

Minutes of a Public Hearing held by the Town Board of the Town of Riverhead, at Town Hall, Howell Avenue, Riverhead, New York, on Monday, August 3, 1998 at 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Vincent Villella,	Supervisor
Philip Cardinale,	Councilman
Mark Kwasna,	Councilman
James Lull,	Councilman
Christopher Kent,	Councilman

Also Present:

Barbara Grattan,	Town Clerk
Adam Grossman, Esq.,	Town Attorney

Supervisor Villella called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Supervisor Villella: "Barbara, could you please read-- I'm going to be reading this after Barbara. These are the ground rules."

Barbara Grattan: "I have affidavits of publishing and posting of a Public Hearing to be held at Riverhead Town Hall, Riverhead, New York at 7:00 p.m. on August 3, 1998 to hear all interested persons who wish to be heard regarding the environmental review of the change of zone petition of Traditional Links, LLC respecting property located at Sound Avenue, Baiting Hollow, New York."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you, Barbara. I just want to lay a little groundwork how we're going to be running this Public Hearing tonight. First of all, I want to welcome everybody and there are plenty of you out there. It's great. The purpose of the meeting. A community discussion on proposed Traditional Links project. We are eager to hear as many points as view as possible so that the Town Board can make an informed decision. Therefore, we have set the following ground rules:

We will need order and understanding. Neighbors may disagree but they must respect each other's point of view. Please address comments to the Board, not to any group or individual. Do not interrupt speakers. Keep comments to five minutes or less. And I do have the

clock here. I hate it, but I think we have to do it.

Try not to repeat the comments of another-- of others, excuse me. The Town Board has not and will not prejudge this application and we will not discourage public debate at any time. Please do not engage in any debate or discussion with a speaker. Remember that the Town Board is not here tonight to take sides or express opinions. We're just here to listen to yours. And from there, you can start. Whoever wants to speak, just follow right around."

Unidentified speaker: "Thank you."

Supervisor Vilella: "Oh wait, you have to state your name."

Unidentified speaker: "Hi, Chris, Phil, Vinny, Jim, Adam, Barbara, nice to be here tonight, my first Board meeting."

Supervisor Vilella: "You have to speak to us. Not to the people."

Margaret Valance: "My name is Margaret Valance. Many of you know me because I've asked you to support the idea of forming a bike trail from Wading River to Greenport. I'm here tonight-- this is my first Board meeting I've attended-- because Bill Talmage asked me to be here. I didn't really want to come become engaged in the debate about his family project but it was impossible to decline. I am his neighbor.

I have lived in Baiting Hollow-- Baiting Holler as Ellen Talmage finally calls for 16 years. In this time, I've come to know all the Talmages who predate me by at least 100 years. John uses my house as a runway marker when landing his World War II planes. I have sat with the Talmages in church, dined with them at literary and seen my children called with theirs by name as Santa delivers his Christmas gifts to Baiting Hollow Church in December.

These people are trustworthy, good people. There is not a child in their entire extended family that I would not want my own children to befriend.

From a business standpoint, I feel that the Talamges have proven themselves to be a resourceful group. They abandoned potato farming when it became unprofitable and have built up a highly successful

geranium and perennial business.

In addition, their trolley business has blossomed. I'm sure they will show the same care and pride in running their future businesses including this golf course. Also the money will stay here in Riverhead. They are not big developers like McNamara who are going to make a quick buck and leave. Remember, this is their land and they have paid taxes. And they will still be here when my son and daughter have left to become beach bums in California and make films in Hollywood. Their extended family will still be here enjoying the profits and the beauty of this golf course.

Finally, I would like to express my pride in the Board. I elected each one of you; I think you're great people. Let's act quickly. The bike trail, this golf course, the aquarium, the childrens' museum and if you can get a Six Flags into Grumman, good."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. All right. Just come on up; one at a time. I've got to redo this. When you hear that, I'll give you a little extra time, Charlie, you're cut off already. Okay."

Charles Cetas: "My name is Charles Cetas. I'm Vice-President of the North Fork Environmental Council. I'm also a long time Riverhead resident. The North Fork Environmental Council is opposed to the Traditional Links Golf Resort as it is currently proposed. The proponents of this mega golf project propose to build two 18 hole golf courses, a 500 unit hotel, a golf clubhouse, a golf school, an unknown number of residential units, and beach facilities on 450 acres of land that contains valuable farmland, woodlands, wetlands, dunes, bluffs, and a long stretch of beach on Long Island Sound.

The Traditional Links site is located on Sound Avenue which has been designated by New York State as a historic corridor. It is also located opposite the Cornell University Research Farm and near the Nassau County 4-H Camp. This area of Baiting Hollow is the "heart" of Riverhead's historic and very productive agricultural district. Without Riverhead's nearly 20,000 acres of farmland Suffolk County would not be New York State's most productive agricultural county.

During the past three decades the development rights from over 3,500 acres of Riverhead's farmland has been purchased by Suffolk County taxpayers by way of the County's Farmland Preservation Program. The purpose of this program is to reserve enough land in perpetuity

for agricultural use to maintain a viable farming industry. The first 100 acres to go into this program are part of the Traditional Links site. The proponents of Traditional Links propose to amend the program to allow preserved farmland to be used for golf course development.

The NFEC is vehemently opposed to such an amendment to the Suffolk County Farmland Preservation Program. This proposed amendment is absurd in light of the Town's recent adoption of its own Farmland Preservation Program and approval of \$4 million in bonds for farmland and open space acquisitions. The County has also recently approved for referendum in November the expenditure of \$40 million for farmland and open space purchases. The NFEC urges Riverhead Town to adopt a resolution opposing Traditional Links' proposed amendment to the County's Farmland Preservation Program.

The NFEC believes that the development of the Traditional Links site would cut the "heart" out of Riverhead's rural character and would accelerate the conversion of Riverhead from a rural/agricultural community to a suburban/resort community. Does Riverhead really want to become a Myrtle Beach North? The NFEC believes the remaining unprotected farmland of this site should also be added to the Suffolk County Farmland Preservation Program.

With the plethora of golf course proposals in Riverhead, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Traditional Links should have a thorough discussion of the cumulative impacts of golf course development in Riverhead Town. Most people living in Riverhead are aware of the problems associated with pesticides leaching into groundwater. But, they should also be made aware that, according to a report on pesticide use by Long Island golf courses entitled Toxic Fairways published by the Environmental Protection Bureau of the New York State Attorney General, Long Island golf courses use four to seven times as much pesticides as are applied on food crops (see page 6 of Toxic Fairways). The same report states that homeowners apply 3.6 times as much pesticides as used in agriculture (see page 6 of Toxic Fairways). The information contained in the Toxic Fairways report should be included and discussed in the DEIS. (A copy of Toxic Fairways is attached.)

The natural areas of the Traditional Links site are home to a wide variety of wildlife. The final scoping document contains conflicting statements on this subject. On page 2 it states, "Neither

oral nor written commentary received through the scoping process have indicated that endangered or threatened fauna exist on the project site." On page 5 it states, "Comments on the draft scope of issues suggest that two (2) federally protected animals exist at the project site." This apparent discrepancy should be corrected or explained.

The dunes and bluffs of the Traditional Links site form a unique geologic feature known as Grandifolia Sandhills which contain a dwarf maritime beech forest recognized as a globally rare ecosystem by the New York State Natural Heritage Program."

Supervisor Villella: "Go ahead, finish up."

Charles Cetas: "I'm almost done."

Supervisor Villella: "I don't even want to use this anymore."

Charles Cetas: "The final scoping document states on page 4 that the 1970 paper by Good and Good, "Vegetation of the sea cliffs...", is the "seminal study of the coastal dunes of Long Island..." and that "the lead agency will neither require the collection of new data or the generation of new science on the coastal dune resource." The Good and Good paper is on vegetation not geology. Obviously, scientific data on the geologic significance of the Grandifolia Sandhills should be included in the DEIS.

For those who have had the privilege of visiting this site, the beauty of the Sandhills is breath-taking. I suppose for the Traditional Links land owners and investors these dunes are gold. It will no doubt take a great deal of money to save the Sandhills from this development proposal. But, whatever it may cost to save the Sandhills and the rest of this 450 acre site, the NFEC believes preserving such an irreplaceable natural wonder and Riverhead's rural character for future generations to enjoy are worth the price."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you, Charles. Excuse me. There will be-- we have to try and keep-- no clapping after the speakers. I know you're out there, you really want to do it and everything but we have to just hold it to it. Yes. State your name, please."

Linda Holmes: "My name is Linda Holmes. I was Shelter Island's appointed representative appointed by the Riverhead Town Board to the

Calverton Commission, Bobby Goodale headed it, and we spent a year and a half trying to help you decide the reuse of the Grumman property, and I know tragically TWA 800 pushed that way into the future. But I was proud to serve with so many good Riverhead residents on that Commission and most everyone never missed a beat. I have come here tonight to make you aware of a landmark case law decision which was rendered some years ago in my home town up in Scarsdale and I think it has a direct bearing on the Talmage family's plan and I wanted to share it with you.

The decision is still cited in Anderson's Book on New York State's Zoning Laws which is the bible and I know Mr. Klein knows it very well and Anderson's National Zoning Law, too, Robert Anderson book which is updated by New York State Lawyer's Association very frequently. The decision involved a developer whose property had been put aside reserved and for which he got a tax abatement as the Talmage family has enjoyed a tax relief on a significant portion of this property for a number of years, I understand over 100 acres are so marked on the Riverhead Town tax map as part of the Suffolk County Farmland Preserve.

The Court's ruling was that-- and it is still cited as landmark case law in decisions of this type, the ruling was that property which has been put aside on a filed map cannot be returned to its full development tax value because its development value-- it has lost its development value, the value has been absorbed by the surrounding properties as the people of Riverhead have absorbed the taxes that have been an abatement for the Farmland Preservation Program which is within this Town, and the ruling was that that type of land cannot be returned to the tax roll at its full rate and it has been absorbed as I said, and that the surrounding property owners having done-- and I know on Shelter Island when the (inaudible) estate, the Gerard Estate, the 2,000 acres became the Nature's Conservancy Mashomack Preserve, my personal property taxes went up \$100 that first year and have gone up every year since.

So that what that case law says was that the Talmage family is not entitled to change their mind unless you allow it and perhaps you have some way of returning tax money to people who have been absorbing -- the tax relief that they've been enjoying. I did want to share that with you. And in case you're wondering also why someone from Shelter Island is interested in what goes on on the Sound Avenue corridor, we

are all-- my family-- my parents before me, my children, and I travel that Sound Avenue corridor all the time and my father died a very anguished and painful death from (inaudible) the lung fungus that people can get from inhaling pesticides, and that dose of pesticide was from a careless Riverhead farmer who forgot to turn off the wand on his tractor full of pesticide when he was swinging around Sound Avenue one day some years ago and my parents were doused with that pesticide and it was pretty heartbreaking to see what happened. So we -- many of us who don't live within the Town of Riverhead have a very vested interest in who's sprinkling what, who's spraying what, and who's putting what into the groundwater. Thank you very much."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. No clapping, please."

John Black: "My name is John Black and I've been studying dunes on Long Island and elsewhere for approximately 25 - 30 years and I would like to supplement material that the North Fork Environmental Council just went over previously. And I'll read my statement and turn in a written copy of it for your information."

The Grandifolia Sandhills consist of an assemblage of stabilized parabolic, linear and dome shaped dunes located on a coastal bluff fronting on the Long Island Sound. The origin of the sediment composing these dunes is derived from these bluffs.

There is evidence of a new dune forming to the northwest of this area since the recently accumulated sediment appears to be assuming a dome shape. As additional sediment accumulates, it is possible that this landform will convert to a parabolic dune and begin migrating to the southeast under the influence of the prevailing winds off of the Sound.

Now to just digress a minute, that is very unusual and in Long Island it is the only case of a migrating dune located on a coastal bluff that I know of. As a matter of fact, I'll say it is the only example of such a system in New York State along a coastal area.

Migrating dunes are unusual anywhere. A migrating dune system on top of a coastal bluff is rare. Since dune systems such as the Grandifolia Sandhills occur nowhere else in New York State such a unique area must be preserved. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Thank you for not clapping."

Linda Holmes: "Excuse me, I forgot to cite by name that decision in case the Town Attorney wants to refer to it."

Supervisor Villella: "Mention your name again, please."

Linda Holmes: "Linda Holmes from Shelter Island. I'm sorry. That was Berkley Estates versus the Village of Scarsdale and it was a 1936 decision which as I say it's still cited as a landmark case law in Anderson's New York Zoning Law & Practice. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Eric Lamont: "My name is Eric Lamont and I represent the Long Island Botanical Society. I am also-- or I have been a resident of Riverhead for the past 18 years and I also voted for you fellows up there. My children were born and raised in Riverhead and we have a lot at stake here and just want to see Riverhead go in the right direction."

I basically have two things I'd like to share, and possibly get a future response back from the Board. The first concern deals with the final scoping document. As I have stated previously, and has already been stated by Charles Cetas, NFEC, the final draft was deficient in several areas. Some of these deficiencies were major and in order for the environmental impact statement to take a hard look that is required, and I think it's going to be to everyone's benefit that this study is sufficient. I believe that an amendment to the final scoping document must be added. And that's my first request, that an amendment to the final scoping document be prepared and incorporated into the environmental impact statement. And this amendment were to address some of the serious deficiencies that have already been brought to light by myself and by others. And I'm sure there will be other points brought out this evening.

The second point that I'd like to make is that a change of zone petition is not automatically granted and when all the studies are complete and when the impact of this project not only upon the environment but upon the quality of life of the people of Riverhead and beyond, when those impacts, hopefully they will be seriously addressed and properly studied, it will be clear to the Town Board and

to everyone that a change in zone for this property is not in the best interests of the people of Riverhead. And that's your job; not just to see what's the best interest for small individual people or property owners, but really for the entire town of Riverhead. And I'd just like to remind you that this change of zone is not automatic. Thank you. And maybe sometime you can let us know if this amendment, if you would consider adding an amendment to the final scoping document."

Supervisor Villella: "Put-- he wanted to put into the EIS. Thanks."

Alex Jackson: "Good afternoon. I'm Alex Jackson (inaudible). I'm not here for the Links, golf course, or anything else. I come here because of things (inaudible) and so I come to tell you a little bit about that because I was born here, I was born right there where I am today-- (inaudible) Talmage farm. And the articles I read to me weren't satisfactory, weren't up to what it should of been to my knowledge.

So I just wanted to read a few things to you that disturbed me and my family. I was raised here, my children, my father and mother came here from Virginia years ago, 1922, and worked for the Talmage family. I've been there all my life. Raised the children there. Couldn't ask for a better family to be a part of. So I come to share with you.

I'm Alex Jackson, I have lived in Riverhead all my life. Been an employee of the Talmage family since 1937. I have known five or six generations of the Talmage family; went to school with John Talmage and (inaudible) Talmage, Jr. and the girls. Became good friends, almost like family. Henry Talmage, their grandfather and (inaudible) Talmage, Sr. were two great men whom I worked for then John Talmage and Nat Talmage, Jr. (phonetic). John became my employer for a good many years. They were very honest people, knowledgeable in all walks of life. No half-way doings, considerate, understanding, (inaudible) good farmers. My father was hired by Henry Talmage back in 1922, worked there for 60 years. Departed this life 1975. There was 12 of us children, with which every one of us worked there for a while. Four brothers, eight sisters, including Lawyer Jackson who is now employed by Riverhead Town.

It disturbs me when I read all (inaudible) in the paper being said about the Talmage family. People I've never heard of coming from some-- I don't know. Some I know. They cannot be from Riverhead. They must be new in Riverhead. Riverhead is a good town and I must say the Talmage family have played a big part in it. They don't realize all the things the Talmage family has done for the community over the years. Like helping find Central Suffolk Hospital, leaders in Boy Scouts, help found the Farm Bureau in New York State, the 4-H in Suffolk County, and help found the Cornell University, the Baiting Hollow Library, very supporting members of the Baiting Hollow Church (inaudible). The Talmage family I know have probably served on hundreds of volunteer boards, served, conservation and civic organizations, all to make life fair in our community.

Now we are getting the farm ready to host a concert for the East End Arts Council. I am sure there are many other things, but these are a few things I know about.

Some disagree with this project for environmental reasons; they have a right to do that. That's what makes this country so great. But I think some of the things they have said about the family are just mean. The Talmage family would never respond to these people. Knowing the Talmage family as I do, they are considerate, understanding family (inaudible)-- just not them. Believe me, I know. So they just sit there and take that stuff. There's-- about more I could say -- a lot more, tell you about the Talmage family any time. It doesn't (inaudible).

I thought it was time for somebody to speak up in regards to the Talmage family. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. I know we want to clap, we want to boo, and everything, but we want to keep this the right way, please. Next speaker. Next speaker, please."

Lynn Jacobs: "Hello. My name is Lynn Jacobs. I'm representing the Suffolk Environment Committee of the Diocese of Rockville Centre and I'm also a long time resident of the Town of Riverhead.

The Environment Committee respectfully asks the Town of Riverhead to uphold farmland preservation efforts by protecting the 101 acres of farmland that was previously preserved under the Suffolk

County Farmland Preservation Program. The Committee further asks the Town to make every effort to protect the globally rare forest known as the Grandifolia Sandhills.

Farmland preservation should be a top priority for the Town. But preservation is more than protecting additional parcels of land; it is also ensuring that preserved land remains preserved in perpetuity. If we can change our minds 20 years after a site is protected, then no land is protected and farmland preservation is meaningless.

As for the Grandifolia Sandhills, it seems to us that in the spirit of concern for the earth, this unique natural area also should be protected from development. At least five different plant communities occur at the Sandhills, four of which are rare in New York State. One of the communities contains century old dwarf beech trees, and is considered to be globally rare. Nearby, another type of beech forest occurs throughout the protected depressions of dune-land. Nowhere else in New York State does such a mature climax forest occur on sand dunes.

The diversity and beauty of the Grandifolia Sandhills reflects the infinite beauty of the Creator, and ought to inspire the respect and submission of our intellect and will. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Carl Bonheim: "Good evening. My name is Carl Bonheim. I'm a resident of Riverhead for 12 years-- "

Supervisor Villella: "Yes, the other mike. You can raise it up a little bit."

Barbara Grattan: "Carl, I need your last name."

Carl Bonheim: "Carl B-O-N-H-E-I-M. I'm a resident of Baiting Hollow, a neighbor to the Talmages. I believe that the gentlemen are facing issues that bring us to a crossroads in Riverhead. I migrated from western Long Island, Nassau County, to the Hauppauge area, and came out here 12 years ago, looking for the preservation of farmland, the preservation of rural suburban type life. I think the Talmage family which I've come to know as neighbors and friends, are really at

the forefront of preserving farmland. Their friends, people who are here looking for the preservation of farmland. I believe their plans are very clearly to preserve most of their land to farm and to their farming business. But here in Riverhead we have the issues of what's going to happen with Grumman, what's going to happen with the aquarium and downtown which I know is very important issues. And also how to extend our tax base without flooding our schools.

In Baiting Hollow, I've seen developments on Edwards Avenue. There's-- (inaudible) Committee on Riley Avenue School and we have the issue of the school has been flooded with new students. I think that as an overall plan, we've got to do things to expand the suburban base but also bring other businesses and other forms of business that will attract tourism, the wineries, and this golf course, I think, is a fine way to bring in more upscale feel and look to the Baiting Hollow community. So I'm very, very much in support of it, not because the Talmages are my friends, but because I think what they're doing is in my best interests. So I'm here in support of it."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Carol Talmage: "My name is Carol Talmage. I live in Baiting Hollow on the Talmage Farm. I grew up in Riverhead on Ostrander Avenue as Carol Burns. I just wanted to point out that our family has been paying taxes on this land as developable property for 116 years. We have had some agricultural assessments in more recent years. But even these and the penalty you pay when you go out are based on the land being developable."

Now, I have a question. I saw in the newspaper that the Town had joined in an effort with environmental groups, the county and the state, to buy our land. Is that true?"

Supervisor Villella: "I can answer that because I've-- no, it's not true. The county."

Carol Talmage: "Okay. I have concerns that the environmental groups will try to make our land worthless by convincing the governmental agencies to suddenly (inaudible) development by creating endless ways in the permitting process. In my opinion, that would be morally wrong. Stealing is stealing even when it's done in the name

the environment. And I thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Elizabeth Backel: "Good evening, my name is Elizabeth Backel. I'm a resident of Baiting Hollow and Vice-President of (inaudible). I serve on the Board of the (inaudible) Property Owners Association. And I'd like to say that when my husband and I decided to settle here 14 years ago-- "

Adam Grossman: "Ma'am, I'm sorry. Can you just give your last name?"

Elizabeth Backel: "Backel. B-A-C-K-E-L."

Adam Grossman: "Okay. I'm sorry to interrupt you."

Elizabeth Backel: "Certainly. We decided to settle here 14 years ago and raise our family, we decided to do that because of the open space and agricultural and rural community that it afforded us to raise our family. And now we find ourselves bordered to our west with a busy condominium complex with a catering facility and golf course, and all the noise and pollution that goes along with those things. Now, it's proposed that a huge hotel resort complex will be developed on our east. I find and I think that we are being-- our little community between the two is being sandwiched out (inaudible) by developers.

I don't understand why my children's rural quality of life have to exist in their backyard when they have all the property around here (inaudible). I believe this type of development is totally inappropriate, not only in the magnitude but also in the disruption of the very quality of life that brought us here in the first place.

Another concern of mine is the volume of traffic that already exists on the Sound Avenue area. A hotel with 500 units, golf courses, catering facility that would combine with staff, maintenance persons and utility vehicles along with the additional traffic for two public golf-- 18 hole golf courses would surely put a burden on that area and the surrounding areas of Baiting Hollow Hamlet.

Additionally, we've been told that if this zoning application is not granted, that Mrs. Talmage is going to build residential homes and burden our school system with unwanted children. And I don't understand-- I mean-- going to ruin our tax base and it's going to increase the capacity of our school to a limit that we can't absorb. And I'd like to know when our children and their families are not welcome in this town.

When we built here and we decided to live here and grow here and send our kids here, no one ever told us that my children and other people's children would not be provided for. So I just want to say that even though my children may not be the 13th or 14th generation of children to be raised here, hopefully, they won't be the last."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Steve Thorenz: "Good evening. My name is Steve Thorenz. I'm a resident and neighbor of the Talmage property. Five years ago, my wife-- "

Barbara Grattan: "Steve, excuse me, could you spell your last name, please?"

Steve Thorenz: "T-H-O-R-E-N-Z."

Barbara Grattan: "Thank you."

Steve Thorenz: "Anyway, my wife, Caroline, she writes for a newspaper, and lucky enough she is an even handed individual with her information and, of course, this is the topic of discussion ongoing in the household. We're able to take a lot of information, some of it that we agree upon, some of it that we don't agree upon together. The one thing I do know, driving over here I thought to myself, you know, I live on property that was probably argued against just like we're arguing right now or people are having discussions over. Our Country Farms development does sit on what used to be farm property. It sits right next door to the Talmage property. The one thing that my wife, Caroline, and I do agree upon is that something is going to happen. Nothing can just not happen. So when we're looking at what could happen, whether it be condominiums on one pile, a development another pile, or the golf course, I have to say that given a good

group of individuals in the planning and the responsibility of Mr. Talmage being a responsible resident of the community, I feel that a golf course would probably be the most beneficial. As long as the buffer zones are planned just so with other people in mind and concerns.

I am concerned about traffic, the schools which, by the way, they're planning a big construction bond this fall. And I can only think that should condominiums or another development be built, we're going to have constant waste on a daily basis (inaudible) into the environment.

So on behalf of my wife, Caroline, and I, I do support the golf course should that be planned. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Jim Kelly: "Jim Kelly, a Riverhead resident. I first want to start off with what you said in the beginning, how this should be a friendly debate. It seems that most of the environmental agencies have taken this personal. I've seen two golf courses go up in Riverhead and not one environmental agency could care less. I don't know why this has become personal, Mr. Talmage and his family. As many people have said here, what they've done in the past has been responsible. I bought a home two years ago in Riverhead. If the taxes don't go down, I'm moving. I work for Eastern Suffolk Boces in Riverhead and I see the schools now. They're packed. They don't have any more room. So we're going to have to build a new school sooner or later. I'd rather see a golf course than 400 houses or 600 condominiums.

And as for the environmental impact, I've never heard of these dunes until we said golf course. Nobody knew these dunes. Nobody cared about these dunes. I live on (inaudible) Pond. I'm afraid my land next is going to become environmentally sensitive. I won't be able to sell that in 10 years. It's getting a little ridiculous. It's their land. If they want to build and develop on their land, when did that become a crime? We really need to think long and hard about this. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Terry Hauger: "My name is Terry Hauger and I am a President of the (inaudible) Baiting Hollow Property Owners Association. We border the Talmage proposal and we border Malibu East (phonetic) which is probably going to be part of this complex. And I would (inaudible) that for the years that I've lived here, the Talmages have been a fine family. Now we are here to discuss not whether or not they are responsible people-- I'm sure they are-- but there is something very special about that acreage. It's not just another golf course. There is a building in our nation's Capitol and it houses treasures. And in it is a jacket and this jacket was worn by Harrison Ford in the Indiana Jones movie. And what we do is we have carefully preserved this jacket as a national treasure.

Now, this is the jacket. Here in Riverhead we have a rare natural phenomena designed by nature with only several patents worldwide. And instead of discussion the preservation of this rare phenomena we are here begging for its life. And in doing so, we're being threatened with school overloading. Now, I think we should try to focus on the reality not the threat because children and schools never devalue property. Because all one has to do is travel towards Nassau or western Suffolk to find that the truly school districts that educate our children add value to the property. So I'd like to, you know, not discuss that.

Now, in a perfect world Riverhead and the developers would work together to ensure the preservation of this rare phenomena. If we were given in this town the Hope diamond, I doubt very seriously that we'd cut it up into two carat stones, and sell it. Okay. So, I think that when we think about the Grandifolia Sandhills, we should also think about not carving it up in development.

Now, (inaudible)-- "

Supervisor Vilella: "That's okay. You've got one more minute. Just relax."

Terry Hauger: "Okay. All I'm going to say, okay, I just request now, this is not a perfect world, so I'm going to request the Board to address certain issues and those issues are that we're (inaudible) in final draft-- scope-- whatever that document is-- and noise, because we can dance to the music at, you know, at Giorgio. Traffic. I notice that there is nothing regarding Route 58 or the exit off the

expressway. I'm going as fast as I can."

Supervisor Villedella: "No. That's all right. This is something that will be in the EIS report that you're talking about."

Terry Hauger: "But I read-- and it didn't go into this so I'm just asking that we do go into this a little, you know-- let's compare this development with the development of equal size and magnitude-- while we decide to ask people to respond to environmental issues. And I believe I'm to the end of my time. Thank you very much."

Barbara Grattan: "Terry, may I have your last name again."

Terry Hauger: "Sure. Hauger, H-A-U-G-E-R."

Barbara Grattan: "Thank you."

Supervisor Villedella: "Thank you, Terry. Next speaker, please."

Paul Adams: "My name is Paul Adams and I have lived in Baiting Hollow six years. I'm a biologist at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and I'm just on the eastern fringe of the Grandifolia Sandhills and I know the area quite well and I'd like to talk very briefly about some of the wildlife there and specifically I'm going to talk about three animals that-- three beautiful and unusual animals that live and breed in those Sandhills and there's a reptile and there's mammal and there's a bird. The reptile is the green snake. This is a spectacular bright green, emerald green snake that looks like something you would find in a tropical rain forest. But it's right here in the forest of Riverhead. The mammal is the ermine. The ermine is a very shy creature. It looks like a dressed up ferret. It has a wonderful chocolate brown coat and a white throat and breast. And the bird is the hummingbird which is America's smallest bird and to my mind is America's most remarkable and beautiful bird. Hummingbirds only survive in a very few places on Long Island and one of them is right there in the Grandifolia Sandhills. They nest in the little valleys that criss-cross that property.

So I can't unfortunately show you these animals tonight and I can't come up with a green snake or an ermine because they're very rare, but I can show you the hummingbirds. As it happens, August the

15th is celebrated throughout North and South America as International Hummingbird Day and I'm going to open up my backyard for birders and people who are interested in the wildlife of Riverhead to come and see the hummingbird on August the 15th. And if I allow a little advertising I have some flyers which I will put out. If you see these amazing little birds dashing around like jeweled helicopters, the fighting and playing and dashing through the trees and close up you can see them, I don't think anybody who sees that would want any change to take place in the Grandifolia Sandhills and there's no doubt that if the development that has been proposed and in particular the golf course which intrudes right into the Grandifolia Sandhills takes place, all those three animals and that's the tip of the iceberg, those are the ones I see in my backyard. There are many others that breed in this area because it's one of the most pristine areas left on Long Island. If a golf course goes in there the animals go away. It is always the case in life that you realize that when something is important and beautiful is just the very moment when it's about to disappear. And we are given this chance, I think, to save this remarkable sight and to obviously recompense the Talmages who have looked after this area in a wonderful way for a long period of time, to fully recompense them financially so that there would be none of the losses to which some of the speakers have alluded and we-- it's a win-win situation. The money is available in various forms to protect this wonderful area. It will be one of the jewels of Riverhead and it's something that we absolutely must do."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Henry Silverman: "Hello. Henry Silverman, Sound Avenue, Riverhead. I live across from the now being built National Golf Course and I find it a positive thing and I also find yearly I'll travel down to Hilton Head, North Carolina and if you've ever been there? Hilton Head? Gorgeous. And if Riverhead from the Talmage project turns into more of a Hilton Head, it's a positive thing. And you need to experience the Hilton Head for how nice it's laid out and the downtown."

Supervisor Vilella: "Quiet, please. Let him speak."

Henry Silverman: "And the environment, it's well preserved and the golf course is much better than housing or whatever. Being a

school teacher, as the other gentleman said-- schools are getting crowded and the tax base isn't there to support it. So I find it a positive thing. Thank you."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you."

Henry Talmage: "My name is Henry Talmage. I'm one of the principals of the project as well as the manager of our farm business, Talmage Farm. I'd like to just take a second to clear up some possible confusion that's been out there about our business and our family.

Someone suggested that we're simply selling out and closing up shop and I can tell you this is not true at all. Our business is doing well and we'll continue to grow our farm business. We're continuously getting into new markets and introducing new products. But like all businesses, agriculture requires constant change in order to survive and to thrive. My family has been farming on Long Island since 1942. We've changed many times over the years since then. But we stopped growing potatoes in the '80's and we expanded our greenhouse and our nursery business. You know, people have said isn't it terrible you can't make money growing potatoes? And some people can; we felt we couldn't. And, you know, we did it for over 100 years. So that's a pretty good run. You know. A hundred years. Business cycles don't last that long today and we've got to be on top of change constantly just like every other business in the state.

We've sold most of our potato equipment and expanded the greenhouse and then we leased the remaining farm acreage to a sod grower to cover the taxes in essence, but our farm operation although it was producing many times the dollars the potato operation was doing, it was doing it on 30 acres of land. The remaining 400 acres was clearly an underutilized asset and we just felt we could not continue economically-- the economic feasibility of having an asset that was not income producing.

So what we tried to do, we began the planning process, you know, the easy way-- and this was 1986 we started this-- the east way was to simply sell the land to a developer which we've always had the right to do. You know, we could have had several hundred homesites ten years ago but, you know, we would have been paid for it, we would have been done, and we would all have gone on with our lives. But

instead we're looking for ways to utilize this really, truly remarkable land in a way that's creative and less intense in terms of housing.

After a lot of investigation and work studies, we determined a very high quality golf project would be a much better use for the land. It would do a few things. One, it would enable our family to retain some ownership in the project which was important to us. It would utilize the land in a way to complement its natural beauty. It would create a place that would draw tourists to the town and, finally, it would be a positive tax base.

You know, two years ago the property to our east was referred to as Malibu East which has rights to build 160 units on it. It became available for sale-- it was available for sale, but we felt it was going to be sold quickly. Our family stepped in, we bought it to include in our golf project but partially to stop the 160 units. Same thing, we didn't feel it was the right use for that land. Today that's incorporated into our project and I think it improves both.

We looked real hard for people who could join us in terms of partners in this deal and we wanted people who wanted the same goals and the same kind of objectives that we were looking for. We've very lucky to have Kenny (inaudible) who's a top amateur golfer but he also knows the golf industry which none of us knew being farmers.

And he was able to get Ben Krenshaw (phonetic) to come and design the course. And that's an important thing. I mean that helps towards the quality of this whole thing.

The one thing I would say and, of course, the big question, a lot of questions come up were based on the environmental impact statement and science and, of course, tonight, that is in the process of being written right now. And what I would say is that I'm going to ask the people in Town, and the leadership for the Town to wait to see what the science says. Please don't judge this until you can look at it from a scientific, not emotional, point of view. And try to stay objective up until that point. Thank you very much."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you, Henry. Next speaker, please."

Van Howell: "My name is Van Howell. I came up here from esthampton."

Supervisor Villella: "Excuse me. What's all the noise out there?"

Barbara Grattan: "State your name again, please."

Van Howell: "Van Howell from Westhampton Beach. I just-- the first thing, I can't resist a brief comment. Several speakers have spoken of you know folks that have been farming here since 1642 and all this as having some kind of like special moral authority, ownership rights. I'd just like to ask you all where do you think we got the land? How we got it? And I say we being in the same general category, except that I'm farming the last one-twentieth of an acre my family farmed at this point. But my family had the idea it would be great to get involved in hotel schemes and stuff like that and did one hundred and some years ago, and basically as far as I can tell the hotel scheme they got involved in didn't do the economy of Westhampton Beach in terms of the local people any good at all, and they're gone now.

There's also no guarantee that a golf course is going to stay a golf course once something else becomes more profitable as you can tell by looking at the history of western Long Island. And I think a family that's lucky enough and I say lucky enough because that's what it is, is luck-- to control this much land and still control it and this unbelievably unique and gorgeous ecologically irreplaceable property, this is like, you know, this is world class stuff in its current state and once you start trying to do yet another upscale golf resort when we're probably on the verge of the stockmarket going down, you are going to have one more upscale golf resort that's, you know, probably in receivership, you know. And, you know, I mean there's only so many billionaires that this economy can create at a time when Asia's already on the way down, you know, that's going to spread. I mean think realistically. I mean you have the kind of ecosystem that takes, you know, if you add up the history of all the species there that are going to disappear, tens of thousands of years to create, hundreds of thousands of years to come into being, you know, and we're talking about unraveling it. Because one thing people remember, even if you have a little island that's left, they did this in Brazil in an experiment, like there's a periphery around that-- "

Supervisor Villella: "Face us; don't go to the audience. Thank

you."

Van Howell: "I'm sorry."

Supervisor Villella: "That's all right."

Van Howell: "I'll face you and tell you then."

Supervisor Villella: "Right. That's what it's all about. I've got to learn all this here."

Van Howell: "Okay. Well, it's like preserving a shoe without a foot."

Supervisor Villella: "I like that. That was good. Okay."

Van Howell: "The light goes out."

Supervisor Villella: "The bell went off."

Van Howell: "And, you know, if the land is going to be alive, it's got to have a surrounding area where all those little critters can have some habitat, you know, not just being a little caged in area because even if it's kept natural, you know, a bunch of acres, the most beautiful acres kept natural and the rest of it turned into a poison golf course-- because it probably will be poison-- you know, is not going to be habitat pretty soon. This has been done. I mean you can see like movies of this happening in the Amazon where they tried to preserve 10 acres to see what happens; 100 acres, 1,000 acres to see what happens of rain forest and the rest becomes cattle ranch. You know, you lose it; it goes. It just dies. The trees start to die, the micro-climate starts to change because of the open space, the sun light pattern. You can see this happen.

I mean I remember going out west and seeing on the edge of some of the northwestern forests where there have been clear cuts, the fog that the trees depend on coming up from the Pacific would come at an abrupt halt once you got to the clear cut area. Those trees are not going to re-grow in those clear cuts, you know. They'll be-- they'll tell you they will, but they won't because the micro-climate is done. Same thing. You have these huge beautiful oaks growing in the valleys up there in those sandhills, you know, as well as the

miniature things on the top of the hills, there's like all kinds of little micro-climates created by all those little valleys and things. Once you start to like cut away the edge and start to chew it up and you start to create different wind currents, you know, pretty soon-- I mean this isn't the kind of thing that anybody is going to be able to document because there would be too much work. You go back there in 50 years, there's going to be a shell of what it is now and nobody is even going to know. They're going to wonder what all the fuss was about because they won't see it, you know. So this is-- we're talking about-- when we talk about let's look at the science of a golf course -- I'll close, this is the last thing I'm going to say. I-- there was a guy-- a Long Island film maker who spent some time in Thailand in the far East where Jack Nicklaus and some Japanese financiers put together some magnificent golf courses in southeast Asia. There are actual videotapes of this Jack Nicklaus design golf course doing what it was designed to do which was dumping pesticides into the water supply of the second largest-- the reservoir of the second largest city serving Thailand, and pouring water out for irrigation purposes. Poisoning the whole city. Do you think that showed up in their environmental impact statement? I doubt it.

You know, this is the kind of thing that the most prestigious golf planners get involved with and this is internationally documented. Thank you very much."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

Rolph Kestling: "Rolph Kestling, Wading River. The first comment I wanted to make to the biologist about that ferret. If you go down to the Wildwood State Park down to where it goes down to the beach, there's a mother and six babies hanging around there. Maybe you could check them up; they're moving west.

I've heard a lot of comments about a golf course contaminating the land. I don't think golf courses were responsible for (inaudible). I think they did more damage. Second of all, I didn't want to make this all one-sided. That's the only reason I came up. As far as a golf course goes, I have no qualms against it. Let them put up a golf course. But I am against the farmer taking back the development rights for those 200 and I think that's the crux of the whole thing. The farmer taking back the development rights. That's a no-no. A deal is a deal. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thanks, Rolph. You can be the next one. I have to make a phone call real quick. I just got beeped; I'll be right back. You can continue. My Deputy Supervisor is here. So he'll take-- "

James Golden: "My name is James Golden. I'm a life-long resident of Riverhead. I went to school with some of the Talmages. It's been my privilege to-- how's that? Did you hear what I said before?"

Councilman Kent: "No. Start again."

James Golden: "No? I said I'm a life-long resident of Riverhead and a friend of the Talmage family. And it's been my privilege to have been able to camp and hike those trails which we're talking about tonight. And they are beautiful, absolutely beautiful. And I'm sure Henry and his brother, Bill, and the rest of his family have all hiked and camped up there. It's a gut wrenching thing for them to put anything there besides what there's now. It's so beautiful; I wish you people could see it.

But the Talmage family like a lot of other people have said, have been one of the most outstanding and respected citizens in Riverhead. And they have done more for Riverhead than most any other family. They've been-- they started the hospital. Mr. Talmage did, and they've been on-- served as president, they're in the 4-H and I can go on and on like this. Like the man said ahead of me earlier.

But I see where they've been taxpayers all these years, and they paid a good amount of tax on that property. They deserve to have something to say about what they can do with their own property. And that's about what I have to say. Thank you."

Frank Manuse: "Hi. My name is Frank Manuse. I'm a (inaudible) at Rutgers University. I know a little about the area and what I'd like to say that there are other options besides a golf course or a (inaudible). But something in Greenwich, Ct. (inaudible). I was up in Greenwich, Ct. a few weeks ago. They have a wildlife sanctuary run by the Audubon Society and they have scientists up there, biologists (inaudible) the patterns of the birds (inaudible). I just don't know about the area so far, you could find out more about

it (inaudible) and employ people to work there and work the place. (inaudible) That's just one option though; there are other I'm sure (inaudible). Thank you."

Kathy Debor: "Hi. This is my first time speaking, too, so I'm going to be a little nervous. I voted for everyone of you up there, too. I just wanted to make that clear. I remember that-- "

Councilman Kent: "Can you state your name? I'm sorry, we didn't get it."

Kathy Debor: "Sure. It's Kathy Deboer. D-E-B-O-E-R. And I just remember that the people-- you know, we're going to represent the people, so I just want everybody to remember that when you make these decisions.

I'm a neighbor of the Talmages; I'm the mother of two children; I'm a homeowner and on the Board of Directors of the (inaudible) Baiting Hollow Property Owners Association.

This change of zone issue has absolutely nothing to do with the Talmage family or their personal character. It all has to do with money. That's all it comes down to. The Talmage family are not the only people involved in this project. There are many investors, silent partners, attorneys, Ben Krenshaw (phonetic), an amateur golfer from Nassau who is not familiar with the beauty and the history behind this Town. Please let's not fool each other. Golf brings money. I moved out here gradually 17 years ago from Nassau County to live in a more quiet, rural lifestyle as I'm sure many of my neighbors did. Now I can hardly get out on Sound Avenue at pumpkin picking time. How will I be able to go anywhere if the golf course decides to have tournament play? No one has mentioned the word tournament and its impact on our seasonal community. I request this issue be addressed and an answer be given to the community. Thank you very much."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please."

John Bernly: "My name is John Bernly. I'm Vice-President of Save the Sandhills. I would like to comment on some points that should be addressed in the DEIS. Number one. The scoping findings of Rick Hanley are inadequate. There are more than sufficient

statements in the record submitted by Theresa Hauger, Richard Amper and others that Rick Hanley arbitrarily and capriciously excluded from being scoped within the DEIS.

The Hanley scoping findings approved by the Town Board fail to address the cumulative and generic impacts of this project when the natural plant and animal populations of adjacent sections of the Grandifolia Sandhills and other generic parts of the generic Long Island sandhills.

Number two. Just because the DEC has no map wetlands on or near the site, does not mean that the wetlands are not present. The (inaudible) is present throughout the area and (inaudible) requires water or wetlands to breed in. So there's obviously some water in or adjacent to the property that the (inaudible) are using otherwise they would not exist there. These are just two examples of deficiency and there are many others in the document.

I request that the Town Board revoke or at least amend the scoping findings as being deficient and remove the bias (inaudible) Richard Hanley from the entire scoping process. Also, I request that the Town Board properly notify all potentially involved agencies, including the DEC and the Suffolk County Legislature, as identified in the statements submitted after the scoping meeting by Theresa Hauger and Richard Amper. Thank you."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you. Next speaker. Joe."

Joe Gergela: "Good evening. For the record, my name is Joe Gergela. I'm Executive Director of Long Island Farm Bureau. I represent over 5,300 families, farmers, commercial fisherman, baymen, people involved in agra-business and many people who are just interested in the rural quality of life. I hope that I can keep my composure. It's very hard for me to (inaudible) this issue because I have very strong feelings as it relates to farmers, their land, their equity in their land, and other matters.

I want to start by first telling the Board and the audience that Long Island Farm Bureau, we represent the farmers and the agricultural industry on Long Island. That's what we do. When we first learned about the Talmage possibility of doing a development, we really didn't know all the facts. We invited John Klein (phonetic)

and the Talmage family to meet with our Board of Directors. We had seven past Presidents of the Farm Bureau present at that meeting. Most of them had been involved with the origination of the first farmland preservation program in the United States, known as the purchase of development rights. Those people took this very seriously about the concern, about the notion of taking land with development rights sold and then putting back rights and changing of use essentially.

Our Board passed a resolution that that was not acceptable; that we did not want to hurt the integrity of the farm program, that the public has confidence in this program and other open space programs, and would not be the right thing to do. In fact, I had to go before the County Legislature and go on record and state that.

I'm not speaking for the Talmages. But I do know that in conversations that I've had with them, that they backed off from the notion of taking any of that preserved farmland and pressing the issue. So the land north of Sound Avenue which is currently zoned residential is where they're going through due process to develop their property.

Part two. One inalienable right that we have as citizens in this country is the right of due process and our constitutional rights. One of those is to own property. One of the framers of the constitution, James Madison said, property without property rights has no value. So that's what this country was built on. People that took the risk of owning property to be able to use it. There is no such thing as absolute property rights. I'm not suggesting that a factory or some other use of that property be allowed to go there. That's not reasonable. But the Talmages are entitled to due process to do what they think is right for their family.

Many of the people here have no vested interest in land except that they want to see open space. We are all environmentalists. Dick Cooper, John Black, a lot of the people here we worked together on the line barrens because it was the right thing to do to protect the environment for the people of Long Island. And we still all believe that the environment should be protected. But those issues have got to be balanced against property rights and people's ability to do what they want with that land. The Talmage family were there a long time ago. They tilled that land. They cleared that land. How many

people here had their sweat, equity sweat go into their property through all those years of hard work to hold onto that land and pay those taxes? I experienced it. I grew up on a farm. I know what it's like. When things went bad, my dad and I we made an economic decision to get out of farming. The Talmages have made an economic decision that they've got to let some of that land go. That is their right.

Many of the people here work for somebody that gives them a pension, and maybe have money in the bank. How would they like it if the government all of a sudden says, you've got to give back half your pension, your life savings? I don't think they'd like it very much. Mrs. Talmage said it right. It's a moral issue. There's 16 people involved with this project. How do you know their financial position, how much money they have in the bank? Maybe they've got bills to pay with that. But they have to-- that is their right to do what they want north of Sound Avenue.

You have zoning and that's part of due process. That's what the government does is balance the interests of the people. There is zoning there. They have the right to ask for a change of zone. What they're trying to do is balance their own interest with the interests of the community. They are not naive to believe that they're going to ram rod this through the public. And, yes, there are environmental concerns. They recognize that and that is part of scoping; that is part of the environmental impact statement that has to be done.

If there's mitigation and protection required of those environmental areas, they're going to do it. These people have integrity and character. They are not fly by nights. They've lived here for a long time. They're not leaving. That land is going to be continued to be operated. Some of it is operated by DeLalio's sod. But their greenhouse operation, Ellen and Henry and Bill and the family, they are in business in this town. And they're going to continue to do that. They are not fly by nights.

Now, the most important thing is due process. I think that a lot of people here are jumping to conclusions without them going through the process first. And this is part of it. I know the Board as a responsibility. They want to hear from all parties that are interested. All I ask you to do is to keep an open mind. Let the facts speak for themselves. Give the Talmages their day in court; due

process. We are-- we live in a country that is made up of laws. They, too, have rights. Everybody here has rights. Let's not come to a conclusion about the Talmages' rights.

A couple things that were said have to be spoken about.

Supervisor Villella: "Go ahead; I'll give you an extra minute."

Joe Gergela: "I'll be two minutes. One is about the tax impact. One thing that people should know, this has been documented in studies by the American Farmland Trust, Suffolk County Farm Committee, residential development requires \$1.36 in services for every tax dollar paid. Farmland and open space requires \$.26 in services for every tax dollar paid. So the people that are the farmers in this town and the people that own open space are carrying the load for much of the people that live in this town. Farmland and open space does not put kids in school and farmers and land owners pay those taxes on their own residences just like everybody else. But the open space does not require services, minimal.

Okay, the other thing which I was concerned and I was very upset about is about the-- about the pesticide issue and then I'll shut up, Vinny."

Supervisor Villella: "You don't have to shut up, you can do it in a nice way. Just real quick, real quick."

Joe Gergela: "Okay. One thing that I am involved with and I've been involved with a lot of the environmental issues. I'm one of the people that wrote the breast cancer pesticide registry law of two years ago to see about the connection between cancer and pesticide use and ground water and the whole nine yards. And it drives me crazy when people talk with-- they don't have any idea about scientific fact. I can tell you that as of right now, scientists have not proved any link to cancer in pesticides. That is why-- "

Supervisor Villella: "All right, all right. Let's calm down. Calm down."

Joe Gergela: "That is fact."

Supervisor Villella: "All right. Let's calm down, please."

Joe Gergela: "There are other (inaudible)."

Supervisor Villella: "All right. Let's calm down, Joe, you can-- "

Joe Gergela: "Anyhow, people talk without have any basis of scientific fact and it's inappropriate."

Supervisor Villella: "Thanks a lot, Joe."

Joe Gergela: "Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Sorry I went over six and a half minutes. But I know you had a lot to say on that."

Joe Gergela: "Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "And he represents the Farm Bureau so he had to have something to say. Marty."

Mary Sendlewski: "Good evening. Marty Sendlewski. I'll be much quicker than six minutes."

Supervisor Villella: "I hope. Thank you."

Marty Sendlewski: "It would seem that there are three very fundamental issues that come to mind here. One concerning the north property. There's been reports about it is developable with residential lots, etc. The zoning allows for recreational uses such as a golf course in this type of development to be considered to these areas in our town.

He had talked about rights. That's also a fact and I think that that's something that the Board and all of us as taxpayers, residents, should keep in mind. That is a fact that the property can be developed.

The second point would be that this type of development is exactly what the town has been striving for to gain tourist type uses and type development that are favorable to the town. We've just seen President Clinton play golf in the Hamptons this last week and that was a big mess traffic wise, but I'm not suggesting he come here, but

what I'm saying is golf courses and that type of draw for the type of people that come and spend money and play golf, I think you have to determine that it's a positive thing for the town of Riverhead; it's a positive thing for our tax base and then I think the third important point for the developer to realize is the fact that the property south of Sound Avenue, the mirror image is true. The fact of the matter is that those rights have been given up. And I think if a developer looks at that and says, you know what? The same way we feel we have a fact and a right to develop the north side, that's true, they should realize that the town has a right and the fact of the matter is that land is preserved and should remain preserved and the Town Board should realize that this is the type of development we've been striving for and realize that if those avenues are taken, that that's what we should really hope happens in this town. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thanks, Marty. Next speaker, please."

Edgar Goodale: "My name is Edgar Goodale. I'm an adjacent owner of property that's to the Talmages. I believe I would probably be adjacent to maybe the third or the fourth hole, I'm not exactly sure which, and I personally find myself in a bit of a quandry over this. The notion of a few hundred homes going up certainly does intrigue me. I could see a little benefit there. However, I really got to tell you that being neighbors of the Talmages and knowing them like I do, knowing them (inaudible) that they are of their land, and I fully support their development of a golf course and resort at this particular site. It's their right. I'm a neighbor, I'll continue to be a neighbor and so as a neighbor I can say let them go through the due process."

Supervisor Villella: "Thanks, Edgar. Next speaker, please."

Dan Morris: "My name is Dan Morris. I represent the Open Space Council. Our concerns are primarily the preservation of the what has been known as the Grandifolia Sandhills in a unique natural area in Riverhead and, secondly, our concern is with the preservation of the farmland, particularly the 101 acres south of Sound Avenue. It's preservation. We are very concerned that any (inaudible) on that could be detrimental to other preservation programs."

In addition, the process that the Town of Riverhead has gone

through so far with scoping on this project. We have a couple of problems with the process. We don't think that the town has complied with notification of the involved agencies with the draft scoping document. I don't believe it was provided to the Suffolk County Department of Health Services. There's no record of that being provided in the records here in Town Hall and conversations with people at the office of ecology. They hadn't received that in a timely fashion either. And that's required under 617(8) Paragraph B of SEQRA.

We also think-- we're looking into the notification of Suffolk County Legislature as a potential involved agency with the transfer of the 101 acres of preserved farmland. They would have to vote on that. We think that they probably should be notified. Again, we don't think they were properly notified.

The other issues, ecological issues will be addressed more in detail as the environmental impact statement comes forward. And we will-- one thing I'm concerned is what's-- this 500 unit hotel, it's been compared-- the area has been-- this development project has been compared to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Myrtle Beach, South Carolina has, probably year round golf season. We're going to be operating with what? Five or six months, or less. What's going to happen with that 500 unit hotel in those off season. That I don't think is addressed properly in the scope of the impact statement.

And we would conclude-- I would conclude by just saying we hope that the Grandifolia Sandhills can be preserved in some way and that the farmland continues in preservation (inaudible.) Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next speaker. Gordon."

Gordon Danby: "Gordon Danby. I live in Wading River. I'm so old, I can't remember whether I've voted for you guys or not."

Supervisor Villella: "It wasn't that long, it was only what? Seven months."

Gordon Danby: "Well, some of you. Actually I did and I must say so far I'm satisfied."

Councilman Kent: "I think everybody should have to tell us

whether they voted for us or not."

Gordon Danby: "As I commented before, and you know this, you people have a very difficult job and you're right on the (inaudible) of whether Riverhead is going to be remain an east end town. If Riverhead goes, the north fork goes. And these issues are difficult and particularly when you have a major proposal from a fine, old, local family, not some carpetbaggers, and I know it's very difficult. And I'm only going to address one point in all this because I can see pros and cons. But I think you should be unalterably opposed to any finagling with the farmland preservation because that would totally undermine the confidence of the public who have to go and vote money and they've done it for years including their neighbors in the west end, (inaudible) it's too subtle to be understood, plus the precedent. You know that there will be (inaudible) lawyers come out of the woodwork using that precedent, will come up with all sorts of-- I mean, this is an honorable proposition, I recognize that. And I am not saying feel sorry for them, but a deal is a deal and just for what it's worth I, in fact, own six acres of land myself, my wife and I. We're not rich and we never developed it so we're not just talking about things we don't (inaudible).

And I'd like to make an aside which doesn't reflect on this particular golf course, but just an aside, probably a waste of time. But, my brother-in-law loved golf. He lived for golf. Tragically after he retired he died two years later from cancer. I joked until he got real sick that he got it on the golf course, but the point is he-- before he was too far gone, went over to St. Andrew's in Scotland, the founding place and he said it was quite rough. They didn't put all this garbage on the grass, we should think about that."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you, Gordon. Next speaker, please. Here they come; they're coming out of the woodwork now. Look at them. All right. Joe, Rich-- who-- Joe, you go first, Joe."

Joseph Ingegno: "Good evening. Joseph Ingegno. I've been a resident of Riverhead north of Sound Avenue for 27 years. I've been asked to read a letter from Jack Van de Wetering. For those people who do not know him, Jack's the man who decides to put his money where his mouth is and has spent tens of thousands of dollars and many thousands of hours planting all of the flowers you see in this town at his own expense and has planted over 3,000 trees along the

highways and byways of Riverhead over the last 15 years.

This letter is his words and I'll read it exactly how he's written it. On behalf of Jack Van de Wetering, I'm here to express his support for the zone change that the Talmage family is requesting.

The Talmages have lived and farmed the east end for centuries. They are one of the founding families of our community.

Their livelihood, in the horticulture industry, brings them close to the land every day. They are ecology minded with the various crops they grow like wild grasses for the wetlands and many native plants that they cultivate for our region. They know the importance of open spaces and share my desire to keep the east end as rural as possible.

Their request for a zone change is made with the best interests of our community in mind. The 350 acres in question, under the present zoning laws, could very well be divided up into lots for a housing development of 300 to 400 homes. Not only would this open space be lost forever but the families living in these homes would put additional strain on our community services and school districts. Our school taxes would have to be increased.

Under the Talmage plan, a golf course would be the focal point of the redevelopment with a hotel for east end guests. We still would have the beauty and open space of the golf course, with its sweeping lawns and landscaping. The hotel would pay taxes and help the economic base of our community but we would not be putting additional demands on our school district.

I am in favor of granting a zoning change for this property.

That's from Jack Van de Wetering."

Supervisor Villedella: "You want to continue, Joe?"

Joseph Ingegno: "Yes. On a personal note of myself, I have known the Talmage family and lived in Riverhead and worked on many projects not particularly with the Talmage family, and I think this is a good thing for the east end. It's just not a project for Riverhead, but it's a project for all of eastern Long Island. I've

traveled to many places that have golf courses and properties and property values as you get closer to the golf courses increase tremendously. Properties on the golf courses are sometimes five to ten times more expensive than properties a half a mile away only because of the open views of the golf and everything else. I think the Talmage family in their long history of farming and the family history in this town will do the right thing. They're not going to build a piece of junk. They're not going to rape the land. They're not going to do anything that is not legally allowed by the environmental laws and I think their request should be granted. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you, Joe. Next speaker, please. Dick."

Richard Amper: "Good evening. My name is Richard Amper. I'm Executive Director of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society and Co-Director of an organization called East End Forever. Since everybody is baring their souls, I didn't vote for a single one of you."

Supervisor Villella: "You don't live in this town."

Richard Amper: "I don't live in the town but like so many groups, not only from around the region but around the state, there's an exceedingly great interest in this particular parcel because of its uniqueness. I sort of probably might summarize some of what we've learned tonight but thank the Town Board for holding this informational meeting and this discussion because I think it's been very useful. We've learned quite a few things, I think some that we agree about, some that we don't.

One of the things we agree about is that the Talmages are good people. We've heard that established if we didn't know that already. My encounters with them in the past have always been very positive. They seem like real good people. The neighbors have come out; the neighbors like them, that's always a good sign. They've been here for a long time so they know the area and it must be assumed that they care about it. We find that they have rights. The Talmages have property rights as folks who owned the land longer than most of us can trace our heritage, so-- we all-- I think everybody in the room agrees about all that. They shouldn't be ignored; those rights should not be ignored-- nor there should not be any delay for delay

sake. One of the things I think we learned in the Pine Barrens thing was that you haven't preserved anything until it's been bought and paid for, until it's been secured. So delay for delay sake is really not a legitimate (inaudible).

I don't believe anybody who's engaged in this process and a lot of them have talked to me, are engaged in any personal way against the Talmages, but the plan that they're developing will affect us all, oh, every one of us very personally. The Talmages will go through due process and we've heard it argued and I think everybody supports due process, too. But I'd like to make a prediction and not a very outlandish one, that when the environmental impact statement arrives here at your table, it is unlikely that it will recommend against this project. The standard procedure is for folks who get into real estate development and some of the Talmages are moving out of farming now and into real estate development. That makes them different from what they've been for the last 300 years and they are moving into real estate development and that involves a whole series of procedures, including hiring experts to come in and provide you what they're calling the science, and I want to share with them the recommendations-- look to the science because you refer to some other scientists and you'll hear from others as the process moves forward.

We understand the interest that that particular scientific evidence will have.

What has happened-- what's different, it's not that this wasn't always valuable land. The Nature Conservancy (inaudible) this property for many years and suddenly become environmental is by all of the experts a very environmentally significant. What the Talmages represent a long tradition in farming; a long farming legacy just as Riverhead does. But this golf resort is going to take them and like it or not this town with them in a very new direction. This is not agriculture. This is not what the Farm Bureau has historically stood for. Joe has to represent the economic interests of its members but he's representing the development interest in this particular case.

There's also the preservation of farms, farmers and farming that's on the line. That's what makes this one so tough. I've heard a couple suggestions, one, that maybe the town-- I think Joe Gergela

suggested, that the Talmages might be entertaining a notion of not trying to get the 101 acres out of the preservation program. If they wouldn't make that declaration, that would be very helpful to a lot of people in this room. That would be very, very useful. I heard one of the Talmages say tonight that they oppose residential development. The same time I heard some of the neighbors say that they sort of view this as extortion, threatening to do residential if you won't let me do the other. If they do oppose residential development as they indicated, if they will also square off the alternative of high end residential development, I think that would be useful to providing a resolution.

Why the Pine Barrens thing worked, as Joe Gergela referred to it and I'm just trying to think about where things work rather than where we fought each other to a stand-off. Why the Pine Barrens thing worked is because people worked together to find a solution that would work with everyone. How can we preserve Long Island's vision of a future for farms, farmers and farming? What I'm asking is that the town government to work with the Talmage family, with the citizens group, with the County government, and the State government to make sure that these people receive fair and just and honest compensation acceptable to them. Not a condemnation but a simple deal that allows the land to remain in agricultural use on the one hand and with the Grandifolia Sandhills are concerned, permanently preserved.

We have a State clean water, clean air bond act, 1.75 billion dollars that the people across the state have supported for this purpose. We have a drinking water protection program, an open space program, a farmland preservation program, and a partnership program at the county level and soon we hope a land bank a community preservation program at the town level along with other work that has been done for preservation purposes. This is not money that goes to an environmentalist. It goes to somebody who needs his land protected.

Let us try in the months ahead as we go through the due process to find if they're not alternatives that we can't together discover the alternatives that worked for us so well in the Pine Barrens where property rights were maintained but preservation was permitted. Let's try to do that. Thanks very much."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you, Dick. All right. Let's go.

You don't want me to stop the meeting now, do you? Because I could do that. I don't want to. I mean it. Let's keep it down, please."

Brad Berthold: "My name is Brad Berthold. B-E-R-T-H-O-L-D. I have a place in Northville."

Supervisor Vilella: "They can't hear you in the back."

Brad Berthold: "I'm talking into the mike. It must be my accent. I second the sentiments that Mr. Amper just discussed here. I was looking into some Riverhead history on the world wide web and I found the Talmage web site which I found to be very interesting. It explains a little bit of the history of the Talmage family. I went to the New York State College of Agriculture where many of the Talmage people have gone. I knew that they had a sterling name in agriculture in Riverhead since its founding. I think they were part of-- and maybe correct me if I'm wrong-- the original 16 divisions of farmland on the north fork by the founding fathers. The original farmers all got several sections, 250 acre sections, to farm and they're still on that property.

HR Talmage was one of the leaders in agriculture in Riverhead and a leading civic citizen. As it says in the web site, he founded Riverhead's first phone company, organized the Long Island Potato Exchange and the Cauliflower Association, and sought support for the founding of the Long Island Vegetable Research Farm which is operated by Cornell University right next to their farm which has helped farmers since its inception here in Riverhead.

They also sought support for the founding of the public beach at Reeves Park and were founders of Central Suffolk Hospital as has been mentioned here.

What seems disturbing to me as I think Mr. Amper-- "

Supervisor Vilella: "No. You have to address us, please. Thank you."

Brad Berthold: "What seems disturbing to me as I think Mr. Amper just mentioned this, is somehow something seems to be changing and this change of zone application and golf course somehow seems an icon of not just the history of farming in Riverhead, but the future of

Riverhead because here's one of the most prominent leading farm families who is now reduced to farming a very small percentage of their farm. They've been leaders in adapting to different farming requirements in Riverhead as he says Mr. Talmage said. The potatoes could probably find some other way to farm, keeping going, which is important to us all in Riverhead. One of the other things on the site is a message from Nathaniel Talmage, one of the patriarchs to his children which I will be able to provide to the Board and it says you are helping run a farm now. This is to his descendants-- guard well the soil. We're fortunate that we've been trusted with a share of the good earth. From it has come our livelihood and if we care for it well it will provide for us in years to come.

But it's not only ourselves that we must think for millions of the earth's people depend on the soil of our country. Our good soil has been building up for untold ages and yet its productivity can be lost in a few short years of careless handling. May it never be said of us that we have been unfaithful stewards of the good earth. Yes, it is important that we carefully conserve the fertility of our fields so that future generations may share in their bounty. And it goes on to say be thankful that your lot has been cast in the countryside. Here in the beauty of the sky and fields and trees it is easier to know and serve God and it is easier, too, to know and love your fellow man. Here is where we know all of our neighbors for what they are, without regard to race or creed or social position. And so it is children that stewardship applies to all of life, the field, the family, the community, and the world.

And I feel that stewardship applies to all of us, too, equally to the field, the family, the community and the world. And I think it's incumbent on the Town Board to see that this is the turning point for agriculture in Riverhead. Our community is still based on agriculture, tourism and fishing. This may be a boom to tourists in some respect but somehow it seems a sad turning point that this leading farm family who's been here since Riverhead was formed essentially, that has now gotten to the point where it becomes necessary to change their way of life and change the use of this land from farming to some other use and I'm just fearful. I think that's why this draws so much attention not only because of the Grandifolia Sandhills, not only because of the effects on the Farmland Preservation Program which is feared will weaken, but somehow it seems we're starting to turn a corner in Riverhead. This is

really the gateway to the north fork, the gateway to Riverhead. And I just think it's disturbing to hear some of the things that this might result in as far as farming's future in Riverhead and indeed the future of the town itself.

So I hope you can do a thorough job and take into consideration all the effects of (inaudible) possibly the Talmages may be able to sell this to a preservation program and that might be one way to (inaudible) situation. I certainly hope so. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you very much. Yes, please. How are you doing, Bill? The other mike."

Bill Schmidt: "Thanks, Vinny. I'm Bill Schmidt. I'm a neighbor and farmer just to the east of the Talmages. I'm also president of the Long Island Farm Bureau. We had as Joe had mentioned earlier, a meeting last month where the Talmages made a presentation of the proposed project. Again, I was probably more nervous at that meeting and I've been president for almost three years, than I'm here right now. There was many past presidents, many farmers-- influential farmers from the Riverhead area that attended that meeting. We discussed in great length the 100 plus acres south of Sound Avenue possibly being transferred and putting development rights back on that property for the golf course and there's basically no way that we could support anything like that. Once the development rights are sold, they're sold. That's it. Whether they give us 100 acres or 200 acres elsewhere, we'll try and preserve those in another way. There's no, you know, it has to stay in farmland. We couldn't do anything that might take the integrity of the program and the confidence that the public has in it.

On the other hand, the area north of Sound Avenue, the development rights are intact. They have the right, I guess, you know, for possible housing or whatever. The general feeling of our board was that this is the type of project that the Town of Riverhead seems to be looking for, (inaudible) tourism, etc. Not too heavily a developed area with the golf course, what have you.

Mr. Amper had mentioned possibly purchasing the development rights north of Sound Avenue. That's a fine idea but there is one thing that the Board has to remember, this program is voluntary. I don't know if the Talmage family is interested in selling their

property north of Sound Avenue. They have every right and as Joe has said in the past and other people, there's a due process to do what they can to benefit maybe them, their family, you know, this is America. They have that right to do what they can north of Sound Avenue. And I would support the project. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thanks, Bill. Yes, please. Go ahead."

Harry Katz: "Hi. My name is Harry Katz. I live in Southold. I used to live in the Town of Riverhead so, you know-- "

Adam Grossman: "Could you spell your last name, I'm sorry."

Harry Katz: "K-A-T-Z. You know, obviously I'm not directly impacted. I don't live near there anymore, but the Talmage, of course, they are wonderful people and very nice and nobody can say anything bad about them. But the fact of the matter is I don't think they should be given special privileges just because they've been here for 10-- 12 generations. You know, that's great, but, you know, other people could come in with similar projects on Sound Avenue. What would keep them from commercial development too. This is zoned residential and agriculture. If the Town of Riverhead wants to see a commercial development along Sound Avenue, that's okay. That should be part of a master plan. But I don't see what special privilege or exemption should be given on land that's zoned agricultural and residential for a hotel. I'm not concerned about the golf course, but I think a 500 unit hotel is not part of the-- that's going too far. So, I really feel that before the Town approves a project like this, they better think about what other farmers are going to do on Sound Avenue and every farmer, every property owners on Sound Avenue should get the same kind of hearing that the Talmages are getting if they come up with a good proposal for hotels and other things that come along. So I do hope that you consider this. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next. Jim."

Jim Flood: "Jim Flood, Aquebogue. I'd just like to say that there's going to be a tremendous pressure for housing development since we decided to-- when we sold the core, now we're looking-- and the Town Board and the Town itself has decided that they're going to go with light industry and there's going to be people, hopefully,

that they'll be coming out and working in light industry and once they get to see the place they're going to fall in love with it just like I did 11 years ago and they're going to be looking for a home. So there's going to be tremendous pressure in the Town in the next few years for additional housing. Which is going to, whether you like it or not, impact severely the school district. So when Mr. Talmage-- the second part of it is that this is exactly what we're kind of looking for. The people who live in this Town, not the people who come from Westchester and go out to Shelter Island or the people who live in Westhampton who developed, sold all their farms and developed all of their land-- I'm not caring about them. I'm caring about the people-- I think we should be concerned about the people in the Town who are worried about the tax base and what I'm hoping the Town will do is consider the Talmage's property, their plan to develop that, including the hotel and golf course. It's exactly what I believe the Town Board is looking for as far as developing a recreational area rather than a housing area where people will come out, visit, play three or four or five golf courses over the course of a week, go downtown, shop and eat in our restaurants, and then leave. And not impact our school district.

They're not threatening us with building 400 houses or 300 houses. But that can become a reality and what I'd like to see is a golf course. A golf course that will bring out people that don't live here, let them stay a week, buy things, and then leave. I think it's-- because our school district, and you know it as well as I do, I have four kids in four different schools in this Town and when we listen to a man who lives adjacent to the Talmage property and whose on the site based management team for Riley Avenue School, he tells you, a neighbor of the Talmages and a member of the site based management team that we cannot, cannot, put another kid in that school without adding to the school. So we're looking pretty much, right now, I believe at building another school no matter what and housing, we never get back the money that we spend in tax dollars on housing. But we will gain manyfold from the tourist industry that this project will create. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thanks, Jim. Yes."

Paul Schilling: "Good evening. My name is Paul Schilling. S-C-H-I-L-L-I-N-G. I'm a third generation summer person out here. We pay taxes, don't impact your school. So I'll take a thank you."

I've watched it, you know, since I've been here forever as far as I know. The change is the one thing we can all count on that the property is going to change. We have to direct it as stewards of the land of what we want. The threat of 400 houses isn't a threat; it an economic reality. The property will be developed. They have the right. How do we make the best choices? In my opinion, a golf course is a low impact use of that property. Ideally I would love that we had the 30 million dollars to turn it over to the Talmages; preserve the dunes. We don't have the tax base out here to do that.

So, what do you want? Where do you want to go? And I think it's a pretty good use. That would be a good thing. That would generate tax base and it would help better schools in this area."

Supervisor Villella: "All right. Let's have it down, quiet in the audience, please."

Paul Schilling: "That's fine."

Supervisor Villella: "Good. Next speaker, please."

Paul Smith: "Good evening. Paul Smith."

Supervisor Villella: "That's easy enough. Spell that."

Paul Smith: "From Holbrook. The sudden focus on the Sandhills may seem exaggerated but the fact is destruction of pristine environment is so intense world wide as it is locally. There aren't many sites left such as this and those are threatened as well. I live in an incredibly overpopulated and overdeveloped area with few wooded areas and those are now being developed as well. I live just 20 miles west of Riverhead in Holbrook. I look to Riverhead and the north fork for my escape from this. I frequent this area and admire its beautiful landscape and historic landmark preserve. This area is my vacationland and it has much to offer. I am, therefore, a tourist here in Riverhead and the north fork. We need not attract the so called world class tourists; we have 10 to 15 million tourists right here in New York City. Aren't they world class?"

If we could package in this area here carefully not to disturb its uniqueness, we will have everything that no one else has, a natural environment. And that in itself would be world class."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Hey, hold up. Come on, Charlie, you know-- you know better than that. I've got to single you out with the dunce hat after this."

Bob Wesalowski: "My name is Bob Wesalowski. I'm a life long resident of Riverhead. For the past 30 years a resident and neighbor of the Talmage family. I'd like to (inaudible) the Town Board looking back in time, recent time, when they just built that new water tower to the west of the Talmage farm. Use those ground rules and o'kay their proposed golf course. Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Next."

Valerie Goode: "Valerie Goode. I'm a local real estate broker. I own Colony Realty in Aquebogue and I's a resident of Baiting Hollow. I'm in complete favor of this project. One thing that hasn't been mentioned tonight is the transfer of development rights program. North of Sound Avenue, is a designated receiving area. The density, therefore, could be much greater than just good old one acre zoning. So people that are opposed to this project should bear that information in mind and we also do need a hotel. I've been selling real estate since 1978. They used to come out, pick a box of strawberries and head for the LIE. Now they want a place to stay. They want to go to the wineries, they want to play golf, they want to go to Tanger. We have developed our vision for tourism. Let's keep going with it; it's a good thing. It's not factories and, you know, polluting industry. And it's visually a pleasure to drive pass a golf course. So I say let's have it. Bring a swing."

Supervisor Villella: "Okay. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Mr. Davis."

Lester Davis: "Lester Davis, Baiting Hollow. (inaudible) since I grew up and operated a farm in Coram for 65 years, I became used to open spaces such as Riverhead (inaudible). We moved to Riverhead next to a golf course and a nursery where we have lived for the past six years. The Talmage property is only a couple hundred yards on the other side of us where we live now and if that property, meaning the Talmage property, if it's converted to houses, we'll probably move again, mainly because of the increased tax liability generated by the houses that probably, well, okay, by the houses, will be-- the taxes increase. Our taxes will probably, we

estimate about \$1,000 and, of course, it will be a ripple affect all across the Town. Realize houses would affect the taxes on farms and other businesses.

Now, on the subject of I know there was a question raised here earlier by a lady who-- how this might come a about, and I can tell you how it affected us in Coram. The tax (inaudible) houses, people, got to the point that our taxes were increased to almost \$40,000 a year and drove us off the farm. To argue against a golf course, and an environmental standpoint, does not make sense since modern golf courses care-- modern golf course care, is now more environmentally friendly compared to the same property going into (inaudible) time and time again. And in light of the foregoing, we wholeheartedly support the use of the Talmage property for golf course use. Thank you."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you. Next speaker, please. Yes, sir."

Anthony Castalano: "Good evening. My name is Anthony Castalano from Wading River. I just want to say I categorically oppose the project. I can fully appreciate the citizenship of the Talmage family. No one doubts that. But it's really irrelevant to the issue at hand. The parcel to the south of Sound Avenue has been protected and there's absolutely no reason that I can see why that should be rescinded at this point in time. And as far as the other piece of property, I think that the people have commissioned our government collectively to preserve properties that are identified as environmentally sensitive and I think that's exactly what we have here and I think that the people are looking for the government to, you know, to follow their request and to try to preserve that property and also to reimburse the, you know, the Talmage family. Thank you very much."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you. Anyone else? Steve."

Steve Haizlip: "I would like to be able to speak at this time so I can get my grandson home."

Supervisor Vilella: "All right."

Steve Haizlip: "Steve Haizlip of Calverton. You know, something

ain't right here. You don't go on a (inaudible) 54 years ago and fight for the right of free speech and the right to use your land and develop it as you see fit. There's been too much Gestapo in this state and county and so forth that tries to prevent people from doing what they would like to do. I understand control is required and I'm a full believer in control on things. But at the same time, we have to be reasonable and as I read in the News-Review, a nice lady from Wading River wrote that we have to stop working for these high powered government officials which I call at the same time they become government extortionists. Now, I think it was about 1993, Mr. Schulman (phonetic) owned the land in the back of me. He wanted to put up a (inaudible) condominiums and all kinds of pavilions and what have you. Well, at that time, nobody went for it. Then he come back and he said he wanted to make a golf course. We went for it, open space, let's have it. Green, serene, and, I've got it right in the back of the house. I have no complaints with it and someone mentioned about too much pesticides, fertilizers on the ground. Well, let's face it. If you had 400 houses there and everybody was out putting fertilizers and pesticides on the yard, you'd be probably worse off than you would if you had a good specialist that knows how to do a golf course. And Mr. Schulman has one of those type of people in there.

Now, the golf course out in Greenport is on a very low water base. I don't know if they went all through this controversy or not to get it. But it is thriving and it is flourishing. And I don't know Mr. Talmage personally at all. I've only seen him twice in my life in there. But from the two times that I did speak with him, he's a gentleman and if he can-- he deserves if this is his mind and this is his notion now to do this and he wants to do it, let him go."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you, Steve. Next speaker. Yes."

Frank Palmer: "My name is Frank Palmer. I'm from (inaudible) Equipment Company. I live in Southampton but my children and my grandchildren live in Baiting Hollow. I looked a little bit at this project and I think you just have to look at 116 years of stewardship and not doing anything to that dune, I don't think that in the design of a golf course that that dune is any way in danger. I think it would be part of the golf design."

Secondly, I know there's a lot of concern about whether this is a viable project. I've been in this business for 40 years and we had 100 golf courses, with a population of 700,000 people on Long Island. Today we have 2,700,000 and we've got 115 golf courses. The roads from New York are much better. This is definitely a tourist area. I don't see how you can possibly look away from this project. I think the economic benefits to the community would be good. I think it has a good solid base. I think the wildlife would benefit tremendously."

Supervisor Villella: "All right. Hold up. Let's go."

Frank Palmer: "I let them have their say and I think-- "

Supervisor Villella: "Correct. Let him talk."

Frank Palmer: "I think I know what I'm talking about on this issue. Wildlife lives on the edge of woodlands. Golf courses are primarily woodland with roads cut between them. They go to the woodland for shelter; they come out to the edge to eat. As soon as you cut a golf course into a woodland, the birds increase, the hawks increase, small animals increase."

There was some mention of some rather unusual, like the green snake. I don't know how that would interact, but as far as hawks as far as normal garden snakes, as far as rabbits, all of those things here-- all of those things do better on a golf course than do in the woodlands. And there's plenty of documentation to back that up.

I would urge the Board to look favorably on the project."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Henry. Henry, I'm sorry. I didn't see your hand up before."

Henry Pfeiffer: "That's all right. I've been around a long, long time. Henry Pfeiffer, Wading River. As a matter of fact, I've been around long enough that when I was born, the Dead Sea was still alive. From the beginning of recorded time, a force that has propelled human civilization onward has been changed. In fact, the only (inaudible) that we can point to in our life is change, and whether this change is done by nature, (inaudible) plates shifting or

by that so called intelligent two legged creature called a human being. And there's been a great deal of that has been going on in my life time. I don't want to go back 300 years ago when the farmers first started poisoning the land out here with their chemicals. I don't want to go back to the turn of the century when we changed from being an agricultural nation to an industrial nation or except Riverhead.

And we have to understand that the individual himself has a particular interest that he's going to pursue and though it may not be supported by us (inaudible) and so forth, you've got to look at it. How the farmer out here-- and I've heard them speak tonight I believe they were farmers or their representatives spoke about preserving the farms, open space. I don't know there's any trees on the farms. Didn't we make a change (inaudible)? We tore down a town of trees, we (inaudible), we leveled the thing off and as a matter of fact, I've seen them out there with those machines; I wish they'd take care of my lawn. But they keep changing and altering things.

We heard tonight several people speak about the horror of the chemicals that might be placed on the golf course. Compared to what they put on the golf course, I think the amount that's put on any farm is probably 100 times more in an age of chemicals. And as fast as we determine-- determines that this chemical is harmful, it can be harmful to animal life; the native life there can be harmful to the human being which we're concerned with and so forth. The farmer responds as he should by withdrawing their chemicals but then he immediately comes up with other chemicals which he continues to put down until they determine that is harmful. Okay.

I happen to be-- let's say perusing and in the introductory remarks there, among the things they speak that the reason for establishing a constitution is apart from the common defense and so forth on, provide for the general welfare. And I think that's up to this particular Board to consider all the elements that have been provided to you here tonight. Look them over very carefully, review them very careful, and do what you can to provide for the general welfare of the people of Riverhead. Thank you."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you, Henry. Any other speakers?
Yes."

John Turner: "Good evening, Supervisor Villella, Members of the Town Board. My name is John Turner and I serve as the (inaudible) Director of the Resource Commission which is a state commission established to undertake studies relating to both Long Island and New York State water resource use and I'm also here on behalf of the Task Force for Long Island Sound, which is also a state created entity to develop various initiatives to try to protect the integrity of that very important estuary.

I've previously commented on behalf of those two bodies before with regards to the scoping hearing that was held and I was just hoping to reiterate some of those issues to you very briefly in hopes that they may find their way into the scoping documents tonight. I'm hoping to have the Town Board consider amending the scoping document to include these.

The first point I wanted to make is that the section dealing with alternatives should be expanded to include at least two other alternatives in addition to those that are rightfully recommended in the scoping document. One of those happens to be the full acquisition alternative. It's one of those recommendations that we made. I think Dick Amper made the point very well when he indicated that there are a whole hosts of local and county and state programs that have been developed-- which tax dollars are spent to try and protect important agricultural and ecological resources and given the existence of all those programs, it is perfectly reasonable to discuss the possibility of acquisition of some or all of the property in question.

And, along that line, I want to agree with what I heard the Farm Bureau representative, Mr. Gergela, say, was regard to the tax impact and it's something I hope that you would consider in requiring in the scoping document, that is, the tax impacts and various alternatives. I think you'll find that as he pointed out, any number of studies have documented that open space is your best buy and that if that property was acquired partially or fully, the tax impact to the town would be the least impactive than any other scenario you could find. (inaudible) is minimal and you get the benefits of the open space preservation. So I urge that that issue be covered in the scoping document as well as also the possibility of a cluster subdivision alternative which you can figure it in different ways to see if you could come up with one that is

environmentally benign and can, you know, fall within the carrying capacity of the property.

Another issue that I wanted to make a point of urging the scoping document-- is the issue of consistency. This whole-- very significant proposal is not happening in a vacuum. There are a whole host of state and county and local plans and policies that it may be very consistent with or be in conflict with. It's important, I think, from your perspective as the decision makers on this to understand how this proposal falls in place with all those proposals. What I mean by that are things like the draft Long Island Sound Management Plan, the State's Open Space Plan, the Town's master plan and vision that you had for the town on the County Farmland Preservation Program and others.

Last point I'd like to make about amending the scoping document is to include some more rigorous requirement about understanding how the Sandhills was created and to refer to the Ralph Good article as the scoping document does, is (inaudible) source would be a major, major mistake. If you look at that article, that article barely describes the geology of the property and it only does to then lean into a discussion about the vegetation. Ralph Good and his wife were vegetation scientists, they were not geologists and, again, to rely on that, to understand the geology there, I think it would be a major mistake and lead to that section of the DEIS being deficient.

To just close with an observation if I may, and that is that the Talmage family seems surprised that there's been a fair amount of opposition and the depth of that opposition and concern about the project. And I guess I'd say that I'm surprised that they're surprised in that there are two very troubling aspects of the project to many people. One of them happens to be, what has already been discussed at length and that is the proposal to pull out of the Farmland Preservation Program the 101 acres to the south. Being involved for years in open space acquisition efforts, I can tell you that public trust would be absolutely undermined if the type of situation that is proposed here was to happen and to happen in other places. And that the preservation of parkland and natural resources would be given a virtually a fatal blow, because what the public has always believed is when they've acquired a property, either full fee title or some interest in that property, that it's something that will be done in perpetuity and will benefit that generation and all

future generations. It's a very, very significant thing."

Supervisor Vilella: "Okay. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Any other speakers? Yes, Mary."

Mary Lamont: "My name is Mary Lamont and I've heard various people here tonight speak about how beautiful Myrtle Beach is and Hilton Head. Riverhead is beautiful. No one can deny that. Riverhead is beautiful. The Grandfolia Sandhills is beautiful. And let me remind everyone here, this is a globally rare eco-system. It's globally rare. And we have it in Riverhead. We're so fortunate; we're so lucky. It's a state rarity; it's a globally rare eco-system. It should be preserved entirely. Thanks."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you. Any other speakers? If not, I-- whoops, sorry. They're getting up now."

Marsha Slotkin: "Good evening. I'm Marsha Slotkin. I agree with Ms. Lamont. I've been there. I don't-- I hope you go see this place because the trees are extraordinary; they're gnarled and they're heroic and they're holding up that (inaudible) bluff, and they're configurations are astounding and the sandunes are (inaudible) and you should go and see just to satisfy yourselves about what's there and what we have. And we know that the Talmage family is not adverse to land swapping because of what they proposed on Sound Avenue. Why not swap north of Sound Avenue? Let them build a golf course. They want a golf course. Let them build a world class golf course somewhere else that's not so environmentally sensitive. We can do. (inaudible) I mean we can raise funds; we can somehow get the land to build that golf course. They've got this desire, let them do it but not there. Thank you."

Supervisor Vilella: "Thank you. I heard a clap, okay. Yes."

Edward Pertile: "Edward Pertile. I just have a few things to say. I think the use-- P-E-R-T-I-L-E-- the best use of the parcel that's in question is as it is right now. That's the first thing. The second thing is I'm not against golf courses, but I think there are other-- plenty of other areas that could be built for a golf course and I think that could satisfy a lot of pro-golf course people here. And the third thing is, even if they do develop this into a golf course, I think you're still going to have more people in the

school and you're still going to have to develop more schools. That's not going to stop your schools from expanding and it's not going to stop development in Riverhead. I don't think this (inaudible). Thank you."

Supervisor Villella: "Thank you. Anyone else like to speak? Ken."

Kenneth Petz: "Vinny, is there an easel we can use to-- "

Supervisor Villella: "There's one right back here. I won't set the five minutes until you're ready with the easel. You're going to talk to us, Ken. Thank you."

Kenneth Petz: "I'm Kenneth Petz and I'm the managing member of Traditional Links. Traditional Links has an agreement with the Talmage family to develop approximately 450 acres of land (inaudible) and as of today, we own. The portion of the land the family owns is commonly referred to as (inaudible). On that map it's basically the blue, the green and the parcel labeled Farmland Preservation Program. The Talmage family has used this resource for farming purposes and now through their commitment to Traditional Links, they have decided to utilize the land in a way that will enable many other people to enjoy what they have for over a century.

This land is without question quite beautiful. It has a great diversity of both topography and character with rolling farmlands to the south and hills and Long Island Sound frontage to the north. And its these characteristics coupled with the site's excellent soil composition that make it ideal for golf course development and that is what attracted us to it. Those characteristics would lead us to believe that we can bring world class golf to the Town of Riverhead.

Is this land unique? We certainly think so. Is it beautiful? Without question. Is there a law that precludes the development or requires that it be preserved in its current state? Absolutely not. The Town zoning laws and the Coastal Erosion Hazard (inaudible) regulations are to the best of our knowledge the only regulatory restrictions that apply to this property.

Nevertheless, we are respectful of this site's natural resources and it our objective to create a plan that integrates a

golf resort and residential uses (inaudible) in accordance with the Town (inaudible) policy objectives in a way that would preserve and enhance its beauty forever.

Are we proposing to change this land? Admittedly. But in doing so we intend to preserve its character by utilizing many of its beautiful natural features. That is why we hired Ben Krenshaw and his golf course architect partner, Bill (inaudible), to design and build our courses. We could have hired any one of today's great golf course architects but we hired Ben and Bill because they are known in the industry as (inaudible) which means that they're particularly well known for their ability to use as much of a site's natural topography as possible.

To those of you who are not familiar with their work, they built the sandhills in (inaudible) Nebraska, which is now ranked by Golf Week magazine as the number one golf course in America built after 1960. I have great confidence in them and I know that together if we are granted this change of zone, we will build the type of golf course that people will come from around the world to Riverhead to play. And this will certainly help Riverhead become the recreation destination that is has been seeking to be and to attract people to the town that will spend their money here.

I do truly believe that we have the opportunity to create something here that the people of Riverhead will be very proud of.

One of the primary purposes of SEQRA and the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement is to identify the site's natural resources and to assess the impacts and benefits of various development alternatives. This will enable the Town to make informed decisions with respect to this property's development within the context of the Town code as well as its economic and social objectives. We are in that process of studying the site and preparing a draft environmental impact statement and until our experts have completed their analysis and investigations and we have submitted our DEIS, it would be premature for us to respond to many opinions that have been rendered about this property both here and in the press. Following the submission of our DEIS, I'm sure there will be a DEIS hearing at which people will have-- concerned parties will have an

opportunity to make both verbal and written comments that be incorporated into the final environmental impact statement. Until then and throughout this process, I would ask everybody involved to keep an open mind and refrain from the nasty personal attacks that have enveloped this project today. I would hope that we can have productive discussions about this property's development without vilifying the individuals involved.

At this time, I'd like to review and clarify some of the facts relating to this property and its development. We did not initiate or invent the idea of bringing resort development to the Town of Riverhead and more housing. The Town of Riverhead did. In 1981, the Town adopted into its code the recreational district overlay zoning that we are seeking. In doing so, identify resort development as desirable for the Town, particularly in the areas along the Long Island Sound which include this property. In that regard, what we are proposing and the change of zone that we have applied for falls squarely within the parameters of policy that the Town has established.

As you can see from the zoning analysis that's up there, there are three zoning districts on this property. The 80 acre parcel which is yellow colored, which we actually just acquired today, is zoned Recreational District. It's not zoned Residential A, it's not zoned Agriculture A, it's zoned Recreational District as we speak."

Supervisor Vilella: "Excuse me. You can continue."

Kenneth Petz: "Okay. On the Talmage family land colored green and blue-- "

Supervisor Vilella: "We'll give you a little bit more time to finish up."

Kenneth Petz: "Thank you."

Supervisor Vilella: "A minute and a half. Sorry. Seriously, yes."

Kenneth Petz: "The point is this, golf is a permitted use on the AG A land and the recreational district land. It's not a permitted use on the Residence A land. The-- and, therefore, golf for all

intents and purposes is not a permitted use on this site. We're asking for the change of zone be given to us for the blue and the green, the Res and the Ag, be the same zoning that exists on the parcel immediately to the west that is yellow. It exists today, that's what we're asking for.

Everybody has talked about housing as a threat. Housing is not a threat. Housing is a functional reality of the zoning of this property absent the change of zone. That's what it is. We are required by the Town in our DEIS to study the housing alternative, which we have been doing in any event.

This is the yield map that we're required to study. It shows 300 units on the site. That's the functional reality of the zoning of this property. We didn't create that. That's what the zoning on this property allows us to develop."

Supervisor Villella: "Quiet. Hey, I wouldn't want to remove you, please. Just be quiet. You have-- listen, I know it is. This is informational, we have to listen to whatever is important. I would appreciate-- finish up."

Kenneth Petz: "The point is, Vinny, that's the as of right use. I didn't create that. That is the only economically viable alternative that we have absent the change of zone. That's the backdrop to this situation. Okay."

Supervisor Villella: "I appreciate it; thanks a lot. Okay. Sorry for the disturbance. If there's no other speakers, I was just going to say I was so proud-- Charlie, you spoke. No, seriously."

Charles Cetas: "I've got to respond to a couple-- no, because there was a couple accusations made I think I would like-- "

Supervisor Villella: "I don't think-- no one's throwing things at anybody. We're just listening to people. I'll give you a minute. No, this is it. This is the last one. Just a minute, Charlie. That's it."

Charles Cetas: "Well, I think that there was a couple things said that the environmental groups have something personal against the Talmages. That is not true. That is absolutely false. I, for

one, my father was a (inaudible) at the Long Island Vegetable Research Farm for 30 years. He knew the Talmages very well. He worked with them to help them farm their land. As a child I remember going to Grange meetings with Nat Talmage Sr. being there. My mother played the organ for John Talmage, Jr.'s wedding to Lori Talmage. For me-- for them to say-- accuse me, I take it personally."

Supervisor Vilella: "I don't think they-- "

Charles Cetas: "Okay. Well, a statement was made that the environmental groups-- and I'm the person-- "

Supervisor Vilella: "You've got five seconds."

Charles Cetas: "-- that the environmental groups have personal things against the Talmages. That is not true. We understand the property rights issue-- "

Supervisor Vilella: "Okay, Charlie, thank you, Charlie. Believe me, I don't think anyone was saying that against-- as a matter of fact, I was very proud of everybody in this room, the way this meeting was handled, except for just one little outbreak, but that's all right because you get, you know, caught up in things. But I want to thank everybody for being here. Excuse me."

Unidentified: (Inaudible)

Supervisor Vilella: "You can't ask that-- I don't know; I don't have the answer. Okay. When the EIS report comes out you can ask all these questions. That's when it comes out, seriously. I want to thank everybody. I just closed the informational meeting."

Meeting adjourned: 9:36 p.m.

*Barbara Dutton
Goun Club*