

**Meeting Minutes of the
SOUTH SHORE ESTUARY RESERVE COUNCIL
August 9, 2006
Freeport Recreational Center
Freeport, New York**

Members/Designees Present: Fred Anders (for George R. Stafford); Laretta Fischer (for Steve Levy); Dan Fucci (for Thomas Suozzi); Joseph Febrizio (for Charles Theofan); Michael Foley (for Kate Murray/Ron Masters); Nancy Kearney (for John Venditto/ James Byrne, P.E.); Michael Litwa (for Steven Bellone/ Richard Groh); Sean Colgan (for Eric M. Hofmeister/Eugene Murphy); Alan Svoboda (for John Jay LaValle/John Turner); Ellen Kelly (for William Glacken); Maureen Dolan Murphy; Carl LoBue; William Wise (for David O. Conover); Dennis Cataldo; Christopher Squeri; Ken Budny (for Gregory LoVece/Bill Hamilton); Michael Eagan; Charles DeQuillfeldt (for Denise M. Sheehan/Gordon Colvin); and, Gary Lawton (for Bernadette Castro).

Staff Present: South Shore Estuary Reserve (Reserve) Office: Jeff Fullmer; Kimberly Rancourt; Michelle Pluzynski; and, Lou Siegel.

Guests Present: Kenneth Arnold (Nassau County Department of Public Works); Allan Aronoff (Brookhaven League of Women Voters/SSER CAC Vice Chair); Katie Hoffmann; Ben Sohm (South Shore Bayhouse Owners Association/Reserve CAC); and, Rob Weltner (Operation SPLASH/Reserve CAC).

Members Absent: Marty Shea (for Patrick Heaney); Cornelia Schlenk; Robert Grover; Lauren Hill (for Mitch Pally); Robert Wieboldt; and, Darrell Kost (for Thomas J. Madison).

WELCOME, OPENING REMARKS, INTRODUCTION

F. Anders welcomed South Shore Estuary Reserve (Reserve) Council members, designees and guests. He thanked the Village of Freeport for hosting the meeting and acknowledged Ken Arnold of Nassau County's Department of Public Works.

E. Kelly welcomed the Reserve Council and guests on behalf of Freeport Mayor William Glacken, and invited them to visit Freeport's Nautical Mile to see the waterfront revitalization that has taken place over the past few years.

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 22, 2006 MEETING

F. Anders stated that the draft March 22, 2006 meeting minutes were mailed to Council members. K. Budny made a motion to accept the minutes as written. M. Foley seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the minutes were accepted unanimously.

SOUTH SHORE ESTUARY RESERVE OFFICE REPORT

A written Reserve Office report was included in the meeting folders. J. Fullmer highlighted some Reserve Office activities since the March 22nd meeting:

- Copies of draft text for the 2003-2005 Comprehensive Management Plan Implementation Status Report were distributed to Reserve Council members. Reserve Council members are requested to review the draft text for accuracy with regard to CMP implementation accomplishments and provide any comments to the Reserve Office by August 23, 2006.
- The next steps in development of the status report will be to prepare the layout and photos, which will be done by Reserve Office staff. Copies will be prepared for the Governor, legislative leaders and Reserve Council members. The report will be posted on the Reserve Council website.
- The Reserve Office is planning a *Day on the Bay* implementation partner boat tour of the estuary for September. This year the boat will leave from Freeport and will tour the western bays. The event will be the venue for presentation of the Reserve Council Stewardship Award and release of the implementation status report.

Kimberly Rancourt updated the Council on Reserve water quality improvement and tributary habitat restoration initiatives:

- The Reserve Office has received and is currently reviewing a final draft of the Brown's River/Green's Creek Watershed Management Plan. The Town of Islip will soon post this draft on its Town website for public review and comment. The Town has planned a public meeting in September at which the plan will be presented.
- Reserve Office staff participated in a meeting and field reconnaissance to develop initial habitat restoration recommendations for Swan River on April 17th. A draft Swan River watershed management plan is nearing completion.
- Each of the municipalities within the Massapequa Creek watershed has completed a survey about their priority stormwater capital improvement projects. A draft Massapequa Creek watershed management plan is currently being developed that incorporates information from these surveys and recommendations of the habitat and education subcommittees of the watershed advisory committee.
- The Forge River Protection Task Force has taken steps to advance watershed planning. A year of surface water quality data has been collected by Suffolk County and the Peconic Baykeeper, groundwater samples have been taken, and in cooperation with funding from Senator Ken LaValle, the SUNY Marine Science Research Center has initiated a study to characterize sediments and sediment flux in the river. The Task Force is also working to produce outreach materials to be distributed to watershed residents.
- A NYS Department of State Request for Proposals to prepare and inventory and analysis of barriers to fish passage for six Reserve tributaries and to prepare watershed management plans for Carlls River and Beaver Dam Creek is being advertized. The RFP tasks were derived from CMP priority CMP recommendations and the work of the Council Diadromous Fish Workgroup. Proposals are due August 18th. Once a consultant has been hired, the advisory committees will be formed to assist with preparation of these reports.

- The Inventory and Assessment of Stormwater Drainage Infrastructure Mapping in the Reserve is progressing. A scoping meeting was held on May 18th with the consultant and technical advisory committee. A letter has been sent from the Reserve Office to all government entities in the Reserve informing them of the project and requesting their assistance. A draft questionnaire has been developed and will soon be finalized and sent to all of the government entities.
- Reserve Office staff is planning stormwater management and technology workshop to be conducted in late October of this year. The Office organized and hosted a planning meeting in May with Reserve stakeholder representatives, including DOS, DEC, DOT, Suffolk and Nassau Counties, NY Sea Grant NEMO, and the Reserve Council CAC to discuss the overall purpose of the workshop as well as potential agenda items, presenters, and logistics.
- On June 8th, K. Rancourt represented the Reserve Office at a workshop at the University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center, which is supported by the Cooperative Institute for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Technology (CICEET), a partnership of UNH and NOAA. The workshop included a tour of the Stormwater Center's field testing site, where various stormwater best management practices are evaluated for effectiveness in a side-by-side, controlled setting, and a presentation of field testing results.
- Office staff has developed a draft agenda for the Reserve workshop, which includes panel discussions on a variety of stormwater treatment technologies, where and how they can be most effectively used, and associated operation and maintenance issues. October 25th and 26th have been identified as tentative dates (though it will only be one day) for the workshop to be held at Bethpage State Park. More information about the workshop will be sent to Council members in the near future.

Lou Siegel reported on the work of the Council's Western Bays Water Quality Workgroup and other initiatives he is working on:

- The Reserve Council Diadromous Fish Workgroup prepared a strategy for conducting a volunteer survey of alewife spawning runs in selected Reserve tributaries. Alewife spawning runs were observed in the Carmans River and Howells Creek in Bellport. The survey was conducted through the end of May. Reserve Office Student Conservation Association Estuary Steward Clare O'Reilly provided great support for the many volunteers who tirelessly monitored the tributaries. The monitoring data was provided to the Workgroup Chair and will be analyzed and presented to the Workgroup in the near future.
- The Shipboard Marine Science Course for teachers was conducted during the months of April, May, and June. The program was instituted under a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency in cooperation with the New York State Marine Education Association. Participating educators received classroom and laboratory training in water monitoring and then took four field trips to explore the estuarine environment first from the shoreline and then from a kayak, historic sailboat, and modern fishing excursion boat. The 20 participating educators were awarded certificates of course completion prepared by the Reserve Office. This program was consistent with the Reserve CMP recommended action to increase monitoring of the estuary and to foster professional training for teachers.

Additional opportunities are being explored to advance these actions through new partnerships with NYSMEA and other educational institutions and grant foundations.

- The Reserve Office and Council were represented this year at the National Marine Educators Association Conference held at Brooklyn College in July. The conference brought marine science educators from across the United States and the world together to network and discuss current marine science programs and issues. The Reserve Office prepared a Reserve program poster, distributed Reserve outreach materials, and provided a workshop presentation on living resources in the Reserve.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE REPORT

Fred Anders presented the Department of State (DOS) report:

- Applications for the 2006 grant cycle of the State's Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (EPF LWRP) were due May 26, 2006. Fifteen applications from Reserve implementation partners requested a total of \$7,059,024 for diverse projects to address the Reserve's water quality, living resources, estuarine-related economy, and waterfront revitalization. A public information meeting related to the call for proposals was conducted on April 3rd at Planting Fields Arboretum in Oyster Bay.
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will soon announce Round 9 of the Water Quality Improvement Projects grant program. There are \$7 million statewide for municipal wastewater treatment improvement projects to meet stormwater discharge requirements, and aquatic habitat restoration projects by municipalities and not-for-profits. Project proposals will be due in October. Related questions may be directed to Tony Leung at NYS DEC Region 1 or Ken Smith at DOS.
- Cornell University hiring an educator for the NYS Sea Grant NEMO (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials) program. The overall focus of the position is to work with Long Island communities - with a focus on Reserve communities - to build a better understanding of municipal Phase II requirements and to increase implementation of effective water quality improvement policies and practices. DOS has contributed \$75,000 to this effort with funds received from Congressman Israel through the US EPA.
- Public information meetings were held May 2nd and 3rd and a public hearing was held at Babylon Town Hall on May 15th for the South Shore Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat updates and revisions. DOS is currently preparing the findings letters for local distribution and submission package for the Office of Coastal Resources Management at NOAA. The new narratives and maps will be posted on the DOS website with links on the Reserve Council website once they have been formally approved by NOAA.
- Today, at Jones Beach State Park, Governor George E. Pataki signed into law, the New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Act (Article 14 of the NYS ECL). The statute establishes policy and principles to guide management of the State's coastal ecosystems, and establishes the New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council to integrate and coordinate the programs, institutions and activities which affect coastal ecosystems. The bill was passed unanimously in the Senate and Assembly,

sponsored by Owen Johnson and Thomas DiNapoli respectively. The Environmental Protection Fund for Fiscal Year 2006-'07 includes \$3 million for the Ocean and Great Lakes Initiative.

F. Anders discussed elements of the New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Act, including: the coastal ecosystem policy; coastal ecosystem-based management principles; creation and responsibilities of the NY Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council; and the report to the Governor and Legislature. He noted that the Deputy Secretary of State for Coastal Resources, currently George Stafford, will serve as Executive Director of the Council, and the Executive Director of Sea Grant will serve as the Chair of a science advisory panel to the Council.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

CAC Chair M. Dolan Murphy presented the report to the Council (see attached).

CAC Recommendation to Reconvene a Formal Education Workgroup

J. Fullmer stated that, if the Council would like to reconvene the workgroup, the Reserve Office would help to facilitate this process.

L. Siegel noted that there are two groups of educators: formal and informal. He added that over the last 8-10 years New York State has completed revised its teaching standards and while the estuary is not specifically mentioned, it could be incorporated into curricula as an example of scientific and historical concepts. He stressed the importance of including active educators in the process.

C. LoBue stated that continuing education courses are offered at SUNY Stony Brook that teach educators how to use local issues, including those related to Long Island's estuaries in their classroom.

W. Wise suggested that based on past experience it would make sense for the Reserve Office to organize a meeting involving Council members and educators to explore the possibility of reconvening the workgroup.

F. Anders suggested that other estuary programs on Long Island are working on similar types of projects and it might be useful to find out what they are doing and if it would be feasible to pursue cooperative efforts.

G. Lawton stated that there are educational programs at the Green Institute at the Pine Barrens and Brookhaven National Lab that bring in teachers and administrators to discuss how to involve students in scientific initiatives related to the Pine Barrens.

J. Fullmer suggested that M. Dolan Murphy report back to the CAC in September about the Council's discussion and the suggestion that the Reserve Office organize a meeting to discuss the feasibility and logistics of reconvening a workshop, as per W. Wise's suggestion. He added that a Formal Education Workshop could discuss the details of producing an outreach video.

Stewardship Award

M. Dolan Murphy reported that ten nominations were received for the 2006 Reserve Council Stewardship Award; five for individuals and five for groups. The CAC's Stewardship Award Subcommittee selected two

nominees in each category and presented these anonymously to the CAC. The CAC then agreed on a top candidate and alternate candidate in each category.

M. Dolan Murphy presented these candidates anonymously to the Council members. Discussion ensued.

K. Budny motioned to accept the CAC's top candidate for the individual award. The motion was seconded and passed.

K. Budny motioned to accept the CAC's top candidate for the group award. The motion was seconded by C. LoBue and passed.

M. Dolan Murphy announced that the awardees were Wilfred Kleisler (individual) and Operation SPLASH (group).

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER REPORTS

C. LoBue provided an update on activities of the Bluepoints Bottomlands Council (BBC). He reported that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) received a \$1 million grant for comprehensive shellfish restoration efforts. TNC is required to match these funds and will do so through cost sharing agreements with the Town of Brookhaven and NY Sea Grant. C. LoBue outlined the major points of the BBC Hard Clam Restoration Plan.

C. LoBue reported that the BBC has also been working to identify threats to seagrass and to prioritize these threats. A workshop is being organized to address seagrass restoration issues. In addition, the State Legislature has created a Seagrass Task Force comprised of representatives of multiple State agencies and interest groups. US Senator Charles Schumer is sponsoring a Senate Appropriations Bill to provide NY Sea Grant with \$600,000 to fund an initiative that will address the scientific questions that come out of the workshop.

J. Fullmer noted that the first issue of the publication *Seagrass Long Island* has been produced by Chris Pickerell at Cornell Cooperative Extension and suggested that Mr. Pickerell could be invited to a future Council meeting to discuss his work.

Operation SPLASH - Rob Weltner

R. Weltner provided an update on some of Operation SPLASH's cooperative efforts to advance testing and implementation of stormwater treatment technology in the Reserve. In addition to its regular cleanups, SPLASH has installed floating docks on Mill Creek and in the first year they stopped 232 garbage barrels full of trash from entering the bay and wetlands. SPLASH has also created and produced its own oil containment booms from recycled materials, which have worked very successfully.

Trust for Public Land - Clark Wallace

C. Wallace gave a brief presentation to the Council about the Trust for Public Land (TPL). He explained that TPL is a national non-profit organization that helps to preserve land, ranging from ten acre wooded parcels, to urban community gardens, to thousands of acres of State land. TPL assists government agencies with the acquisition of private land, by helping to negotiate with landowners, secure purchase options, and raise public funds for purchases. TPL also assists with environmental studies, appraisals, and boundary surveys. C. Wallace then identified some examples of TPL's work on Long Island.

J. Fullmer noted that a next step for open space protection included in the Reserve CMP implementation status report for 2003-2005 is the formation of an open space workshop. Some steps have been taken toward developing an open space protection strategy for the Reserve and Reserve Council partners have taken numerous actions to protect open space.

L. Fischer commented on Suffolk County's work to protect open space.

BAYWAY UPDATE AND NOMINATIONS

M. Pluzynski updated the Reserve Council on Bayway development progress:

- The request for proposals is based on tasks that were identified by the Reserve Council's Bayway Workgroup and other Bayway partners that participated in a series of Bayway workshops sponsored by the Reserve Office. These tasks include; preparation of a five-year strategic implementation plan for the Bayway; design of a Bayway visual identity; development of promotional outreach materials; implementation of a Reserve-wide cultural resources survey; and creation of a "virtual" Bayway internet site. Once a consultant for this project has been retained, the Reserve Office will reconvene the Bayway Workgroup to act in an advisory role, interacting with the consultant and Reserve Office to advance development of the tasks outlined in the RFP. It is anticipated that completion of this project will provide the needed framework to create a cohesive and logical implementation of the South Shore Bayway as described in the Bayway Vision Report.
- Production of the Bay Shore Marina Bayway interpretive kiosk was completed, and the Town of Islip has prepared the site where the kiosk will be installed by creating a circular, cement viewing pad around the kiosk that is ADA accessible, and connected to the walkways surrounding it. The kiosk will be installed at the marina in the very near future.
- An interpretive kiosk for the Fire Island National Seashore (FINS) Watch Hill Ferry terminal on the Patchogue River in the Village of Patchogue is nearing completion. The Village of Patchogue will be preparing the site for installation, and creating an ADA accessible cement viewing pad in the new park adjacent to the Watch Hill Ferry terminal. The Reserve Office helped facilitate an innovative partnership between a local municipality and the federal government to create this interpretive exhibit. The Reserve Office will continue to work with the Village to develop additional interpretive exhibits for the Patchogue River Maritime Center. Successful partnering with FINS on this project has been precedent-setting because of the potential for cooperative efforts to develop additional interpretive projects at recognized Bayway Destinations located in the National Seashore, including the Fire Island Lighthouse, Sailors Haven/Sunken Forest, and the William Floyd Estate, and visitors center at Smith Point County Park.
- The Town of Babylon recently celebrated the completion of the first phase of the new Oak Beach Park, a recognized Bayway Destination. Supervisor Bellone, Town Board members and representatives of the Suffolk County Legislature joined New York State Secretary of State, Christopher Jacobs on July 5, 2006 to dedicate park improvements. The completion of this phase includes a reconstructed fishing pier, 500 ft of waterfront walkway on Fire Island Inlet, shoreline stabilization, creation of a new beach area, and access ramp for kayakers and windsurfers. The Reserve Office is currently working with the Town to develop Bayway interpretive exhibits for this site.

The Reserve Office is working with Bayway partners to develop interpretive signage at a number of additional recognized Bayway Destinations including: Lido Beach Passive Nature Area (Hempstead); Talfor Boat Basin/White Cannon Park (East Rockaway); Shinnecock Canal Maritime Center (Southampton); and Bayard Cutting Arboretum, Heckscher, Connetquot, Captree, and Robert Moses State Parks.

- To date, the Reserve Council has recognized 40 Bayway Destinations and two Connectors. A list of these is on the Council's website. For today's meeting, a findings statement has been prepared for one nominated site. The nomination application for this site has been reviewed by the Office for accuracy and completeness and found to be in keeping with the guiding principles and interpretive themes of the Bayway.
- The Village of East Rockaway, in conjunction with the Friends of the East Rockaway Grist Mill Museum, has nominated the East Rockaway Grist Mill Museum as a Bayway Destination.
- C. LoBue motioned to recognize the East Rockaway Grist Mill Museum as a Bayway Destination. C. Squeri seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

K. Budny reported that the Post-Morrow Foundation and Ducks Unlimited are working on restoration project on Beaverdam Creek in Broohaven. They have recently planted an additional 6000 spartina plants and the project is progressing well. He invited Reserve Council members to visit the site.

D. Fucci inquired about the announcement of EPF Water Quality Improvement Project (Round 8) awards. F. Anders stated that the awards would be announced shortly.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Aronoff stated that there has been much discussion in the media about emergency weather response. He inquired whether there was a role for the Reserve Council to play as a facilitator or clearinghouse for ideas regarding response to weather-related emergencies.

F. Anders responded that there is a potential role and stated that he had invited the US Army Corps of Engineers to attend a Reserve Council meeting and give an update on their report about hurricanes.

J. Fullmer stated that Reserve Council members should have all received copies of the report on Reserve bay flooding and erosion, which includes a number of recommendations related to flooding and erosion as well as contact information for a variety of agencies that respond to weather-related emergencies. He noted that there is a summary of the report on the Reserve Council website.

W. Wise stated that there is a difference between planning for weather-related emergencies and responding to them. He suggested that while the Council may participate in planning for these instances, emergency response requires expertise that is beyond the scope of the Council.

ADJOURNMENT

M. Foley motioned to adjourn the meeting, D. Cataldo seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

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**SSER COUNCIL MEETING
August 9, 2006**

**Citizens Advisory Committee
Report to the Council
May 9, 2006 CAC Meeting
July 11, 2006 CAC Meeting**

Maureen Dolan Murphy, CAC Chair

CAC MEETINGS TO DATE:

May 9, 2006 (minutes attached)
July 11, 2006 (minutes pending)

CAC MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

May 9, 2006

The CAC had a presentation by Mr. Stephen Couch, Engineer from the United States Army Corp on the topic of ocean/bay water exchange, the role of inlet formation and closing, historical ACE projects and the Fire Island to Montauk Reformulation Plan. S. Couch informed the CAC that a draft copy of the Fire Island Reformulation Plan would be out in the Fall of 2006. As the Council might remember the CAC had a presentation by Vic Consiglio on the opening and closing of inlets along the Barrier Island. The CAC remains very interested in this topic of ocean/bay water exchange and the policies of opening and closing inlets.

There was discussion on whether the Plan would change the current Army Corp policy of immediately closing breeches on the barrier island when they occur. S. Couch said the plan was evaluating the current policy. The CAC is planning on having a follow-up presentation once the draft plan is released.

It was reported at the last Council meeting that the CAC would become active in recruiting nominations. The SSER office helped to draft a "recruitment" flyer. CAC members were able to get information in the Fire Island Association newsletter and distributed the flyer at environmental public events and conferences. Information about the Stewardship Award was also placed on the Council website. We received a total of 10 nominations. Thank you to all the Council members that submitted nominations.

At the previous Council meeting it was reported that the CAC formed an education subcommittee that was tasked with looking into the feasibility of making an educational video on the Reserve. Since then the subcommittee has meet several times.

The CAC feels that is important to develop an educational video. Through the subcommittee's initial work, it was reaffirmed that there is a need to increase educational programs throughout the Reserve. In Chapter 6, page 59, of the CMP it states:

Of the 124 public school districts on Long Island responsible for primary and secondary level education, nearly half (60) are located in whole or in part within the Reserve. These districts serve a major portion of the approximately 423,000 school age children on Long Island.

Experience of one Amityville grade school teacher has left her with a feeling that many students are unfamiliar with the Reserve. Some students participate in "Project Jason". This is an interactive program that allows students to "virtually experience" Louisiana's marshes. At one point there was an active Formal Educational Workgroup. The CAC would like to see this formal workgroup re-activate. The immediate goal would be to produce an educational video. The workgroup could also explore ways to increase learning about the Reserve in the schools. (Refer to Chapter 6: Increase Education, Outreach and Stewardship, recommendation from the SSER CMP.)

July 11, 2006

The CAC had a presentation given by J. Tanksi, NY Sea Grant Coastal Processes Specialist on current research on barrier island breaches that is being funded by Sea Grant. This was a great follow-up presentation to the Army Corp Presentation. Sea Grant is still in the middle of much of there research and the CAC would like to have them back when the research is completed.

STEWARDSHIP AWARD

OTHER CAC NEWS:

Trout Unlimited is conducting a major media effort about brook trout in NYS and the eastern region. They have developed on new brochure on status and threats of the Eastern Brook Trout.

M. Dolan Murphy attended the Peconic Baykeepers release of Baywatch 2006: Long Island's Bay Health Report.

Jake Kritzer, Environmental Defense, will be attending the September CAC meeting to go through his work on diadromous fish restoration.