



LONG ISLAND BUSINESS NEWS

VOLUME 68 NUMBER 1 ■ LIBN.COM

Part of the BRIDGETOWER MEDIA network

JANUARY 1-7, 2021 ■ \$2.00

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021



LI leaders give their
projections for the
new year » **page 4**

MICHAEL DOWLING:

**A FORECAST FOR
THE REGION'S
POST-COVID
RECOVERY**

» 4

MAURIE MCINNIS:

**RETHINKING
EDUCATION'S
TRADITIONAL
MODEL**

» 8

CAROLYN MAZZENGA:

**REMOTE
WORKFORCE
WILL BE PANDEMIC'S
LASTING LEGACY**

» 5

KYLE STROBER:

**RECOVERY DEPENDS ON THE
STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE
OF DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY**

» 5



OUTLOOK2021

Continued From Page 5

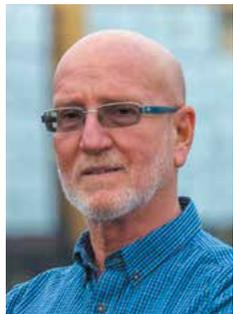
to spur economic development to increase their revenues. They will seek to repurpose or revitalize parcels that are abandoned, vacant or underutilized. Town initiatives, such as those undertaken by Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine that create “floating” zones, will achieve economically and socially welcomed redevelopment of existing commercial properties. These efforts need to become a model for others. Similarly, Smithtown’s efforts to create the LI Innovation Park at Hauppauge could be mirrored by its neighbor, Huntington, by resurrecting the Melville Employment Center Plan.

Counties, towns, and villages will use this pandemic to amend and modernize their application, inspection, permit, and approval procedures in order to reduce public health risks while encouraging economic development. Embracing technology will be critical, with innovations such as electronic submissions, virtual inspections and public hearings.

Just like the New Deal after the Great Depression and ARRA after the Great Recession, our federal government may seek to pass an infrastructure stimulus bill. Projects like the Oakdale Merge, expansion of Suffolk sewers and the electrification of the LIRR further east may finally come to fruition. New York State will continue to drive forward downtown revitalization initiatives in Islip, Westbury, Hicksville and Baldwin as well as push for transformative projects like Heritage Village at the former Hicksville Sears site.

2021 will hopefully be a year of silver linings after a horrific 2020.

Andrew Kaufman, principal, Brookhaven Rail Terminal



The role of rail in 2021 will help create a far greener Long Island as we begin to emerge from COVID.

Brookhaven Rail Terminal is anticipating a noticeable increase in the demand for

rail as an alternative to the conga line of heavy trucks that brings goods and supplies onto the Island as the economy begins to recover from the shock of the pandemic. Interestingly, rail freight did not experience a significant drop during the region’s initial shutdown during the spring of 2020, as the home repair industry saw sheltering homeowners turn to their own residences with unprecedented inspiration. BRT’s intermodal rail yard became stocked with plywood, sheetrock, asphalt roofing and more, significantly reducing the wait time for material to get to market. Post-COVID, one anticipates a significant increase in additional products that reflect a return to “normal.”

Strategically, the new administration in Washington is expected to turn its attention to the nation’s rail infrastructure. A key element of that system is the proposed Cross-Harbor Rail Tunnel (also known as the Cross Harbor Rail Freight Tunnel) that would tunnel under Upper New York Bay and connect New Jersey with Brooklyn. It would have an exponential impact on our ability to reduce truck emissions throughout the region and harness the power of rail to strengthen our economy and our environment.

Lawrence Kadish, president and founder, Museum of American Armor



For those of us entrusted with telling America’s story of courage and valor in the defense of freedom, 2021 will become even more important as we seek to recapture the year lost to social isolation, quarantine, and the inability of many

museums to open their doors. There is a shared appreciation that even the modest amount of time assigned to teach history in the classroom has been further reduced. While technology can fill part of the gap, it is our museums with powerful displays and exhibits that ensure the history lesson becomes an indelible part of a young student’s learning experience.

The year 2021 will also see the nation and the world observe the 20th anniversary of the terror attacks on our country, one that shocked America, saw Long Island conduct countless funerals, but also saw a nation rallied in a way unseen since World War II. We need to use the upcoming milestone anniversary during 2021 as a means to better appreciate the strategic threat democracies continue to face from terrorist nations and civilization destroyers now armed with nuclear weapons. That shared awareness is the collective debt we continue to owe our veterans.

Kevin Chandler, v.p. and general manager, Suez Long Island



While COVID will continue to impact every aspect of our society in 2021, the critical assignment of protecting our environment through the efficient operation of Nassau County’s wastewater

treatment system remains – in every sense of the word - essential. During 2020, SUEZ and Nassau County placed on line a state-of-the-art biological process that is part of a \$19.6 million project to the Bay Park plant that will remove nitrogen in wastewater that is discharged into Reynolds Channel, north of Long Beach. In 2021, a second phase of the project will be completed, further reducing nitrogen, that, in turn, will help our fragile ecosystems regenerate and will aid in bringing back fishing and shellfishing. In addition, it will strengthen south shore marshlands, which further helps protect our shorelines during severe storms. COVID has served to remind everyone that public health requires constant vigilance. That includes embracing County Executive Curran’s mandate to operate ‘cleaner, smarter, and better,’ wastewater treatment facilities.

‘SELLERS WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE THE UPPER HAND IN 2021.’

Andrew Kubrick, partner-in-charge, Marks Paneth Long Island office



As the curtain closes on 2020, a year marked by the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, we begin a new year and another audit and tax season. Modern technology has made the idea of working remotely

a reality, and the future of the accounting profession has changed forever. Microsoft Teams and Zoom calls were foreign to most of us until this year. Now, you can work from home and share and exchange information as if you are in the office. But beyond that, three advances in modern technology—artificial intelligence, data analytics and cloud-based accounting software—will have an even more profound effect on the accounting profession and how public accountants conduct their business. Artificial intelligence will help to reduce financial fraud and decrease human error. Data analytics will continue to be used in audit planning to identify risk areas. Cloud-based accounting software has allowed outside accountants to access a client’s information more easily and work on tax returns remotely. Among many other things, this pandemic has taught the accounting profession that technology will lead the way in properly servicing your clients and your staff.

Elissa Kyle, placemaking director, Vision Long Island



2020 was, well, transformative to say the least. While many businesses are struggling as we head into winter, there are signs that there may be light at the end of this long tunnel. January and February

are going to be challenging for downtown businesses with COVID cases increasing and cold weather making many of the outdoor solutions unfeasible. However businesses are better prepared for the spring and won’t have to deal with the steep learning curve that many faced this year. Restaurants will be ready to transition to outdoor dining as soon as the weather starts to warm up even a little- those outdoor heaters will come in handy in March and April. Local governments are more prepared to streamline permitting processes to get this in motion. Hopefully the roll out of the vaccine will help numbers drop more quickly when the weather warms and not go back up again in the fall. Multifamily residential projects are still moving forward in many downtowns providing more feet on the street for businesses. Continued creativity will help our Main Street businesses connect with customers and increasing distribution of a vaccine will help improve the comfort and confidence of customers supporting our businesses.

Linda Lugo, chairperson of the Board of Managers, OneKey MLS



Our local housing market has proven to be resilient, as realtors have found new and creative ways of doing business safely and successfully throughout the year while working through the various phases of the pandemic and

I expect that same ingenuity to be a positive factor throughout 2021. Real estate transactions have, and will continue to happen.

As the law of supply and demand has been at play for most of 2020, home prices across the OneKey MLS area have reported significant year-over-year increases in the second half of this year. The influx of buyers moving to the suburbs from the city, coupled with the pent-up demand of buyers that was already in place, has created a very strong sellers’ market on Long Island. We expect sellers to continue to have the upper hand in 2021, but more reasonably than what the market experienced this year.

With the good news of the vaccine, more inventory should come on the market by the second half of 2021, as would-be sellers feel more comfortable with listing their home. This will result in a more balanced market and modest price gains. Other good news for buyers is that experts predict mortgage rates will remain low, somewhere around 3%, for at least the first half of 2021.

Luis Vazquez, president, Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



The Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has been around for over 30 years, advocating and supporting small businesses on Long Island and throughout the metropolitan area. This past year

it has been a challenge for all small businesses, especially Hispanic and minority-owned small businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic has left our community with little, and in some cases no options. Many have closed their businesses for good, and others are barely making it to stay open, fearing more lockdowns in the future. However, this pandemic has opened new ways of supporting our small businesses.

Technology has helped us in communicating with our small businesses, keeping them informed on local, state, and national government programs and regulations to be able to conduct business in a safe and responsible manner. We feel technology is a catalyst for advancing business practices and adapting to new norms, those who are educated in best technology practices for their business will continue running their business in an innovative manner.

Our chamber has had to work with national, state, and local authorities to advocate for our member’s businesses, and keep our members updated on programs, regulations, and best technology practices to keep small Hispanic and minority businesses informed. We look