Positive Endeavor

As a longtime advocate for water protection, it goes without saying that I would speak to “The Hills at Southampton” planned development district proposal. While the article [“Weighing In On Hills Debate,”February 16] accurately presents the rationale for my opinion, it omitted an important component of the project that warrants significant emphasis—namely, the elimination of wastewater nitrogen to the highest achievable levels by employing a sewage treatment facility.

In both development scenarios, as-of-right and PDD, nitrogen loading from sewage discharges without advanced treatment is a significant water quality concern. Because of the regulatory deficiencies in Suffolk County’s septic code, and the absence of more stringent town laws, the as-of-right scenario can employ conventional septic systems that do very little in regard to nitrogen removal.

During my statement at the December 5 hearing, I expressed concern that Discovery Land Company had not articulated substantive details on their sewage management plans. In addition, I opined that the project should incorporate a centralized sewage treatment facility that would not only treat wastewater generated on site but potentially service existing development as well; specifically, the East Quogue Elementary School, a singular entity that is very likely a more significant source of nitrogen loading based on the daily human use.

I was pleased to learn at the February 7 meeting that Discovery Land was committing to the inclusion of a sewage treatment facility to service the development and will explore connecting existing development beyond its boundaries—a positive endeavor that can provide bona fide benefits.

Kevin McAllister

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