

Meeting Summary – January 21, 2026

Hauppauge Community Action Committee – BESS Discussion

A committee meeting was held to review materials related to the proposed BESS facility and to discuss community concerns and next steps. The meeting followed a roundtable format and included participation from concerned residents, fire department representatives, and school district administration and Board of Education members.

Key Discussion Themes

The group reviewed all distributed documents and shared concerns related to safety, emergency response, and broader community impacts. A central issue identified was the challenge of educating and activating the broader community. Many residents are either unaware of the proposed facility or do not fully understand what it is and the potential implications.

There was consensus that Hauppauge is the epicenter of this issue and must remain the primary focus before extending outreach to other towns. Participants expressed concern that if the Hauppauge community, the most directly affected, cannot be effectively mobilized, it will be difficult to activate neighboring communities. Additionally, other towns may be reluctant to engage due to concerns that opposition could result in the facility being relocated to their own areas.

Coordination and Collaboration

The importance of a coordinated approach between the school district, fire department, and community was emphasized. Participants agreed that there is already a strong foundation of collaboration among these groups that can be further strengthened and expanded.

School district administration and BOE members indicated that they will take all materials and concerns raised during the meeting back to the Board for presentation and consultation to determine what additional actions the district and/or BOE may be able to take.

Legislative and Local Considerations

A critical action item identified is monitoring two bills currently in committee at the State Senate and Assembly level. If either bill passes, it could significantly undermine or eliminate local efforts related to this issue.

At the local level, the committee is continuing to consult on the most effective path forward. One anticipated step includes engaging with the Planning Board and presenting concerns from multiple perspectives, including the community, school district, and first responders/fire department.

Next Steps

- Increase public education and outreach

- Continue consultation on local strategy
- Engage the Planning Board with coordinated input
- Monitor state legislation
- Strengthen collaboration between all stakeholders

The committee has also connected with a former Fire Marshal and Hazardous Materials Coordinator for the Town of Islip who has offered to assist. This individual is expected to attend the next committee meeting to share expertise. Following that meeting, the committee aims to further refine and solidify a coordinated local strategy.