

Robert J. Kingston
Kaintuck Farm
Mill Neck, N.Y. 11765

March 8,2013

Frank Leone
President, Leone Homes

Perhaps my wife and I have always cherished houses that can boast both elegance and history. So when our property-a product of the "Gatsby" period, when Long Island became "estate country" (and the house, incidentally, where Svetlana Stalin wrote her first book after escaping, with the help of her publisher, from Russia, in the depths of the cold war)-became available thirty-some years ago, we quickly took on the task of maintaining its status in times of continuing change.

My wife is an artist, I a political analyst and writer, so the property flourished and served us both professionally and socially-until the extraordinary storm "Sandy," last October, with the help of a couple of gigantic trees, took down the western end of the house, as well as doors, windows, some ceilings, and the corners of rooms, together with great sections of its valued slate roofs and walkways. Fortunately, among the contractors we interviewed, Frank Leone showed himself more confident and compelling-and certainly understanding-than other bidders. So, with the careful advice and counsel of Chubb's thoughtful representatives (who have insured the property since we acquired title to it, more than thirty years ago), a small army of subcontractors, under his guidance, began to repair and replace doors, windows, slate and tile, wall and floor, lighting and plumbing-even one stove!-plaster and paint, wherever Mr. Leone, with Chubb, had noted the need. Except for the outside paint (which must wait until spring), the work was completed in early February.

Frank Leone is an extraordinary professional, indeed perhaps an exemplar of his trade. He begins, of course, with a remarkable appreciation of the work, the "task" that he is being invited to review. He observes in detail; he describes the task as he understands it, in terms that his client can understand too; and his own assurance does not seem dictatorial in any abrasive-way. He communicates, too, an understanding of his potential client's own concerns, and an appreciation of what is "valued" in the intended task, from the client's own point of view. And-no doubt of ultimate significance-without any elaboration on the client's part, he seemed to share and generate a comparable confidence between his client and the other skilled subcontractors whom he will, on the owners behalf, need to engage.

Perhaps his own "right hand man" and *Vice President*, Mark DeRugeriis, epitomizes the importance of this aspect of his wisdom as a contractor; for Mr. DeRugeriis, who played that lead role in the supervision and completion of this prolonged and expensive task, became not only a clearly accepted "director of operations" but virtually a "friend of the family" for the duration. His command of professional skills, and his understanding of the human relations of the profession, were an asset throughout this project, and reflect Mr. Leone's wisdom and taste.

Mr. Leone is known to care about the history and the *look* of this part of the North Shore of Long Island; it is apparent that he may care equally for its life and its work and its residents. We appreciated his efforts and the effort of those who worked with him.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Kingston', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert]. Kingston