

**South Shore Estuary Reserve Council  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**MEETING MINUTES**

May 9, 2006

Long Island Maritime Museum, West Sayville, New York

Chair: Maureen Dolan Murphy

**CAC Members Present:** Allan Aronoff (Brookhaven League of Women Voters/CAC Vice Chair); Pam Burford (Fire Island Association); Michael Cafaro (Sierra Club); Henry Dam (Suffolk Alliance of Sportsmen); Ed Davis (Great South Bay Audubon); Robert DeBona (Mastic Beach Property Owners Association); Maureen Dolan Murphy (Citizens Campaign for the Environment); Mike Duffy (South Bay Cruising Club); Joe Kayal (Independent); Lesley Kane (Islip Town Leaseholders Association); Gil Kelley (Association of Marine Industries); Craig Kessler (Ducks Unlimited); Kevin McAllister (Peconic Baykeeper); Wendy Murbach (South Shore Audubon Society); Dave Schaper (NY Seafood Council); Florence Sharkey (Brookhaven Baymen's Association); Ben Sohm (South Shore Bayhouse Owners Association); and, Dave Thompson (Trout Unlimited).

**CAC Members Absent:** Curt Matzinger (South Shore Waterfowlers Association); Students for Environmental Quality; and Rob Weltner (Operation SPLASH).

**South Shore Estuary Reserve Office Staff Present:** Jeff Fullmer (Director); Clare O'Reilly (SCA Estuary Steward); and, Michelle Pluzynski (Program Implementation Specialist).

**Guests Present:** Donna Cange (Save the Forge River); Bob Cizek (Concerned Citizen); Nancy Kearney (Town of Oyster Bay); Ron Lupski (Save the Forge River); Holly Miches (Independent); and Stanley Urban (Independent).

**1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS**

At 7:00 p.m. M. Dolan Murphy called the meeting to order. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

**2. APPROVAL OF MARCH 15, 2006 CAC MINUTES**

Approval of the March meeting minutes was deferred until the July 2006 meeting.

**3. PRESENTATION – OCEAN/BAY WATER EXCHANGE**

Mr. Stephen Couch, Engineer from the United States Army Corp of Engineers gave a presentation utilizing historical imagery 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. His contact information is [Stephen.couch@usace.army.mil](mailto:Stephen.couch@usace.army.mil) or phone 917.790.8707.

Discussion ensued.

- H. Dam expressed his perspective on ocean/bay water exchange issues and related to his experience during the hurricane of 1938 at the Fire Island Lighthouse.
- F. Sharkey expressed her organization's concern about the impact of closed breaches on the bay.

- D. Schaper asked if the ACE has monitoring benchmark locations for sea level rise. S. Couch responded that within the New York area that are three locations; Lake Montauk, the Battery and Sandy Hook are the oldest, and more have been added in the last 50 years. Sandy Hook has the closest conditions to Fire Island, and the sea level is rising 0.14 millimeters per year. Flooding on the mainland due to storms has occurred and will continue given the rise in sea level.
- K. McAllister asked if the ACE reformulation study included fisheries as part of the economic analysis. S. Couch replied that they are focusing their analysis primarily on the impacts of flooding and storm damage but some biological monitoring is being conducted as part of the study.
- D. Schaper inquired about the role of storm surge and its impact on water exchange and levels in the bays in conjunction with a major rain event. S. Couch replied that ACE is mostly focusing on the surge.
- J. Kayal inquired about the current policy to close breaches as they occur. He then asked if it was possible that there could be a change in that policy as a result of the findings of the reformulation study. S. Couch responded that was possible. The study is analyzing response to breaches depending on their nature and location.
- The draft study is expected to be released in the Fall of 2006.
- M. Dolan Murphy thanked Mr. Couch for his presentation and extended an invitation for him to return in the future with new and updated information.

#### **4. REPORTS**

##### ***Reserve Office Report:***

J. Fullmer reported the following highlights from Reserve Office activities since the March 2006 CAC meeting:

- The Reserve Council is tentatively scheduled to meet again in August. Date and location to be determined but will be posted on the SSER website when available.
- The Bayway has two new recognized destinations since the last meeting, Zach's Bay at Jones Beach State Park and Hempstead Lakes State Park. To date, the Reserve Council has recognized 40 Bayway destinations and 2 connectors. He encouraged CAC members to recommend additional nominations.
- The Office is in the process of planning a stormwater treatment technologies workshop for SSER stakeholders that will take place in the fall. More information to follow.
- The SSER Inventory and Analysis of Stormwater Drainage Infrastructure Mapping project has begun. Its goal is to assess the status of stormwater infrastructure mapping in the Reserve, highlight successful mapping methodologies, and identify municipalities that require assistance to complete mapping.
- The SSER Office is participating as a member of the Forge River Task Force and has been assisting the Chair with development of Task Force meeting notes and summaries.

- The Alewife Survey in selected SSER tributaries is continuing. To date, alewives have been documented in the Carmans River and a small stream in Bellport. The survey will be extended until May 31<sup>st</sup>.
- The SSER office will be attending an event with Suffolk County and Brookhaven Town officials announcing new fish ladder projects, studying the feasibility of removing dam obstructions to restore 30 miles of habitat for diadromous fish in south shore tributaries, recent Carmans River watershed acquisitions and new stormwater capital projects.
- Lou Siegel, SSER Science Coordinator recently organized a meeting with local fishing boat captains to discuss use of their boats as floating classrooms during the off season. The marine science for teachers course will be conducting a shipboard excursion out of Point Lookout on May 31<sup>st</sup> at 4 PM . CAC members are invited and encouraged to attend. Call the office for details.
- The SSER Council website homepage has a few new items posted including links to the Post-Morrow Foundation osprey cam, a seal watching video, and photos of the alewife run documented in the Carmans River.
- The SSER Bay Flooding and Erosion report prepared by the Office and Department of State was distributed to the Reserve Council members and SSER elected officials. The report investigates concerns related to bayside flooding, and documents current understanding and plans for comprehensive planning and management actions Reserve communities may choose to undertake to reduce future impacts of coastal hazards. A summary of the report's recommendations and findings will be posted on the SSER website.
- A public hearing will be held on May 15<sup>th</sup>, from 7 – 9 pm at the Babylon Town Hall Annex regarding proposed revisions to Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats. This is your opportunity to comment on the changes being proposed. Contact the SSER Office for more information.
- Thanks to Gill Kelly of the Associated Marine Industries for distributing our SSER brochures and newsletters at the April AMI General meeting.

***Council Meeting Report:***

M. Dolan Murphy discussed her CAC report to the Reserve Council on March 22, 2006:

- Reported the CAC accepted the South Bay Cruising Club as a new member.
- Reported that Pam Burford of the Fire Island Association is the new chair of the SSER stewardship award sub-committee.
- Reported the CAC sent a letter to the Town of Islip expressing appreciation for their proposed increase in the number of mobile pump-outs.
- She reported that subsequent to the Council meeting, she had discussed the Islip letter with representatives of the Town of Babylon who expressed concern that the letter had implied the Town was not doing enough to protect and restore the estuary. She told Babylon this was not the case, nor the intent of the letter. She reported to the CAC that Babylon is working on a public-private partnership to achieve reduced pump-out rates for boaters in Town waters and is increasing the number of land-based pump-out stations in Town waters, as well as an effort to upgrade boater

access at Tanner Park. She reported that she had offered to invite a Town representative to a future CAC meeting to discuss their program and the Town declined.

- As a result of the pump-out discussion, there were questions from meeting attendees about the impact of on-site wastewater systems and how was the Council addressing them. Discussion ensued. J. Fullmer responded that the CMP included recommendations on this topic, and the CAC could explore ways to advance implementation of these recommendations through increased education and outreach on best management practices for on-site wastewater systems. K McAllister also expressed support for upgrading systems to include denitrification and that the Council should promote new opportunities for wastewater treatment technologies.

## **5. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### ***STEWARDSHIP AWARD:***

P. Burford gave a report from the Stewardship Award Subcommittee:

At the last CAC meeting it was decided to open the award process up to the possibility to giving two awards, a single and a group award. To date, the committee has not received any nominations, but they are hopeful they will receive nominations at this meeting. The committee and Reserve Office has prepared a handout to promote the stewardship award. They put information in the Fire Island Association newsletter, and have distributed at environmental public events and conferences. The timeline is to accept nominations until June 15, 2006. Then vote at the CAC meeting in July, and bring the results to the Council meeting in August, and give the award in September.

### ***Education:***

B. Sohm gave the Education Subcommittee update and distributed a handout. They met four times since the last CAC meeting, and are very enthusiastic about producing an educational video.

B. Sohm made a motion to request the Council to reestablish a formal education workgroup with the purpose of formalizing curriculum for all levels of school. C. Kessler seconded the motion. Refer to Chapter 6: Increase Education, Outreach and Stewardship, recommendation from the SSER CMP.

J. Kayal asked if there was a formal education subcommittee at one point. J. Fullmer responded, yes, a number of years ago, prior to CMP adoption there was a subcommittee to discuss development of curriculum to use in the schools for Reserve education. Since that time New York State has adopted new curriculum standards that should be reviewed.

The motion was passed unanimously.

The Education Subcommittee sees the video project as part of a broader effort with three or four videos and curriculum. A. Aranoff asked if the development of curriculum would be for the South Shore or all of Long Island. B. Sohm replied they would like to create one video for the South Shore, and then each additional area could produce their own.

The subcommittee is exploring potential methods to fund the creation of a video.

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

## **9. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

D. Thompson reported that Trout Unlimited was conducting a major media effort about brook trout in NYS and the eastern region. He said that he was the contact person for this effort on Long Island and distributed a new Trout Unlimited pamphlet about the importance of the trout.

M. Duffy distributed the Great South Bay Cruising Club Pump-out Committee report and thanked the CAC for their support on the issue.

M. Dolan Murphy reported that Sea Grant has agreed to do a follow up presentation on ocean/bay water exchange research.

It was suggested that Dr. Jake Kritzer from Environmental Defense be invited to a future CAC meeting to give a presentation on diadromous fish restoration efforts.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.