "We have a unit that looks for the homes for us and rather than take a complete picture and say, this percentage we're going to do here, we take an area, not everybody wants to sell to the state. We have so many things to take into consideration when we look for a home. But we are very careful and we try not to have an over-concentration of homes in a particular place. I know that you're not getting the answer that you want so far as equitable distribution, but equitable distribution and over-concentration are not the same. We really try that when we go into an area, that we're not going to change the nature and character of the area because there are similar homes there."

Charles Johnson: "Well, I guess I'm not really getting a

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clear meaning of what oversaturation is and what equitable distribution is. They are both, I understand, being different, but I'm not getting any clear picture as to what either one of those are in your interpretation."

Robert Lopez: "Okay. I'd like to further elaborate on Miss Milliner's comments. Miss Milliner-- when you pose your question, how many homes are you operating? And very often when we sit here before you, you hear people interchange phrases like the State, LIDDSO. We are employed by the New York State Office of Mental Retardation which has approximately 22 regional offices throughout New York state. That is the Long Island District Developmental Services Office. When the question was posed, how many homes do you operate, Miss Milliner was speaking regarding our District Office and specific homes we operated, and rightfully so, you pointed out a disparity between the number of homes that we operate in Suffolk County and the number of homes we operate in Nassau County. That, like all statistics, if one were to separate statistics out, very often you can slant them in a certain manner."

Charles Johnson: "I'm not trying to slant them."

Robert Lopez: "I know, I'm not implying that you are. But I just point out the fact that when a question is posed regarding homes we operate, it must be also taken into account that the Long Island District Office is not the only-- obviously the only operator of group homes as presented by the Town of Riverhead. There are also what we call voluntary operated homes. Currently on Long Island, there are in excess of 220 homes on Long Island. It is correct that New York State's Regional Office operates the majority of them in Suffolk County as demonstrated by the numbers provided. However, there are a number of agencies that operate specific to certain counties, Nassau AHRC, Nassau UCP, they charter and their legal government bodies empower them to operate in certain counties. There are additional homes-- "

Charles Johnson: "Those are county groups rather than state?"

Robert Lopez: "One second, please. They are voluntary operated agencies. You might have heard of Catholic Charities?"

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Charles Johnson: "Yeah."

Robert Lopez: "In this case, Catholic Charities is a bi-County agency. So the point I'd like to express here, is that when a number such as 22 is expressed as being operated by our office, those are homes that are operated by Mr. Ball and his staff. However, it does not take into account the fact that there are a number of other homes in Suffolk County."

Charles Johnson: "Right, but they're not state owned."

Robert Lopez: "They're not state owned, but they are certified by my office, New York State Office of Mental Retardation. Now, our site selection process does involve looking in areas throughout Long Island, in Nassau and Suffolk County. We coordinate with our sister agency, the Office of Mental Health. We coordinate with the voluntary agencies. We are the funding agency for these homes. We are very conscious of where they're located. If one would take a look at Nassau and Suffolk County, you will see a number of homes throughout each county, both in the north shore and south shore. So now with regards to the specifics as it pertains to over-concentration, the law, and again I would defer to counsel here if they want to further elaborate on it, provides a forum for a municipality to demonstrate being that they're the closest body to the community and to any proposed site, they provide a forum in which a municipality can demonstrate what they view as adverse impact on that specific site. More specifics about the law, again, you have counsel here that can provide legal interpretation. The questions you are asking are specific legal questions and you have a representative here who is familiar with the law and representing that case."

Charles Johnson: "Let me just ask you one other thing. With regard to the 16 homes that you are operating in Suffolk County, do you know how many homes are being operated in Riverhead?"

Robert Lopez: "By our office of those 16?"

Evette Milliner: "None, yes, none."

Charles Johnson: "None presently?"

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Evette Milliner: "I just want to further clarify what Bob was saying. Of the voluntary agencies, community residential facilities which are different in funding from intermediate care facility, but there are 44 in Nassau and 30 in Suffolk. So it depends on what the voluntary agencies, where they are located as Bob said."

Charles Johnson: "Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you. Donna?"

Donna Testa: "Donna Testa, 3 Trout Brook Lane, Aquebogue. We, the concerned residents of Trout Brook Lane, firmly believe that the site proposed for establishment for a group home is totally inappropriate for the intended use. Trout Brook Lane is a family neighborhood containing over 50 children under the age of 10. This street is frequently active with children at play. Trout Brook Lane does not contain streetlights, making nighttime visibility very poor. The subject parcel is backed up to a wetlands area and busy County Road 105 as well as being in close proximity to unprotected Long Island Railroad tracks which poses a potential safety hazard to the residents of the proposed facility. The home on this site contains two staircases at the front entrance and an elevated rear deck. The rear and side yards have been raised, leaving a dangerous drop to the surrounding property. Also, there is an elementary school bus stop directly in front of this parcel causing a hazard to area children from group home vehicles. Public transportation is non existent on Trout Brook Lane. A review of homes for sale in the Riverhead area has identified several available homes which are much better suited for the intended use and are closer to public transportation and public services. I just wanted to point out one thing to the gentleman who wanted to know why we lived on Trout Brook Lane if there was a wetlands area behind us and how we protected our children. We protect our children by having gates on our stairs so that they cannot climb up and fall down. Okay? We protect our children -- we do not live against the wetlands. We're on the other side of the street but we have a fenced in yard. They cannot fence in that yard across on the wetlands area. Okay? Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you, Donna."

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Evette Milliner: "I just want to say that part of our renovations will be that we are going to fence in the yard and we are changing the staircase. There is going to be renovations done on the house and part of it will include that and, thank you, we are also interested in the people that are going to be living there, just like you, yes, in this proposed home."

Councilman Stark: "Can I ask a question?"

Supervisor Janoski: "Mr. Stark, would you like to pose a question?"

Councilman Stark: "Yes. I would like to ask you a question. Have you gone to contract on this house?"

Evette Milliner: "We have an option on the house."

Councilman Stark: "You have an option?"

Evette Milliner: "Yes."

Councilman Stark: "At any time prior to your going to an option on this house, and I heard you make comment to cooperating with Town Board members and Town government, did you come to this Town Board to seek assistance in locating a group home in the Town of Riverhead, prior to your notifying us of a group home to be located on Trout Brook Lane?"

Robert Lopez: "All right. As I mentioned in my earlier comments, -- "

Councilman Stark: "Because if you did, I didn't see you."

Robert Lopez: "Okay. I mentioned in my earlier comments, our office has for quite a number of years had a policy of notifying the municipalities, in this case the (inaudible) which is generally the Town Supervisors of the Towns in Nassau and Suffolk County, of our interest in developing homes on Long Island. It's become even more critical as we've been directed by the Governor's office to close down Long Island Developmental Center. So, on a I believe 18 month basis or so, letters go out routinely from our office to the various municipalities informing them of our presence and extending a hand of cooperation

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for working with us in selecting homes in the area."

Councilman Stark: "Did you come to the Town of Riverhead?"

Robert Lopez: "Correspondence-- "

Councilman Stark: "-- on this second home and say, look, we want to seek to place a second home in the Town of Riverhead? Do you have any suggestions as to where we can do it? No. What you did was come to the Town of Riverhead and said, we want to place a home on Trout Brook Road. Now we go through the laws, the regulations, and we hold a hearing. Again, we're trying to present saturation to you. I heard the young lady say we look very carefully at saturation in a particular area. Well, the particular area happens to be the Town of Riverhead. Not just Trout Brook Lane, but the Town of Riverhead. So, I think the area has to be expanded. All I've ever said to your organization, seek our help and you will prevent hearings like this. Seek our cooperation and you'll prevent hearings like this. There are many locations in the Town of Riverhead that would blend to your group homes. I personally think you are way out in left field down on Trout Brook Lane. I personally think that on Terry Place you were very far out in left field. You took the alternate site. You may have lit another bonfire underneath that one but we don't have the opportunity to go through another public hearing on Corwin Street. I just think your organization lacks the cooperation or the intent to get cooperation from this Town and the people of the Town of Riverhead. I don't think there's anybody in this Town or in this audience that does not have love for thy neighbor, love for anybody. But you come with an attitude, we'll place it, go through the process, and we can go anywhere we want. All I've said to you on past hearings, come and ask us before you go to contract. Before you go to option. And I guarantee you, you'll find a location in the Town of Riverhead that suffices everybody's needs. Thank you."

Mrs. Halikias: "May I ask what you are doing for the front of the house, where the doorway opens up into an area that has open lawn. I think what people are not saying is we are afraid. And we're very, very kind and we're good. There isn't one of us who doesn't have-- I have a niece who has cerebral palsy, we all have someone in our family or who needs

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help, extra help. I have taught special children. I know they're medicated. I know that they become emotionally upset at times. I know the door can open and fly out the person and maybe go into something that we will not know how to handle. Are you training the neighbors and are you training us to cope with these students-- with these people? How are we going to manage? You know we're afraid. I think that that's really what people are not saying. We would-- I think if you had little children or people maybe who couldn't-- I'm sorry to say-- maybe even couldn't walk, we might not be so frightened. And these mothers are talking about little children and not only that, I think there are elderly people around. I have a house and I hope to live there as a retired person. I'm a little leery about it. Aside from that, we say this house, then what else? Nobody is telling you this, but we know this. I've come from Brooklyn, I know what happens to beautiful neighborhoods, not that I'm saying anything. People run and leave. They're scared. And we've paid money, we've developed this lovely area. I can't believe-- I don't know how you selected such a-- it seems to be a silly place to put people who need to be in areas where there's something going on. I mean, we have to take the car to go here, we have to take the car to go there. I know there are going to be buses and little station wagons with people coming and going. I can't even envision it. You haven't really educated us, you haven't told us what to expect. You're saying this is it, take it or leave it. That's not fair. We've worked so hard to save enough money to buy those houses, to pay for our-- whatever it is-- our mortgages, and we're fearful. Now conform-- I don't know-- have little children in this place. Can you do something like that? Can you tell us, well, this is what it's going to be? And five years from now when the State Department leaves, something else doesn't come in here. Have you visited this place to see what it's like? It's a very -- I have pictures-- it's a pretty little frame house, nothing in front, a lawn, stairs, a little parking lot. How do you keep somebody from running out and doing something? How? I don't know. Are we going to all put fences around our house? Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Wait a minute. Before we go any further, would you tell us who you are?"

Mrs. Halikias: "I'm Mrs. Halikias. We live diagonally

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across from this house. I live diagonally across."

Supervisor Janoski: "Could you spell that for us please?"

Mrs. Halikias: "H-A-L-I-K-I-A-S. I own the house."

Supervisor Janoski: "Okay. I just wanted that on the record. Go right ahead."

Mrs. Halikias: "Okay. And I appreciate what I've heard here. For the gentleman, I really-- we don't have this hatred for people who don't manage. We understand that people get old and cannot take care of their children. I know all too well. I have a niece who's 21. I don't know what she's going to do when her mother and dad can't take care of her. But, we understand. But I think if you hold it within somehow, there is a better place. I know it. Seriously, please, look in your hearts to find another place and to accept it. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Way in the back."

Bob Lohneiss: "Bob Lohneiss, Trout Brook Lane. Tonight's hearing is the third that I'm aware of dealing with the location of residences for developmentally disabled individuals. All three concerning residents in the eastern part of the Town of Riverhead. I understand that the hearing has been somewhat confrontational with comments from the public questioning the wisdom of the state of New York and its decisions regarding the location of these residences. Given this history, it seems to me that there could be a more rational and comprehensive approach in locating these residences. The Mental Hygiene Law which is intended to direct the state in both the delivery of local services and their locations appears to encourage cooperation of local and state government through a partnership in the determination of the need for and the allocation of those services. It would seem then that a joint effort between the state and the Town could achieve the desired results for both the agency and our community. Specifically with a comprehensive approach, government could locate services in those buildings needing physical rehabilitation. This would result in improvements to existing housing, betterment of neighborhoods, and more efficient utilization of your state funds. It would seem to me that there exists numerous alternative sites within the

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Town which are in need of rehabilitation and which must seriously be considered by the state and the Town. In summary, the residents of Trout Brook Lane fail to see the partnership between the state and the community in this process. Why not use this as an opportunity for the state to play a positive role in our neighborhood communities. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you. Is there anyone else wishing to address the Town?"

Robert Lopez: "I'd just like to make a comment after that. Regretfully, I've heard a number of comments about the home just being selected and I must comment here. Our office has consistently offered out a hand to the municipalities throughout Long Island. We have offered it in writing, we have offered it in certified mail, and we have offered it at every public hearing my office has attended. We leave tonight like we've left every other meeting. Any municipality that wants to work with our regional office, we will gladly sit down with them, anytime, evening meeting, afternoon meeting, morning meeting. Prior to notification, in any given year, we will sit with you, and we will sit with any municipality that wishes to work with us, provide a site selection committee, and to make alternate sites. It is the intention of our office to work in a partnership with all municipalities. That has been our policy for many, many years. And it's not only the letter but the spirit of the law to work in cooperation, and it is a partnership we desire. That being said, we still have a tremendous need that I mentioned earlier. There are 1,000 families on Long Island who are waiting for homes for their children. We will write the letters, we will attend the meetings, we will extend our hand in partnership and cooperation, and we will continue to develop homes throughout Long Island. But our hand is always out there to help the persons who live in the community to work cooperatively with the people who reside in the community and, most importantly, to serve the consumers who are in need of help. But I cannot stress more firmly our intention, our efforts have always been straightforward, it's not a secret that we're out here, it's not a secret that there are needs. And we recognize it is a delicate process. We continually offer ourselves in renewal to the community to meet with you and to look at other alternative sites. The law is very clear that alternative sites are a possible outcome of hearings such as these. The Town of Riverhead

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is to be commended. They have offered alternative sites. Our agency has in good faith evaluated them in the past. Where those homes were determined inadequate to meet the specific needs of the proposed homes, we unfortunately had to decline those. In those instances where the homes were identified as being capable of meeting the needs of a proposed site, we accepted them. Again, in the spirit, the letter and the spirit of the law. So I just would really hope that people who leave here tonight, know of the sincerity of the Long Island DDSO to work cooperatively with the community."

Evette Milliner: "I also would like to respond if there's time. I've wanted to talk with Mrs. Halikias. I think we've spoken on the telephone, not to talk with you, but to answer some of your fears and, really, I speak with no arrogance at all. I am involved with developing group homes throughout Nassau and Suffolk County. Bob Ball is involved with the program part of it. We put nobody into the community that would be of harm to themselves or to anybody else. In addition, the staff in this house are there 24 hours a day. We really care about what we're doing. We care about the relatives of all of you who will some day, be looking for homes, because if you want to know where they're going to live, so that their parents could either live or die at least in peace, they are going to come to us some day and we're going to put them into an area where all of us would like to live. We are not doing anything to harm children. I'm a grandmother. I know-- I mean I'm not going to get into a discussion. What I want to say is that these people have staff, the staff is there 24 hours a day. Nobody will be walking-- am I saying right-- in the street, by themselves. They are profoundly retarded. Don't be afraid. In fact, think in your mind that when your family member needs somebody, they will come to us and hopefully there's going to be a home because the waiting list is very, very long. I don't want you to have any fears. And you have my number. It's 434-6102. Call me in the office. I will be glad to answer any of your questions."

Supervisor Janoski: "Is there anyone who has not spoken who wishes to address the Board? Way in the back."

Dan Pierce: "I'm Dan Pierce, I live at 1 Trout Brook Lane. And I just want to say that I have nothing against the

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folks that need additional help in housing and additional help with living, but I would like to point out the excellent job our elected officials did here, and their showing that Riverhead already does its share. We are helping and we are doing it. I'd like to see the rest of the towns on the east end take some of that responsibility. That's all I have to say."

Supervisor Janoski: "Thank you. Is there anyone else who has not spoken who wishes to address the Board? You are back by popular demand."

Stuart Tobin: "Having heard a very eloquent speech by this gentleman here regarding cooperation with the municipality, I would like Mr. Stark to pose his question again about cooperation prior to picking up 30 Trout Brook Lane as a home."

Councilman Stark: "I really can't accept that last speech that he made because I really, truly believe if you had come to this Town and said, look, we want to propose a second home, I don't believe there's anybody again in this room, including myself, and I have handicapped people in my family, not immediate but in cousins. We will do everything in our power as a Town Board and through our staff, the Supervisor's staff, Community Development, planning, wherever it may be, the Town Attorney's office, to make the transition of adjustment in this Town so smooth, that you will never have a hearing like this. I think Mr. Lohneiss gave an extremely good point tonight. We are in the process of trying to rehabilitate this Town. We are a poor Town. We have the lowest tax base of anybody in the 10 Towns of Suffolk County. We could use the cooperation of the state through your agency, to rehabilitate homes in this Town and bring them up to your standards and the standards we'd like to see in the Town. So, again, the only thing I have-- and the only complaint I have-- is you seek cooperation. You say you want to have cooperation, but I have never ever seen anything in correspondence on my desk prior to somebody saying, we're going to put a group home at such and such a location. Never have and you're already on option or contract. If you come to us and said, look, we're looking for a home, I guarantee you, we'll find you a place. We'll find you a location that we can rehabilitate. And everybody is to the plus. The Town is to the plus, the home that we rehabilitate. The people are nearer to the plus. But I don't see that. You come with the idea that

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(inaudible) is going to be there. Yes, it's going to be there. But it doesn't have to be there if you cooperate with us prior to your arrival. And I guarantee you if you give me notification of it, we will cooperate, at least myself, 100 percent. And I think this community will, too, because we're a very cooperating community. Thank you."

Robert Lopez: "My office welcomes that offer of cooperation."

Councilman Stark: "Well, then, return it by calling us."

Robert Lopez: "I will certainly do that and see that you are carbon copied on all correspondence relating to such matters."

Councilman Stark: "Yes. Thank you."

Supervisor Janoski: "Does anyone else wish to address the Town Board? That being the case, we will close the Hearing. Let me just thank you all for taking part in this Hearing, and for the admirable way which you have presented your thoughts to the Board and to the representatives of the state. The Town has-- in the past has taken a position of oversaturation. That is always the position which is taken because we know too well the number of social programs which are housed in the Town of Riverhead. And we know all too well the impact of that location. Failing to make a case for oversaturation, the Town will make recommendations of alternate sites. It seems to me logically that the first thing that you do is that you make your case with the one provision for oversaturation, the Padovan Law. And if that is rejected, then you take the second alternative which is to suggest an alternative location. So I thank you for participating. After all, this is what it's all about. Thank you very much for being here. It's, I know, very uncomfortable to be on the hot seat, and I appreciate your presence."

Hearing closed: 9:00 p.m.

Barbara Hutton
Town Clerk