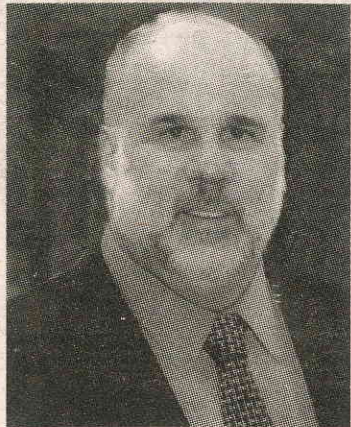


Planning Board Will NOT Study Impact of Development

Report and Comments,
Bernadette Smith Budd

The Riverhead Town Planning Board on January 6, 2011, unanimously rejected a resolution that would have called for a cumulative environmental impact review of the extensive commercial development which will change Wading River forever.



Kenn Barra wants to build a Mall at East Wind.

John Zoumas wants to build Central Square and Kenn Barra wants to build Knightland Mall and Great Rock wants a catering hall and the land just west of McDonald's is next.

The request for a cumulative review was made by the Group For the East End, the Riverhead Neighborhood Preservation Coalition, the North Fork Environmental Council and the Wading River Civic Association. But the Planning Board, appointees (not elected by the people and with no public input but with five year terms), including Joe Baier, of Wading River, said no.

Most alarmingly, the "Planning Board" is letting Developers John Zoumas and Kenn Barra work together on commissioning a "traffic study" on the impact of their mega-developments. These Developers are licking their lips and saying: let's change Wading River forever so we can move elsewhere. Talk about the "fox in the henhouse," how objective does the Town Board fantasize these traffic studies are going to be?

"Given the number, and magnitude, of the projects,...we collectively strongly advise that a cumulative, comprehensive review take place," wrote Robert DeLuca, president of the Group for the East End. The letter was written on December 20, 2010 to Riverhead Supervisor, Sean Walter, and Town Board members Jodie Giglio; George Gabrielsen; Jim Wooten; John Dunleavy.

A Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) can be requested by the Town Board members.

John Zoumas wants to build "Central Square," on 17.83 acres east of CVS. This would include a restaurant, bank and 31,000 square feet of retail/professional (assuming it is all rented, given there are empty stores now in Wading River and Shoreham), says DeLuca.

Kenn Barra, owner of East Wind, wants more. He wants to merge five parcels of land to construct "Knightland" Mall. This would include another restaurant and 32,518 square feet of retail, according to DeLuca. This is on the triangle of Sound Road and Route 25A.

Great Rock Golf Course also wants more. They want permission to construct a 7,201 square foot catering hall with more parking, in the middle of a residential neighborhood. This is ignoring the fact that a

huge, often unused catering hall looms just across the street, at East Wind. The *Community Journal* strongly supports a GEIS, and more - for the people. The Town Board was elected (unlike the Planning Board) to represent the people; now is the time to carry out those campaign promises and oaths of office. "The pedal is to the metal." We need representation - now.

Dominique Mendez, co-founder of the Riverhead Neighborhood Preservation Coalition (RNPC) commented: "The RNPC was very dismayed by the Riverhead Planning Board's decision but the fight for Wading River is not over. Luckily, the Planning Board does not have to have the last word unless the Town Board lets it be so.

"The Town Board has its own authority to commission a Generic Environmental Impact Study (GEIS) of this stretch of Wading River. We are encouraged by the Supervisor's recent acknowledgment that there are issues, other than traffic, that need to be studied and that to 'overrun Wading River with this level of commercialization is insane'.

"Now's the time for Supervisor Sean Walter, and the Riverhead Town councilpersons (Jodie Giglio, George Gabrielson, John Dunleavy and Jim Wooten), to step up and commission the GEIS before these site plans get approved and the future of Wading River, as either a shopping destination or a town blighted by rows of empty stores, is sealed." *Full text of this letter is on page 8.*

SWR Gives Pay Raises

The SWR Board of Education approved 2 percent pay raise "retroactive to July 1, 2010" for "confidential employees" on Tuesday, January 18. The Board should tell the people how many people are being given raises, and the total cost. Positions of those getting this raise should also be public. This is an unconscionable time to grant any pay raise: public employees are taking **pay cuts**; state aid is in jeopardy; revenue into the school district is being decreased. But the SWR school board, and its lame duck Superintendent, is **granting base pay raises**. The Senior Citizens paying for it got no increase in social security. *Budd*