LTV to Broadcast in Southampton

By Bella Lewis

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LTV's Channel 20 public access content will soon begin broadcasting to Southampton, via that town's new channel, SunTV. In the future, the plan is for SunTV to add content of its own and handle most of Southampton Town's programming.

Previously, Cablevision, which airs programming from all over Long Island, was Southampton’s public access provider. Extending East Hampton's more area-specific content via SunTV marks a welcome shift toward more community-oriented content, said Southampton Town officials.

"We're hoping to get it up in a few weeks, and we're excited about what it's going to look like and what it's going to sound like," said Connie Conway, the town's director of communications. "When you're out here, when you're living in the town, and you turn on public access, it should be something that reflects the community."

"This is a huge win for all involved," said Michael Clark, LTV's executive director. "For LTV, it creates a new level of viewership. For Southampton, they can view our extensive archive and current shows while giving SunTV a platform to create their own."

According to Mr. Clark, Frazer Dougherty, the founder of LTV, saw this possibility a long time ago, "but wasn't able to pull that off, so it's kind of neat that it's finally happening."

Southampton Town Supervisor Jay Schneiderman remarked that although "a lot of people put their stuff on Facebook and Instagram and times are changing, Channel 20 is very usable, and it's in that zone where a lot of people channel-surf, where there's CNN and MSNBC and CNBC, so a lot of people would watch it and they would become regulars if we had good content." He foresees talk shows, local sports, not-for-profits, and cooking shows on the airwaves. "I'm excited about it," he said.

Ms. Conway, too, expressed excitement that Southampton is now to use LTV's studios and production facilities, which will be open to all the town's residents as well as anyone or any group sponsored by a resident — "Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts! anyone who wants to go out and produce something."

"We're happy to share our facility and our expertise to help SunTV get underway," said Diana Weir, LTV's chairwoman, who helped make the arrangement happen. "We're all one big happy family out here, so why not?" she added. "We have a lot of amazing programming at our studio, including a lot of Southampton content. We can all learn from each other, and the rich history of the East End."