

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



Office of Suffolk County Legislator Kevin J. McCaffrey, 14<sup>th</sup> District

For Immediate Release  
Date: August 4, 2015

Contact: Gregory Atherton  
Phone: 631-854-1100

## MCCAFFREY CELEBRATES SUCCESS IN PRESERVING THE CHARACTER AND ENSURING RESILIENCY OF SANDY AFFECTED COMMUNITIES



*Pictured Left: Legislator Kevin McCaffrey and Carolyn Gusoff of WCBS. Pictured Right: A raised home with an open foundation.*

Lindenhurst, NY: Suffolk County Legislator Kevin McCaffrey (R-Lindenhurst) recently joined with residents of Superstorm Sandy-affected communities and members of the media to discuss an important milestone in the ongoing recovery process. Namely, the discussion was focused on McCaffrey's successful efforts in lobbying local municipalities to make critical changes in their local building codes to facilitate certain funding opportunities for impacted residents.

After Superstorm Sandy touched down on Long Island almost three years ago, countless homes were damaged or destroyed by unprecedented flooding. Both federal and state funding soon became available for the residents to retrofit and rebuild their homes and communities. Through the Governor's office, a dedicated effort to aid the recovery was created – New York Rising. Despite the many complexities and setbacks associated with the administering of New York Rising, the affected communities have slowly been making progress, primarily through the raising of structures in the most vulnerable flood zones. However, with the raising of residential structures came a host of unintended consequences.

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The homes that were raised sit in communities that have traditionally been composed of residential units constructed on standard concrete foundations, or on raised structures with closed foundations. Therefore, the introduction of raised homes with open foundations post-Sandy introduced a major disruption to the aesthetics of various neighborhoods. Furthermore, New York Rising did not provide any funding for closed foundations. Due to these realities, McCaffrey committed himself to finding a solution that would simultaneously preserve the traditional characteristics of affected communities, while also ensuring residents got the funding that was needed.

McCaffrey knew that any work that New York Rising funded was required to be in compliance with local building codes, thus if closed foundations became a requirement, the costs would ostensibly have to be covered by the state. It was when the Village of Freeport had made closed foundations a requirement in their code that McCaffrey clearly saw the benefits in the expansion of those efforts into nearby municipalities.

McCaffrey's vigorous advocacy for closed foundations proved extremely successful, as the Town of Babylon, the Village of Babylon, the Village of Lindenhurst and the Village of Amityville have all made the necessary changes to their respective codes. A trend has indeed started, as other municipalities throughout Long Island are on track to follow suit and make similar changes to their codes in the near future.

"This was a change that needed to happen as soon as possible," said McCaffrey. "The people whose lives were touched by Superstorm Sandy have gone through more than their fair share of struggles. There was no legitimate reason for having yet another hurdle for these residents to jump over. Now the communities are in a much better position to not only rebuild and become more resilient, but also have the aesthetics they deserve."

McCaffrey is committed to seeing that those who have properly applied and are qualified for New York Rising reimbursements associated with the raising of their homes get the funds they need to comply with the new building standards.

"Hopefully, we can soon put Superstorm Sandy behind us," added McCaffrey. "This was a great success and I thank all of my colleagues at the village and town levels for stepping up to the plate when it was so desperately needed."

*Legislator McCaffrey represents Suffolk County's 14th Legislative District which encompasses the Village of Lindenhurst, Babylon Village, the hamlets of West Babylon and North Lindenhurst, portions of Copiague, North Babylon, and Babylon's barrier beach communities.*