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director dies at 75

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JUDGE REBUKES FLYNN

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A4-5

THE NEW FACE OF NASSAU

County becoming more
diverse and older, data reveal

A2-3

KEVIN P. COUGHLIN / ALLISLANDAERIAL

Around LI

East Williston OKs 5-year plan

East Williston's school board voted 5-0 Monday to approve a new five-year strategic plan that emphasizes STEM, real-world learning, social and emotional learning, and facilities and security.

Sean Feeney, principal of The Wheatley School, said East Williston residents chose those four areas for district officials to direct additional money, time and staff hours to between now and the 2022-23 school year.

Feeney, who served on a committee to help develop the plan, said that the district already has a strong science, technology, engineering and math curriculum, but that the goal for the next five years will be to integrate arts into coursework and evolve STEM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Math) into STEAM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Arts/Math).

The strategic plan also calls for possibly expanding internships, field trips and overnight and abroad experiences for students.

Superintendent Elaine Kanas said the strategic plan is a living document that will be adjusted annually and approved by the school board when new milestones are completed.

— KHRISTOPHER J. BROOKS

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Whether you have one, two, three or more **'kids in tow,'** here's a roundup of fun, **budget-friendly events on Long Island.** newsday.com/family

UPPER BROOKVILLE

Kept out by RED TAPE

Russia's LI mission, shut down by U.S. 2 years ago, isn't likely to reopen soon

BY DAVID OLSON

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Two years after President Barack Obama ordered the closure of the sprawling Russian government mission in Upper Brookville, experts say there's unlikely to be any movement soon to allow diplomats to return to the century-old, 18,929-square-foot mansion.

Obama closed the mission in retaliation for alleged Russian interference in the 2016 election and alleged harassment of U.S. diplomats in Russia. The gate to the 14-acre estate remains chained and padlocked.

The Russian foreign ministry said in an August statement that, every two weeks, it uses "diplomatic channels" to request access to the estate — and several other shuttered Russian government properties around the United States — for "holding one-off protocol events" and "with the aim of preventing the failure of operating systems," according to an unofficial British Broadcasting Corporation translation of the statement.

"The U.S. Department of State has systematically refused to provide such access," the statement said.

The Russian embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment. A State Department spokesman said in an email that "the Department does not comment publicly on diplomatic communications."

Russia described the mission as a residence for members of the country's United Nations delegation and a site for official events.

While Obama ordered the closure, President Donald J. Trump cannot reopen it without congressional approval. After reports that the Trump administration was working toward returning the estate to



The Russians cannot unlock the gates and return to their Russian mission until Congress approves.

Russia, Congress last year approved a law that requires congressional review of any such plan.

Timothy Frye, the Marshall D. Shulman professor of post-Soviet foreign policy at Columbia University, said reopening the mission would be part of "a first move in a warming of relations . . . a low-cost signal that relations are normalizing. But relations are anything but normal at this time."

"Given the real opposition to improving relations with Russia, until we figure out what happened in 2016 and beyond, it's hard to see that the Congress will make any moves to improve relations without some substantial moves by the Kremlin to show that they're also serious about improving relations," Frye said.

Instead, Russia has engaged

A grand old place

Facts and figures about the Russian mission, according to Nassau assessment records:

- Built in 1918
- Has 36 rooms
- Has 15 bathrooms
- Has an in-ground pool
- Market value, with the surrounding 14 acres of the estate, is \$9,350,400
- Purchased by the Soviet Union in 1952 to house the Soviet delegate to the United Nations
- Once owned by New York Gov. Nathan Miller

in "extraordinarily provocative" actions, such as seizing Ukrainian naval vessels and 24 Ukrainian sailors last month, and allegedly poisoning a former Russian spy in England,

said Paul Fritz, an associate professor of political science at Hofstra University and an expert on international relations.

When the Democrats take control of the House of Representatives in January, they likely will reopen investigations into alleged Russian meddling in the elections and any potential Trump campaign collusion, Fritz said.

"I think that's going to keep pressure on the White House to avoid doing anything that would appear conciliatory to Russia," he said.

For now, "the State Department remains in control of the property. The mission, open or closed, has not created any issues in the community, Upper Brookville Mayor Elliot Conway said.

"They've been good neighbors," he said.