

August 4, 2011

To: Rye City Council

From: James E. Carnicelli, C.E., Managing Engineer, Carnell Engineering, P.C.

Re: Public Health and Safety, Hen Island, Rye, N. Y., Westchester County

Dear Council Members:

I have asked that this letter be read before the August 10th. Rye City Council

As a civil/environmental engineer, I have managed and directed four companies concerned with environmental assessments, testing and consultations for over 35 years, serving the Hudson Valley and particularly Westchester County.

I am currently a member of the Westchester Board of Health having served as Vice President of the Board for over 20+ years. As a current and active member I am one of the longest serving members of the Westchester Board.

I have visited Hen Island on numerous occasions and I am aware of environmental issues which I refer to in this correspondence.

The existing conditions at Hen Island are of concern to me because there are occurrences of sewerage pollution affecting both the site and Long Island Sound. In addition to these unacceptable conditions, the homeowners do not have access to potable drinking water usually provided. Water is collected by water cisterns which allow for contamination and encourages mosquito larvae breeding.

With the present threat of West Nile Virus the mosquito infestation is of serious concern. The mosquito infestation is intensified due to the lack of maintenance in the north and rear sections of the north island facing the Greenhaven community and north section of the center island also facing Greenhaven. These mosquito breeding sites are increased due to the storing of washed up debris and leaves placed in the high reed areas. The remedy to minimize the infestation is compliance with a standard mosquito control program which would include removing all cisterns storage use in conjunction with regular maintenance of the reed areas.

Some of the reasons why composting toilets are not acceptable are:

- Soil and rock and topography
- Odors produced by these systems.

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Composting Toilets – Cont'd.

- Systems do not accept gray water (showers, bathtubs, kitchen and bathroom sink drainage). A separate septic or holding tank system would be required.
- Proper mainland certified septic type service is usually required. This would be difficult in servicing an isolated island
- Limited, improper or non- maintenance by site owners
- Non-disposal of composting waste
- State and County code restriction for their use.
- Increasing mosquito infestations due to proximity of marsh lands of the island

After researching all aspects of the sanitary waste and water systems, it is my opinion as well my employed engineers, that composting toilets and open cistern collection of gray water is not an acceptable solution.

The only reasonable solution for public health and safety is municipal land line connection from the mainland to Hen Island for both sanitary waste and potable water.

In the best interest of public health and safety, I am hopeful that the Rye City Council will agree that this is the only means to achieve this goal.

Very truly yours:



James E. Carnicelli
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Scarsdale, New York