

South Shore Estuary Reserve Council
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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MEETING MINUTES

July 8, 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); George Costa (for Dave Thompson, Trout Unlimited); Bob DeBona (Mastic Beach Property Owners Association); Maureen Dolan Murphy (Citizens Campaign for the Environment); Linda Freilich (Sierra Club); Lesley Kane (Islip Town Leaseholders Association); Gil Kelley (Association of Marine Industries); Wendy Murbach (South Shore Audubon Society); Ben Sohm (South Shore Bayhouse Owners Association and South Shore Waterfowlers); Florence Sharkey (Brookhaven Baymen's Association).

CAC Members Absent: Great South Bay Audubon Society; Peconic Baykeeper; NY Seafood Council; Students for Environmental Quality; South Bay Cruising Club; Suffolk Alliance of Sportsmen; Operation SPLASH; and, Joe Kayal.

South Shore Estuary Reserve Staff Present: Jeff Fullmer (Director); Lou Siegel (Science Coordinator); Patrice Benneward (Program Implementation Specialist); and, Clare O'Reilly (Program Implementation Specialist).

Guests Present: Nancy Kearney (Town of Oyster Bay); Bill Fahey, Donald Martin, and Chris Ricciardi (Pattersquash Creek Civic Association); and Jim Brown (South Shore Audubon Society).

1. Introductions

M. Dolan Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:10p.m. CAC members and guests introduced themselves.

2. Approval of CAC Meeting Minutes

F. Sharkey motioned to approve the March 11, 2008 meeting minutes. P. Burford 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:

- Reserve Office staff attended the New York State Oceans and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council (OGLECC) Oceans Work Group meetings on May 21 and June 24. The Oceans Work Group represents the nine state agencies on OGLECC, and the South Shore Estuary Reserve and Hudson River Estuary Programs. The work group is developing recommendations for inclusion in OGLECC's November 2008 report to the Governor and State Legislature. Reserve Office staff are continuing to work with Great South Bay Demonstration Area Steering Committee (which consists of the Department of State, Department of Environmental Conservation, The Nature Conservancy, and South Shore Estuary Reserve) to develop report for the Great South Bay demonstration area.

CAC members asked if stakeholder input will be included in the November report to the Governor and Legislature. J. Fullmer replied that stakeholder input will be incorporated in the report, including input gathered from the stakeholder meetings held this past fall.

CAC members also asked what relationship there is between OGLECC and the Fire Island to Montauk Point Reformulation Plan (FIMP). J. Fullmer replied that OGLECC is currently focusing on work within New York State's jurisdiction, but the report to the Governor and Legislature will address working with federal partners on their projects, such as the FIMP, that impact the ocean. J. Fullmer added that he recently attended a conference in New Jersey about creating a seamless network of protect shorelines around the New York New Jersey Bight, and that management of this common area will require working with other states and federal partners. L. Freilich added that she had information related to the FIMP that she is willing to share with interested CAC members.

- Governor Paterson recently announced the grant awards for the 2007 Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. In the Reserve, grants were awarded to the Town of Brookhaven and Village of Patchogue for preparation of a watershed management plan for Tuthills Creek, to the Village of Patchogue for interpretive signage on Patchogue River, to the Village of East Rockaway for access improvements to Mill River, and to the Town of Oyster Bay for planning a Bikeway linking Bethpage State Park and the Wantagh Bikeway. The Governor's office issued a press release specifying the amount of money awarded to the projects.

C. O'Reilly updated CAC members on the third annual Volunteer Alewife Monitoring Survey, which finished at the end of May. Volunteers reported seeing alewives in the Carmans River, and that the recently installed fish ladder was used by alewives. Reserve office staff are working with staff from Environmental Defense and Seatuck Environmental Association on a report on this year's survey.

J. Fullmer updated CAC members on work related to the water quality of the Western Bays. Reserve Office staff are continuing to work with the Department of State, Department of Environmental Conservation, United State Geological Survey, Stony Brook University School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, Town of Hempstead and Nassau County in developing partnership agreements to conduct water quality research and monitoring in preparation for development of total maximum daily load (TMDL) analysis. This effort supports the principles of ecosystem based management, and will advance research recommendations in the Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan. Reserve Office staff participated in a meeting on May 29 at Stony Brook University with the mentioned partners to discuss the roles and objectives of each partner.

L. Siegel reported on the following Reserve Office activities:

- Participants in the sSELF program held a conference at Dowling College on May 28th. Several of the groups presented their data and discussed their results and experiences. Dr. John Tanacredi of Dowling College presented the students with "Preserve the Reserve" stewardship certificates, and gave a tour of the coral and horseshoe crab labs to the students. At present, there are over 230 separate observations posted and available on the web. At least three of the groups will continue taking readings through the summer. Two of the sSelf participants won major awards at the Long Island Science Fair.
- The Reserve Office continues to award "Preserve the Reserve" stewardship certificates. At present the Reserve Office has awarded over 200. All of the participants in the sSELF program received certificates during May and June.

P. Benneward reported on the following Reserve Office activities:

- The advisory group for the South Shore Bayway Strategic Implementation and Marketing Plan met on June 3rd to provide comments to the technical consultants on the plan and media outreach

products. Reserve Office staff have been working with the technical consultants on revising the plan. Reserve Office staff have been receiving training on how to modify the Bayway website, currently under development. Reserve Office staff are planning on having a workshop in the fall to discuss the Bayway plan with stakeholders, including the CAC and Reserve Council.

- Reserve Office staff are working with Nassau County and partners on developing a blueway trail for paddlers. Under the latest Open Space Bond Act, Nassau County approved \$50,000 for development of a blueway trail. The Village of Freeport is applying for a \$50,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program for a blueway trail, with the county money used for the match. If the grant is successful, there will be \$100,000 going into a study to plan the trail and begin implementation. Reserve Office staff expect this trail will be a pilot project for expansion into the rest of the Reserve.

CAC members commented on the growing popularity of kayaking, and the potential to for kayaking to attract Long Islanders and visitors to explore the Reserve.

- Reserve Office staff attended a meeting of the South Shore Promotion Committee on June 19th to discuss continued development of a website (exploresouthshore.org) and identify opportunities to create package tours to promote south shore historical, cultural and recreational sites.
- Reserve Office staff recently distributed over 200 requests for information to Reserve partners for inclusion in the next Implementation Status Report. The Reserve Office has started receiving information, and encourages CAC members to submit information to be included in the report.
- At the conclusion of the office activities report, Jeff Fullmer presented Clare O'Reilly with a Reserve Stewardship Action certificate recognizing her work with the CAC to advance implementation of the Reserve CMP. The CAC thanked Clare for her excellent work.

4. Stewardship Award Nominees

P. Burford and M. Dolan Murphy presented the Stewardship Award Subcommittee recommendations for recipients of the 2008 awards, including the recommended and alternate candidates in each category (individual and group). Subcommittee members provided additional input on the nominees. Candidate names were withheld until CAC members had reached consensus on which candidates were to be recommended to the Reserve Council.

CAC members voted unanimously to endorse the subcommittee's choice for the individual award [Alexandra Mancuso, author of *Great Blue's Message*].

CAC members voted unanimously to endorse the subcommittee's choice for the group award [The Riverhead Foundation].

P. Burford agreed to prepare a memo for distribution to the Reserve Council regarding the recommended award recipients.

CAC members discussed possible local artists to develop the award, and Reserve Office staff asked CAC members to contact the Reserve Office with additional suggestions.

5. Public Portion/Announcements

B. Sohm described a storm drain project in the Copiague/Lindenhurst area that may be impacting the Great South Bay. M. Dolan Murphy suggested that the CAC can write a letter to the Town of Babylon for

information about the project and its potential impacts. L. Freilich suggested that the Sierra Club can write a letter regarding the project as well.

B. Sohm expressed his support for development of a TMDL in the Western Bays, and suggested that water quality testing should include testing for hydrocarbons, which may impact hard clam growth. L. Siegel replied that the Town of Hempstead is capable of doing such testing.

M. Dolan Murphy informed CAC members that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) sent a response to the CAC's letter regarding the habitat of the dwarf hognose snake near the Town of Oyster Bay's JFK Sanctuary. The DEC has included the wetland habitat on its list for mapping the area to determine if it meets their criteria for an area of "unusual local importance."

L. Freilich mentioned that the Sierra Club is considering organizing an educational fair about clean water initiatives, and would like CAC members to participate.

L. Kane informed CAC members that the Town of Islip is considering a resolution to ban jet skis from wetland creeks in the town. A vote is expected within the next few months.

P. Burford mentioned that she is on the Village of Patchogue Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan advisory committee, and that a draft of the plan will be available soon, followed by public meetings to gain input on the plan. She will keep the CAC informed about when public meetings will be held, and encouraged CAC members to participate.

J. Fullmer invited CAC members to a workshop organized by Fire Island National Seashore (FINS) on the National Parks Service's Climate Friendly Parks initiative to address climate change.

F. Sharkey mentioned that the FINS General Management Plan may prohibit baymen from taking horseshoe crabs. The Brookhaven Baymen's Association will be working with FINS to craft regulations that allow for taking horseshoe crabs for personal use as bait through a quota system, based on regulations already in place in Alaska. CAC members discussed current regulations regarding the taking of horseshoe crabs, the increased presence of baymen from out of state due to the closure of the horseshoe crab fishery in other states, and water quality issues affecting horseshoe crabs.

G. Costa updated CAC members on the state of the Carmans River. The water level has notably decreased in lakes along the river, and Trout Unlimited members are looking into possible causes for this decline. Trout Unlimited has been conducting an insect survey, which indicates that the river is in a healthy state. Invasive plants in Upper and Lower Lake are still a concern, and mowing plants is now being considered as a management option by the Town of Brookhaven's Carmans River Task Force. G. Costa mentioned that there has been a decline in native vegetation in areas on the Peconic River where herbicides were applied to eradicate invasive species, and that Trout Unlimited is against herbicide application in the Carmans River. G. Costa mentioned that there has been some damage to the stream bed of the Carmans River due to kayaking and canoeing taking place in areas of low water, and Trout Unlimited is monitoring the situation. Trout Unlimited recently cleaned out the fish ladder on Hards Lake Dam and that is has been working well. G. Costa added that this year is the 25th anniversary of the Art Flick Chapter.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.