



STATEMENT OF THE LONG ISLAND BUILDERS INSTITUTE REGARDING THE HEARTLAND PROJECT IN THE TOWN OF ISLIP
APRIL 16, 2015

On a very limited number of occasions, a municipality on Long Island has the opportunity to provide a significant new dimension to our regional lifestyle and economy, an opportunity to transform our community of communities. It happened in the 1950's with the approval by the Town of Hempstead of Levittown, the first truly large-scale housing development for our returning veterans and their families, which changed the way our residents lived together. It happened again in the 1950's with the approval for the Roosevelt Field Shopping Center, the first large scale retail development on Long Island, which changed the way our residents shopped. It happened in the 1970's with the approval for the Hauppauge Industrial Park, which still is the second largest conglomeration of commercial and manufacturing space in the country, and changed how our residents worked. And now in the 21st century, the Town of Islip has an opportunity to transform how our residents live, work, shop and play together by providing the necessary approvals for the Heartland Project, which will make Long Island a better place to live by providing our residents, both current and future, with a lifestyle all its own.

The demographic changes which have hurt Long Island's competitiveness during the past twenty years continue to occur. Notwithstanding our richness and glory, Long Island continues to lose young people at a rate far higher than any other area in our region and continues to grow economically by creating mostly lower paying jobs, not the higher paying jobs being created in other suburban and urban areas of the country. Our young people continue to leave, not just because they cannot find a suitable housing option, which is a reason, and not just because they cannot find a high paying job, although that is also a reason. They leave us, and our suburban lifestyle, for the lifestyle of other areas, including New York City, because they do not want to live their lives in our lifestyle at this moment in their lives. What they want is a cosmopolitan community, one which provides all of the amenities and components of a lifestyle together, in the same area, rather than in separate and segregated economic areas, as has been the lifestyle of Long Island for the past fifty years. Now is the time for Long Island to provide a new and different lifestyle, one which does not conflict with our suburban communities, but which complements them by providing a new and different option for our residents. Heartland is just such a place and now is just such a time, for we cannot wait any longer.

Heartland will provide new housing options, new retail options, new community benefits and transform an area which was once one of the largest mental health facilities in the world to a new and vibrant community in the heart of Brentwood, in the heart of the Town of Islip. Surrounded by transportation options, paralleling the largest suburban rail line in the country, Heartland will provide a new opportunity for Long Island to prosper.

As with any new development, Heartland will provide new challenges to our infrastructure systems. We strongly believe that a phased in approach to this development will allow our planners and the developer to fashion a series of measures over the years which will complement the development and reduce and eliminate any negative consequences relating to infrastructure. In addition, Heartland will challenge our thinking of what it means to live on Long Island and how such a project can work with our community of communities to provide new opportunities for our residents, those who are here already and those who want to come here in the future. The positive physiological benefits of moving this project forward cannot be diminished or disregarded, for this project is the step Long Island needs to take to really be in the 21st century.

In our opinion, Long Island is ready, willing and able to take on the challenges of creating a new lifestyle and a new living environment and the Heartland Project is the perfect catalyst for this movement forward. All we need now is for the Town of Islip to provide the approvals necessary, just as our towns provided the approvals in the past for new and far-reaching development opportunities. The Long Island Builders Institute, the largest residential trade association in New York State, urges the Town of Islip to allow Long Island to move forward.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our views.

Mitchell H. Pally
Chief Executive Officer