

## **Doing Nothing**

Wainscott

October 28, 2011

Dear David:

I thought the last election for the town board in 2009 was of overriding importance after six years of Bill McGintee. This election, I think, is of equal or greater importance for both East Hampton's economic health and its well-deserved reputation for beauty and peace and quiet.

East Hampton is under assault on two fronts. The first front is the suit filed one and a half years ago by wealthy oceanfront property owners to claim title to the beach on Napeague. The town trustees, bless their souls, immediately jumped into the fray and have mounted a vigorous and well-conceived defense against those property owners. Supervisor Bill Wilkinson and the town board, on the other hand have shown little interest. Even worse, Supervisor Wilkinson attempted to convince the trustees' attorney to settle the litigation. The settlement would have preserved the beach for the exclusive use of the property owners during the summer months.

Only in the last week has the town board, presumably for political reasons, come to its senses and passed a resolution indicating its support. It still has contributed no money to the trustees for the cost of the defense. That speaks volume about Mr. Wilkinson's real opinion of the importance of the ocean beach to the rest of us.

The second front concerns the East Hampton Airport. The Wilkinson-dominated town board has adopted an airport plan that calls for significant expansion in the future. The board, of course, denies that there are any plans for such an expansion, which begs the question of why the plan envisions it. Moreover, the Wilkinson-dominated town board has stated repeatedly that it will accept federal money to repair the perimeter fence around the airport.

I will take it at face value that that repair is necessary. What is crucial is how the repair is paid for. The Wilkinson town board wants to accept federal funding for a job that will cost less than \$400,000, even though the dedicated airport account has a surplus of between \$1.5 million and \$1.8 million. In so doing, the town board will cede control of the airport for 20 years to the Federal Aviation Administration. This will take attempts at noise abatement and control of expansion out of local hands and pass them to the F.A.A.

There is no conceivable reason that the town board should accept federal money for the fence other than to ensure that, on behalf of the 1 percent of the East Hampton population that utilizes the airport, there will be no interference by other town residents in airport operation and expansion for 20 years.

The Wilkinson-dominated town board agreed to an alternate flight path over Georgica Pond (to the detriment of Sagaponack, Wainscott, and Georgica). This will have no discernible effect on noise abatement in Northwest. The board has indicated no interest in any noise abatement studies or action; indeed, Councilwoman Theresa Quigley has recently said, presumably on behalf of the town board, that she favors a “scalpel” approach, which translates, in my opinion, to doing nothing.

Do not for a moment think this is inconsequential. Not only are thousands of homeowners affected and the value of their homes drastically reduced, but also the beaches from Sagaponack through Wainscott to Georgica will be rendered unusable by helicopter noise.

I swore to myself two years ago that I would never vote for a Democratic town board candidate again. I intend to break that oath this election. I will vote only for supervisor and town board candidates who have pledged not to accept federal money for the airport and who will fight the Napeague property owners’ lawsuit with vigor: Bill Mott and the Democrats. I do this not based on political party but because they have shown respect for us with their concern about these issues. There are

plenty of good Republicans out there. Lisa Rana, the town trustees, and Steve Lynch immediately come to mind.

Very truly yours,

DANIEL G. VOORHEES