

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

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**MEETING MINUTES**

March 11, 2008

Long Island Maritime Museum, West Sayville, New York

Chair: Maureen Dolan Murphy

Vice-Chair: Allan Aronoff

**CAC Members Present:** Allan Aronoff (Brookhaven League of Women Voters); Pam Burford (Fire Island Association); Ed Davis (Great South Bay Audubon); Maureen Dolan Murphy (Citizens Campaign for the Environment); Linda Freilich (Sierra Club); Lesley Kane (Islip Town Leaseholders Association); Joe Kayal (Independent); Dorothy Rainer (for Bob DeBona, Mastic Beach Property Owners Association); Aubrey Russo (Students for Environmental Quality); Dave Schaper (NY Seafood Council); Ben Sohm (South Shore Bayhouse Owners Association and South Shore Waterfowlers); Florence Sharkey (Brookhaven Baymen's Association); Rich Troy (South Bay Cruising Club); and, Dave Thompson (Trout Unlimited).

**CAC Members Absent:** Association of Marine Industries; Suffolk Alliance of Sportsmen; Operation SPLASH; Peconic Baykeeper; and, South Shore Audubon Society.

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

**Guests Present:** Nancy Kearney (Town of Oyster Bay); George Costa (Trout Unlimited); Michael Cafaro (Sierra Club); Laura LaTorre (South Bay Cruising Club); Kenneth Barnett (researcher); Paul Breschard and Jerri Breschard (Pattersquash Creek Civic Association); Dennis Meigel (Mastic Beach Property Owner's Association); and, Bob Cizek.

**1. Introductions**

M. Dolan Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. CAC members and guests introduced themselves.

**2. Approval of CAC Meeting Minutes**

B. Sohm motioned to approve the January 8, 2008 meeting minutes. J. Kayal seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**3. Reports**

**SSER Office Report**

J. Fullmer updated the CAC on Reserve Office activities since the last meeting:

- The municipal drainage infrastructure mapping assessment report and maps prepared by Bowne AE&T were approved. The report contains recommendations regarding how municipalities can complete their stormwater infrastructure mapping in order to prioritize stormwater capital projects.

- Government agency representatives met on February 13th to discuss water quality research and data collection needs in the SSER western bays, and establishing partnerships between government and academic entities to advance preparation for development of Total Maximum Daily Loads.
- The Reserve Office assisted the consulting firm Ecologic LLC in facilitating a follow-up stakeholder engagement meeting for the Great South Bay Ecosystem Based Management Demonstration Project. The purpose of the meeting was to report back on what information was collected at the initial stakeholder meeting and subsequent focus groups. Information will be documented in a report to the Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council.
- Participating groups are submitting water quality monitoring data as part of the South Shore Estuary Learning Facilitator (sSELF) program. Data can be viewed on a GoogleDocs spreadsheet. Interested CAC members can visit <http://www.nysmea.org/sSELF/> and click “View our Data” to see the spreadsheet. L. Kane suggested that CAC members could assist in identifying other groups to participate in the sSELF program.
- The “Preserve the Reserve” stewardship certificate program is very popular, and is useful for documenting the diverse implementation activities taking place in the Reserve. Recently, the Reserve Office presented Mike Reynolds with a certificate commending his work as the Supervisor of Fire Island National Seashore.
- Patrice Benneward has been hired as the new Program Implementation Specialist, and will start on March 31. Much of her work will focus on the South Shore Bayway project.
- A preferred visual identify (logo) design has been developed for the South Shore Bayway project. The new design will be included in the Strategic Implementation and Marketing Plan.
- Reserve Office staff are participating in the newly established South Shore Promotion Committee, which was initiated by Reserve Council member Captain Michael Eagan. The committee has started to reach out to businesses related to tourism, recreation, public use and enjoyment of the estuary. The committee will be working to implement the recommendations of the Bayway Strategic Implementation and Marketing Plan. The South Shore Promotion Committee has also been featured on the website [www.mylitv.com](http://www.mylitv.com), and is starting their own website, [www.exploresouthshore.org](http://www.exploresouthshore.org). CAC members are encouraged to visit these sites to learn more, and should submit suggestions for which businesses should be involved by contacting Capt. Eagan or Karen Gaconnier, Director of the Long Island Maritime Museum.
- Reserve Office staff assisted Nelson Pope and Voorhis with a public input meeting for the Beaver Dam Creek Watershed Management Plan, held on March 4th at the Post Morrow Foundation Annex. The Post Morrow Foundation also published a newsletter to announce the meeting and describe the watershed management plan. Bellport High School Students for Environmental Quality continue to collect information about the location of stormwater infrastructure in the watershed using GPS devices. The students were trained by staff from Cornell Cooperative Extension.
- Construction work is completed on the fish ladder at the Hards Lake Dam spillway on the Carmans River. There have been reports of alewives present in the ladder passage. The approximate budget for this project was \$45,000 for the ladder and \$150,000 for construction costs. Suffolk County Parks and NYS Department of Transportation are discussing possible ways

to secure the area. Southaven County Park, in which the ladder is located, is a Bayway destination. Trout Unlimited and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation are discussing possible monitoring systems to track activity in the ladder. There are additional fish passage projects planned for Swan River, Mud Creek, and other upstream impoundments on the Carmans River.

- The Diadromous Fish Work Group will again be conducting a volunteer alewife monitoring survey in Reserve tributaries. The Seatuck Environmental Association will be leading this effort. CAC members are encouraged to contact C. O'Reilly at the Reserve Office for more information.

### **Self-Study Workgroup Report**

The Reserve Council Self-Study Work Group met on February 21st to discuss revisions to the draft by-laws in preparation for the Council meeting on March 5th. The draft by-laws are based on the CAC's Policies and Procedures. The draft by-laws were reviewed at the Council meeting and additional input was provided. The Self-Study Work Group will meet again to develop a final draft for Council consideration and adoption at the next Council meeting in 2008. The by-laws will help clarify the process by which the Council makes decisions, which was an issue brought to the Council's attention by the CAC.

J. Kayal suggested that the impetus for the creation of the Self-Study Work Group originated from a recommendation from the CAC to the Council regarding the Council's adoption of an advocacy role. M. Dolan Murphy recalled that this recommendation from the CAC did not pass when presented as a motion to the Council.

The draft by-laws identify Roberts' Rules of Order as the procedure by which the Council can vote on taking actions, including provisions for abstentions from votes, and tabling votes to allow Council member designees to consult with Council members regarding issues. The draft by-laws also suggest a structure through which revisions to the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) can be made, including the incorporation of new issues into the CMP.

The draft by-laws propose that CMP revisions should be made every five years. J. Kayal suggested that the Reserve Council consider revising the plan annually to frequently adapt to change. M. Dolan Murphy suggested that annual revision of the CMP may take away from focusing on implementation activities.

The draft by-laws require that the Council meet twice a year at a minimum, and members can suggest to the chair that additional meeting be convened if necessary. Present Council members commented that meetings have been well attended historically even with more frequent meetings

### **Education Work Group**

The Formal Education Work Group recently met and discussed the results of a survey distributed to educators about what curriculum materials would be most useful for teaching about the Reserve. A majority of respondents indicated that brief, topic based videos of five to ten minutes on a DVD, CD, or downloadable from the internet would be most useful for use in a classroom setting. The Formal Education Work Group also discussed alternative development of a more lengthy documentary type video that could be used for public presentations, and could be divided into segments that could be used for classroom use. L. Kane added that most survey responses were from high school and middle school educators.

The Formal Education Work Group also discussed the children's book "Great Blue's Message," written and illustrated by students from Sayville High School, which focuses on protecting the Reserve. CAC members should contact Lou Siegel at the Reserve Office regarding funding sources to print the book for distribution to local schools. CAC members suggested distributing the book via the internet.

### **Council Report**

M. Dolan Murphy reported about the Council meeting held on March 5th at Stony Brook Southampton. The Council primarily discussed the draft by-laws as previously reported.

M. Dolan Murphy asked Council members if they were available to give a presentation about ecosystem-based management to the CAC, and Bill Wise from Stony Brook University's Marine Science Research Center volunteered to speak to the CAC in May.

M. Dolan Murphy reported to the Council about the presentation from Chart Guthrie about invasive species at the January CAC meeting. D. Thompson reported that the Carman's River Task Force is meeting to discuss how to manage invasive species in lakes on the Carman's River, and that there is concern about what implications herbicide application in the lakes can have on the Reserve. M. Dolan Murphy suggested that if CAC members are interested in attending the task force meetings, they can contact Citizens Campaign for the Environment for more information.

J. Fullmer mentioned that the CMP does not address invasive species directly, but there are CMP recommendations related to restoring tributary corridors. J. Fullmer suggested that the CAC should discuss how to convey to the Council that invasive species are a Reserve management issue that are not addressed in the CMP.

### **4. Presentation**

Kenneth Barnett gave a presentation to the CAC about a rare species, known as the Dwarf Eastern Hognose Snake, recently found in the Reserve near Tobay Marina. He explained the research that he and several students are conducting about the evolution and behavior of the snake, and its habitat in a freshwater vernal pool on Jones Island. K. Barnett will be petitioning the regional office of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to designate the snake's habitat as an area of "unusual local importance." K. Barnett is also in contact with the Town of Oyster Bay, which has jurisdiction over the known extent of the snake's habitat.

CAC members asked if other herpetology research is currently being conducted in the Reserve. K. Barnett replied that he and the research team are documenting other animals observed during their research, and they are also working with Dr. Russ Burke of Hofstra University, who conducts herpetology research in the Reserve.

B. Sohm proposed the following motion:

*The CAC will write a letter to the Town of Oyster Bay and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation in support of designating the habitat of the Dwarf Eastern Hognose Snake as an area of "unusual local importance."*

D. Schaper seconded the motion. J. Kayal called the motion to question, and suggested that the CAC should recommend to the Council that a letter should be written. M. Dolan Murphy said that the CAC has taken action in support of previous initiatives suggested by CAC members without recommending Council action, but has kept the Council well informed on its activities in this regard.

The motion passed with 11 in favor and one abstention.

K. Barnett can be reached at 518-810-5116 or [kebarnet@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:kebarnet@gw.dec.state.ny.us)



## **5. New Business**

No new business was discussed.

## **6. Public Portion/Announcements**

B. Cizek announced that the Brown's River and Green's Creek Watershed Management Plan contains recommendations regarding improving water quality in the watershed, and suggested that watershed residents should interact with the Town of Islip to implement these recommendations. L. Kane replied that she is a member of the Islip Town Environmental Committee (ITEC), which is currently exploring ways to implement the plan, including distribution of an educational brochure and inviting watershed residents to upcoming ITEC meetings.

G. Costa announced that the Art Flick Chapter of Trout Unlimited is holding their annual cleanup of the Carman's River on Saturday, March 22nd, including a tour of the recently installed fish ladder. CAC members were invited to participate.

L. Kane announced that there will be a shoreline cleanup the weekend of April 26th & 27th.

L. Freilich announced that Sierra Club and Operation SPLASH are organizing a cleanup of Smith Meadow Island on Saturday, March 15th.

M. Dolan Murphy reminded CAC members that the May meeting agenda includes two presentations, and suggested that the meeting start at 6:30. CAC members agreed to this change.

## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.