

GREEN GROUP ENDORSES CANDIDATES

East End Candidates Stand Up for the Environment

For Immediate Release

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The Long Island Environmental Voters Forum has announced its endorsement of candidates for town offices who can be counted on to make the environment a priority on the East End.

In Southampton the green group gave high honors to Town Board candidates Julie Lofstad and Tommy John Schiavoni. Lofstad is running for reelection on both the Democratic and Conservative lines; Schiavoni on the Democratic line. "Councilmember Lofstad is a true champion of the environment who takes her responsibility to the people of Southampton very seriously," said Richard Amper, president of the Environmental Voters Forum. Tommy John is a first time candidate with a history of supporting environmental initiatives.

In an unprecedented move, LIEVF "endorsed" sitting Town Councilman John Bouvier, whose term is not up until 2019. "Councilman Bouvier is a knowledgeable and committed public servant who has made commitment to Southampton's environment a priority throughout his term in office. All three oppose the proposed "Hills" mega-development in the pine barrens and state-designated Special Groundwater Protection Area.

"The Hills proposed project involves an 18-hole private golf course, with 117 residences and a 155,760 square foot clubhouse/catering facility. Scientists have identified this site as essential to the protection of drinking and surface waters in an area that is already seriously jeopardized by groundwater contamination, producing harmful algae blooms that threaten Weesuck Creek and Shinnecock Bay. In addition to nitrogen contamination from sewage, the project involves the use of large quantities of herbicides, pesticides and fungicides. "The Hills" parcel lies in a town Aquifer Protection Overlay District, County Critical Environmental Area and State Special Groundwater Protection Area. It is the largest Pine Barrens parcel, still in private ownership. The town recognized this essential fact by re-zoning the property to one home per five acres.

The project is opposed by nearly all environmental and civic groups in the town and beyond. The Voters Forum made no endorsement in the race for Supervisor where both candidates support the mega-development despite heavy opposition from Assemblyman Fred Thiele and other public officials.

The Long Island Environmental Voters forum also endorsed three candidates for Southampton Town Trustee, a board that works to protect the town's water resources. They are Ron Fisher, Gary Glanz and Ann Welker.

In East Hampton, the environmental group endorses Democrat Peter Van Scoyoc for Supervisor, and Republican Paul Giardina and Democrat Jeffrey Bragman for Town Council. "Bragman has a particularly impressive record as an environmental champion" said LIEVF president, Richard Amper. East Hampton has taken the lead among Long Island towns in efforts to reverse declining water quality in the town and across the Island.

In Shelter Island, LIEVF again endorses incumbent Supervisor James Dougherty. "His consistent commitment to the environment makes this endorsement a no-brainer," Amper said.

In Southold the Voters Forum endorsed Debbie O'Kane who has been active in environmental protection both as a private citizens and in her professional work. "Debbie has green blood in her veins said LIEVF executive director, David Reisfield.

In Riverhead, LIEVF called for the replacement of the Town Supervisor, Seal Walter and Board Member Jodie Giglio. "These elected officials have had more than enough opportunity to advance the environment and have not done so. Their management of the town has left riverhead deep in debt, despite dramatically increased taxes and with little or no attention to a declining environment. LIEVF endorses challengers Laura Jens-Smith for Supervisor and town council candidates Catherine Kent and Michele Lynch.

The Long Island Environmental Voters Forum is a non-profit, non-partisan grassroots organization created to identify, recruit, endorse and support pro-environment candidates for public office.