



## INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF OCEAN BEACH

POST OFFICE BOX 457  
OCEAN BEACH, NEW YORK 11770-0457  
TEL: (631) 583-5940 FAX: (631) 583-7597  
[www.villageofoceanbeach.org](http://www.villageofoceanbeach.org)

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KEVIN J. SCHELLING, *Superintendent of Public Works*

June 11, 2015

Town Supervisor Anna Throne-Holst  
116 Hampton Road  
Southampton, NY 11968

### Re: Fire Island Sewage Treatment (FIST) Plant and Nitrogen Levels in the Great South Bay

Dear Town Supervisor Throne-Holst,

With the recent massive die-off of the fish in Riverhead, which followed only a month after an alarming number of dead turtles had washed up on our shores, it is clear that the wildlife of our bays and beaches is severely threatened. The failure of Fire Island's clam population to return to its once-thriving numbers is a sad reminder that the Great South Bay is still struggling against the effects of man-made pollution. And for many of today's youth, they have never seen the Bay without its brown-tinted color, an effect of the nitrogen pollution from antiquated sewer treatment systems.

I am reaching out to you to ask for a written letter of support for our commitment to lessening the nitrogen output into our waterways. This letter will be used to request the county to secure funds and a plan for FIST. With an upgraded and unified sewage treatment system, Fire Island could reduce as much as over 200 pounds of nitrogen waste per day. Over time, this reduction would lead to a strengthening of our marshes and other natural barriers, which will aid in better protection against future storms. Protection of the marine environment will also mean protection in real estate and property values, as not only will the marshes and sea grass continue to exist and thrive to serve as barriers against storms, but the flourishing aquatic life underneath and on our shores will ensure that our beaches stay as beautiful as we have always come to know them. Fire Island is known for its splendid shores, and is one of the chief reasons why areas such as Ocean Beach are home to nearly 6,000 seasonal residents and 13,000 day visitors during the summer months. Protecting our marine life and our beaches is not just an environmental necessity; it is an economical investment for years to come.

Please see the attached Newsday article from March 12, 2015 entitled "Waste and Water," which describes this grave issue in more detail. Steven Brautigam, the Clerk/Treasurer, will be in contact with you regarding any meeting you request, either at your office or at ours on Fire Island. Please email him at [sbrautigam@villageofoceanbeach.org](mailto:sbrautigam@villageofoceanbeach.org) or call us at (631) 583-5940.

Regards,

James S. Mallott,  
Mayor