

# WAINSCOTT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE



June 6, 2016

Supervisor Larry Cantwell

Town of East Hampton

159 Pantigo Road

East Hampton, NY 11937

**Re: Moratorium for Wainscott Business District**

Dear Supervisor Cantwell,

Thank you for your support and that of East Hampton Town in pushing forward with the East Hampton Town Hamlet Studies.

As witnessed by those present during the Wainscott Hamlet Charrette's Public Walking Tour on May 20, Wainscott is suffering from neglect and needs to implement a comprehensive plan which satisfies the residents of Wainscott.

Unlike the other hamlets in the Town, Wainscott's Business District has been allowed to develop haphazardly without uniform planning or an identifiable character. The business district along Montauk Highway contains industrial uses with cement trucks throwing up dust laden with chemicals and warehousing operations next door to retail clothing stores and restaurants. Wainscott has become so unfriendly that no residents or visitors stroll from store to store – the walk is too dangerous, unattractive and unviable. In a recent Site Plan Initial Evaluation (application #A0520160011), Senior Planner Eric Schantz also struggled with Wainscott's lack of aesthetic identity when he wrote: "... *the commercial center of Wainscott along Montauk Highway does not have any clearly identifiable architectural aesthetic...*". The failure in the past to implement a plan for Wainscott, as highlighted in this case, risks setting a precedent for an anything-goes criteria with regard to architectural aesthetic. We must be careful to ensure that past neglect does not mean future neglect.

We all agree the Wainscott Hamlet Study is vital, but we are equally concerned about what is to be done over the next 12 months. The consulting firm of Dodson & Finkler, Inc. believe it will be at least a year until the Wainscott Hamlet Study has been completed and adopted by the Town of East Hampton, but there are now applications before the Town of East Hampton (and no doubt many more to be submitted), that run contrary to the already established direction in which the Wainscott Hamlet Study has taken.

The Vision Statement as published in A Comprehensive Plan for the Town of East Hampton by the Town of East Hampton lists its first two goals as –

**Goal One.** *Maintain, and restore where necessary, East Hampton's rural and semi-rural character and the unique qualities of each of East Hampton's historic communities.*

**Goal Two.** *Take forceful measures to protect and restore the environment, particularly groundwater.*

We commend and concur with the current Town Board for this vision, but these words are meaningless without a commitment backing them up. There needs to be a commitment from the board to adjourn planning decisions that may significantly affect Wainscott's character until the completion and adoption of the Wainscott Hamlet Study.

Without a moratorium on significant planning decisions within Wainscott, the current Town Board is unintentionally permitting further degradation within Wainscott, which is in direct opposition to the Town's Vision Statement (as stated above). If the Town Board of the Town of East Hampton truly believes in this Vision Statement, it has no option but to place a moratorium on planning decisions.

Wainscott is under threat today – now – from creeping urban sprawl, poor water quality, choking traffic and dangerous conditions for those who walk or bicycle. Accordingly, the WCAC unanimously passed a resolution on June 4, 2016 that it recommend the Town Board impose a moratorium on all planning decisions for applications already submitted which are pending and for applications yet to be submitted within the Wainscott Business District until the Wainscott Hamlet Study has been completed and adopted by the Town of East Hampton.

At this same WCAC meeting (on June 4), a larger than usual number of local residents attended to express their opposition to the proposed car wash. Following on from the vote for a moratorium by the WCAC, the public was asked to raise their hands either for or against a moratorium. Please note that the public all supported the committee's request for a moratorium (except for one abstention and one nay).

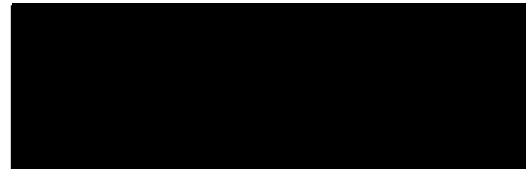
The WCAC also request that the Town Board mandate a place on the agenda for the Town Board Meeting on October 6, 2016 to hear an up-dated report on the Wainscot Hamlet Study with an opportunity for members of the WCAC and other interested citizens to comment.



As the gateway to East Hampton, Wainscott suffers more than any other hamlet from traffic volume which flows through its business district along Montauk Highway to all of East Hampton. If another application were to be approved at the Wainscott gateway similar to Home Goods or the prospect of a steel and glass car wash, or developers wishing to join grandfathered commercial lots together, everyone in East Hampton Town will feel the effects when Wainscott's narrow gateway becomes choked and jammed shut. This is not an issue solely about Wainscott – it is an issue for everyone who resides in East Hampton Town.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,



On behalf of the Wainscott  
Citizens Advisory Committee

c/c: Planning Board  
Town of East Hampton  
300 Pantigo Place  
East Hampton, NY 11937

Councilwoman Kathee Burke-Gonzalez  
Town of East Hampton  
159 Pantigo Road  
East Hampton, NY 11937