

MAUREEN O'CONNELL, RN, JD
NASSAU COUNTY CLERK



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

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October 8, 2015

Honorable Norma L. Gonsalves
Presiding Officer
Nassau County Legislature
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, NY 11501

Honorable Kevan Abrahams
Minority Leader
Nassau County Legislature
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, NY 11501

Dear Presiding Officer Gonsalves and Minority Leader Abrahams:

I am writing to advise you of my vehement objection to the proposed fee increases set forth in the 2016 proposed County budget that negatively impact land filings in my office. Further, I would like to draw your attention to the significant discrepancy that occurs annually regarding my office's revenue projection erroneously being revised upward by the Budget Office. Historically, my projections, which are forecast utilizing the preceding year's trends and anticipating market conditions for the upcoming year, have been consistent with the actual revenue realized by my office.

In 2010, Nassau fees incurred by homeowners selling their mortgaged property and purchasing new mortgaged property was ten dollars for each instrument totaling \$30.00. If the two proposed local laws impacting land recordings are passed by this Legislature, that same transaction would cost \$1,575.00 in Nassau fees. This 5,250% escalation of fees during a five year period is unconscionable.

One proposed local law seeks to amend Section 19-17.0 of the Nassau County Administrative Code to double fees collected by the County Clerk's Office for the recording and indexing of an instrument or for the satisfaction or cancellation of a lien or statutory notice of a lien or claim on land and the indexing of such satisfaction or cancellation from one hundred fifty dollars to three hundred dollars for each block under which such instrument is required to be indexed.

Additionally, another local law seeks to increase fees collected by the Department of Assessment for "Tax Map Verification" from seventy five dollars to two hundred twenty five dollars. Although the Tax Map Verification fee and Clerk block fee are independently collected by different County agencies, the net financial burden to homeowners would be catastrophic.

In the past I have opposed any and all increases in County Clerk fees. As you may be aware, the housing market in Nassau County has been subject to near collapse –with many areas still recovering from Superstorm Sandy damage, zombie houses resulting from slow-moving foreclosure proceedings, and tight financing. These factors make selling or purchasing a home extremely difficult as is. The proposed fee increases before you are egregious and quite possibly in violation of the New York State Law.

Nassau County recording fees are already among the highest in the nation. Clearly, any proposed fee increases would crush the real estate market and have negative economic consequences for both potential homeowners and possibly the County as real estate transactions, and revenue generated as a result, are sure to decline.

Accordingly, I strenuously oppose any fee increases and urge you oppose as well. Thank you in advance for your further consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,

MAUREEN O'CONNELL
Nassau County Clerk

cc: Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano
Deputy County Executive Eric Naughton
Budget Office Director Maurice Chalmers
Legislator Siela A. Bynoe
Legislator Carrie Solages
Legislator Denise Ford
Legislator Laura Curran
Legislator Francis X. Becker, Jr.
Legislator Howard J. Kopel
Legislator Vincent T. Muscarella
Legislator Richard J. Nicoletto
Legislator Ellen W. Birnbaum
Legislator Delia M. Deriggi-Whitton
Legislator James Kennedy
Legislator Laura M. Schaefer
Legislator Dennis Dunne, Sr.
Legislator Judith A. Jacobs
Legislator Rose Marie Walker
Legislator Donald N. MacKenzie
Legislator Steven D. Rhoads