

Letters

Letter to the Editor:

We hear almost daily about residents and groups that are protesting one or another of the proposed developments in Huntington and other towns on Long Island.

You may have heard about the heavily forested and steeply hilled 10-acre former Parker-Schlaijker estate property in Halesite that was purchased by a builder with plans to subdivide the parcel and construct 8 new houses.

Typical arguments against additional development include ecological and environmental impact – birds and wildlife, air and water quality, erosion, flooding, etc. – as well as burden on schools, municipal services, infrastructure, roads, traffic safety, congestion, crime and police protection.

Those who stand to profit from these subdivisions and development consider opponents to be just NIMBY (“Not in My Backyard”) protests by folks that DO NOT WANT anything in their “back yards” or neighborhoods.

While we share many of the concerns listed above, the proposed “Nathan Hale Nature Preserve” is different – and not just another NIMBY protest – because it is something that the residents of Halesite DO WANT.

As a lifetime Long Islander, I am no stranger to development. Growing up in the Village of New Hyde Park, I still remember the hundreds of little houses that replaced the rows of zinnias, chrysanthemums, carnations, and marigolds in the flower farm across the street and the fields of potatoes at the end of Ingraham Lane.

We can, of course, still buy flowers (from Columbia or Ecuador) and potatoes (from Idaho) but there are some “things that money can’t buy.”

The 10-acre property between Bay Avenue and Vineyard Road is a unique and very special old forested sanctuary with its birds, wildlife, trees and plantings.

There are few places left where you can hear so many distinctive bird songs, cries and see the colored plumage of these feathered friends, as well as the great hawks, scary owls and bats that nest there. The cool shaded forest is home to dozens of four-legged friends too – graceful deer, shy little red foxes and many other kinds of little furry fellows. And where else in Huntington can you see such a display of magnificent 75-year-old azaleas and specimen rhododendrons?

That is why the Nathan Hale Nature Preserve is not just a NIMBY reaction to development. It is the only way that this remarkable undeveloped sanctuary will continue to be preserved and accessible for the use and enjoyment of the public and future generations – our children and grandchildren.

Sincerely,
George Carl Pezold
THE NATHAN HALE NATURE PRESERVE

“Raise Your Voice” Winner

Dayaneliz Veliz, of Walt Whitman High School in Huntington Station, was one of four who won ERASE Racism’s 2024 “Raise Your Voice” student essay contest for Long Island public high school seniors. The essay contest focused on discussing “Structural Racism and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives in Schools.” Each winner will receive a \$500 college scholarship at ERASE Racism’s Annual Benefit on Wednesday, June 5. The scholarships are made possible by the support of SCOPE Educational Services in Smithtown.

“At my school in Long Island, we take great pride in our commitment to addressing structural racism and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. One of the highlights of our academic year is the annual Unity Day celebration. The vibrant parade and fair bring our entire community together in a joyous display of solidarity and diversity. It’s truly heartwarming to see the Huntington Station Enrichment Center, town officials, and the South Huntington School District come together to support this event, which has been a cherished tradition for nearly a decade. The Unity Parade and Fair not only celebrate the rich diversity of our local area but also showcase the incredible people and programs that strengthen our community bonds.”



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Postmaster: Send to 1930, Huntington Station, the Huntington, New York, NY 11750. Congress. Publication per copy is \$1.