



# *TOWN OF HUNTINGTON*

## *LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK*

March 2010

Dear Concerned Resident:

We are in receipt of your correspondence in connection with the more recent violence in Huntington Station near the Jack Abrams Intermediate School. We are deeply concerned about these events, as are you, and wish to express our sincere regret that they have affected you and your children on such a personal level.

Please recognize that the Town of Huntington has been, and continues to be, a partner at the table doing everything possible within its purview, and very often more, to improve the quality of life in Huntington Station.

Many have written to the Town with an expectation that it has the ability to “secure” the area of gang or other criminal activity. At the outset, we should clarify that the Town’s Department of Public Safety does not possess police power. It is comprised of civilian employees whose task is to ensure residents’ compliance with the Town’s zoning and housing codes. Rather, it is the County that controls the allocation of police resources in our communities.

The Town has gone to bat with the County on numerous occasions lobbying for more police and police resources. We also helped cultivate the existing police presence at Jack Abrams that was able to respond immediately to the events of last Thursday’s incident. We donated the use of a marked public safety car to the Jack Abrams security team. And, indeed, we are working with our federal representatives, among them Congressman Steve Israel, to marshal FBI and any other Federal resources that can help our town get a jump on the gang and drug problem.

We applaud the arrests, announced this week, of 10 members of the Latin Kings gang as a result of a joint Suffolk County-FBI investigation. From what the police have told us, these 10 were responsible for a significant portion of the violence in the Huntington Station area. We are also encouraged by the County and Federal commitment to continue the effort until the gang influence is totally eradicated from the community.

Rest assured we take the safety of all residents quite seriously and in that regard, have most certainly taken many additional steps above and beyond that which might traditionally be expected of a municipality. In November 2009, Supervisor Petrone, together with County Legislators Lou D’Amaro and Jon Cooper, formed the Huntington Station Action Coalition. This is a broad network of community stakeholders who are now working collectively to plan and initiate tangible projects and programs that will address vulnerabilities in the Huntington Station area.

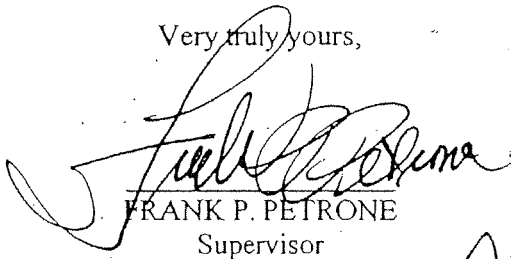
Under the Action Coalition, a Code Enforcement Task Force was initiated to supplement existing efforts to address illegal housing conditions. It consists of three inspectors, one of which is Spanish speaking. The three inspectors represent almost 30% (three of eleven) of the inspectors in the Department of Public Safety dedicated to the enforcement of the Town Code. From November 10, 2009 to March 5, 2010 the task force investigated 129 cases resulting in the issuance of 309 notices of violation, 30 demands for inspection and 55 summonses. Possible illegal apartments comprised 48 of the investigations with an additional 15 single-family homes investigated for possible overcrowding situations. Four search warrants have been executed at homes of suspected illegal housing in which the property owner failed or refused to allow an inspection. All four locations were found to contain illegal housing.

Just this week the final report of the Huntington Station Action Coalition was completed and released to the public and may be viewed at the Town's web site. Recognizing the special needs of the Huntington School District, Supervisor Petrone secured Huntington School Superintendent Jay Finello, Huntington School Board President Bill Dwyer, Jack Abrams Intermediate School Principal Mary Stokkers and Jack Abrams Intermediate School PTA President Rebecca Sanin to serve as both Coalition members as well as Sub-Committee members as their input is clearly critical.

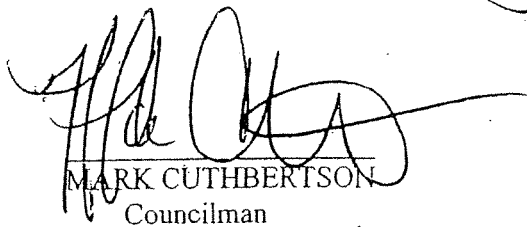
In addition to the immediate measures above, the Town has invested millions of dollars in public improvement projects to revitalize the Huntington Station area that is incremental, so in time, the general appearance of this area will vastly improve.

It is our intention to attend the April 19<sup>th</sup> School Board meeting to stand with the school community and others so we may continue the ongoing dialogue. In the meantime, please know we the Town, as well as our partners at the County and Federal government levels, are listening to your concerns and continuing to meet and brainstorm to address the safety and right of enjoyment of all residents in Huntington Station and throughout the Town.

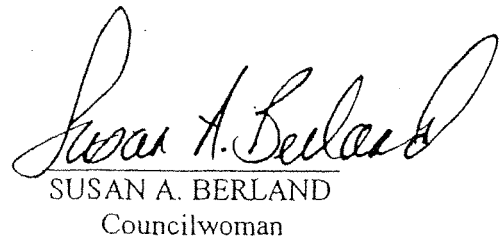
Very truly yours,



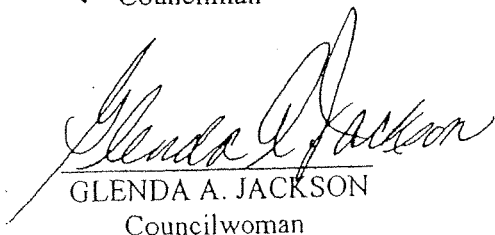
FRANK P. PETRONE  
Supervisor



MARK CUTHBERTSON  
Councilman



SUSAN A. BERLAND  
Councilwoman



GLEND A. JACKSON  
Councilwoman



MARK MAYOKA  
Councilman