



SPECIAL MONTHLY POP-UP GUIDE

Green Living Babylon

Babylon Green Homes Fight Greenhouse Gases

BY APRIL JIMENEZ
ajimenez@longislandpress.com

Last month Babylon Town Supervisor Steve Bellone, joined by many of LI's prominent greenies (LIPA, the Center for Working Families, the Plumbers Union Local 200, Western Suffolk BOCES, the Green Living Expo Organization (who shares the parent company of the *Long Island Press*, The Morey Organization), the Neighborhood Network, the Sierra Club, the U.S. Green Building Council, LI Green and Energy Auditor Rich Manning) announced the innovative Green Homes program. In front of Terry Sabatino's home, on Babylon's sleepy Sixth Street, Bellone emptied two large 25-pound bags of barbecue charcoal into a wheelbarrow in front of the podium and declared, "This is how much carbon one house in Babylon generates in one week." The Long Island Green Homes Program (LIGH) is going to change that, promises Bellone.

At a press conference on Aug. 6, Bellone announced that a resolution was passed unanimously to expand the Residential Solid Waste District's definition of "solid waste" to include carbon—which has never been included in the past. "By adding carbon emissions to the definition of solid waste they are able to quantify an efficient home," says Art Desin, vice chair of the U.S. Green Building Council LI Chapter. "It's a very creative and innovative program that was addressed today," adds Desin.

Under the new Green Homes Program residents can make energy efficient improvements to their homes at little or no

cost and without assuming any new debt. The program will reduce carbon emissions by 65,000-130,000 tons, reduce energy costs for homeowners and create 6,600 new "green collar jobs," says Bellone.

According to the Town of Babylon, the average home leaks considerable amounts of energy on a daily basis. Translation: homeowners wasting money. "With energy costs at an all-time high, especially on Long Island, homeowners can no longer afford to waste energy. Under the Long Island Green Homes Program, the average Babylon resident will reduce their energy costs by \$1,160 a year," says Bellone. Sabatino's is the first home to undergo the green retrofitting under LIGH.

"I knew that Supervisor Bellone had this initiative and after seeing that [oil] bill, I knew I had to do something," says Sabatino.

The LIGH program will effectively reduce the carbon footprint of each participating household by 20 to 40 percent, taking an average of 1-2 tons of carbon out of the atmosphere a year.

LIPA President and CEO Kevin Law recently released *Efficiency Long Island*, an Island-wide agenda to provide rebates and incentives to make homes more energy efficient.

"[Babylon's LIGH] initiative dovetails perfectly with LIPA's own ambitious Efficiency Long Island program and will make it easier for Babylon residents to avail themselves to the full array of LIPA



THE TOWN OF BABYLON RETROFITS ITS FIRST GREEN HOME ON SIXTH STREET. Photo by Steve Gravano

incentive programs for energy efficiency which not only reduces emissions, but lowers customers' bills," says Law.

And as much as these initiatives will benefit the environment, they will also benefit Babylon's economy, according to Emmaia Gelman, senior policy organizer of the Center for Working Families. "Greening New York's housing stock not only helps fight climate change but good public policy can create thousands of family-supporting jobs," says Gelman.

In addition to the initiation of the LIGH program, the Town of Babylon is collaborating with BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) to create a training program for Energy Auditors. According to Bellone, currently there are very few trained professionals to conduct home energy audits.

HOW THE LIGH PROGRAM WORKS

To participate in the Green Homes Program a resident will schedule a Home Performance Evaluation with a Town of Babylon certified Green Homes Contractor. The contractor will provide a detailed report recommending energy efficiency improvements and forecast energy savings that will result from

those improvements including weather stripping, caulking, air sealing, insulation, upgrading energy efficiency of heating and cooling units and in some cases energy-efficient appliances. For homeowners who are considering installing new windows or siding, the program may pay for the difference between conventional windows and Energy Star windows, or thicker insulation for the siding.

Initially, the town will set aside \$2 million in Babylon's Residential Solid Waste Fund for the program. Once the improvements have been completed the town will direct payment to the contractor. The resident will pay a monthly fee to the town until the benefit assessment has been fully satisfied. According to Bellone's office, in most cases, the monthly payment will be less than the projected energy savings the resident is receiving, providing the resident with a positive cash flow.

Everyone wins: the homeowner, the economy and the environment.

"We're hoping that this program will act as the national model," says Bellone, who stresses that in order to make this entire program effective it must be implemented at little or no cost to the homeowner. ☐

Via Viente
"It's like a Health Food Store in a Bottle"™

- Come Back To Whole "Raw" Living Food, with LIVE Enzymes leaving Alkalinity in Your Body.
- Via Viente has 16 years of Nutritional & Scientific Research and is designed to impact your entire body with Vitamins, Chelated Minerals and Super-Anti-Oxidants.
- This combination of whole food and clean minerals naturally blocks Free Radical Damage and is a powerful Anti-Aging, Anti-Inflammatory product!

Contact Tina Puma • 516.378.3753 • www.unap.getvita.com

SEEDS of CHANGE
CERTIFIED ORGANIC

Summer is almost over, but your garden doesn't have to be.

Visit the new Four Season Growing section of our website, and learn how to extend your season to enjoy garden-fresh food this Fall.

Order a catalog, shop our website, and learn about fall gardening.
www.seedsofchange.com