

**South Shore Estuary Reserve Council
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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FINAL MEETING MINUTES
May 12, 2009
Long Island Maritime Museum, West Sayville, New York
Chair: Maureen Dolan Murphy
Vice Chair: Open

CAC Members Present:

Maureen Dolan Murphy (CAC Chair, Citizens Campaign for the Environment)
Pam Burford (Fire Island Association)
Bob DeBona (Mastic Beach Property Owners Association)
Lesley Kane (Islip Town Leaseholders Association)
Joe Kayal (Independent)
Kevin McAllister (Peconic Baykeeper)
David Schaper (NY Seafood Council)
Ben Sohm (South Shore Bayhouse Owners Association & South Shore Waterfowlers)
Dr. John Tanacredi (Dowling College Dept. of Earth and Marine Science)
David Thompson (Trout Unlimited)
Rich Troy (South Bay Cruising Club)
Hank Dam (Suffolk Alliance of Sportsmen)
Ed Davis (Great South Bay Audubon Society)
Phil Blindenhofer (Association of Marine Industries, Alternate)
Gil Kelley (Association of Marine Industries)

Guests Present:

Nancy Kearney (Town of Oyster Bay)
George Costa (Trout Unlimited)
Gerald Ludwig (Mastic Beach Property Owners Association)
Robert Wilson (Pattersquash Creek Civic Association)
Marge Wilson (Pattersquash Creek Civic Association)
Dr. Art Kopelman (Coastal Research & Education Society of Long Island, Inc.)

South Shore Estuary Reserve Staff Present:

Lou Siegel (Science Coordinator)
Sherry Forgash (Program Implementation Specialist)

CAC Members Absent:

Bellport Students for Environmental Quality
Sierra Club L.I. Chapter
Operation SPLASH

1. Introductions:

- Maureen Dolan Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Introductions were made all around.
- Nancy Kearney asked for suggestions of groups/individuals that might be available to volunteer at the Town of Oyster Bay's Marine Education Day on June 5th. Volunteers teach environmental lessons to 4th graders.

- Maureen Dolan Murphy briefed the CAC on the passing of CAC Vice-Chair, Alan Aronoff. She read the brief memorial article that is posted on the Reserve webpage. Maureen sent a fruit basket to Alan's mother on behalf of the CAC. Several CAC members commented on the good work that Alan did for the CAC and his commitment to the committee over the years. Maureen Dolan Murphy, Jeff Fullmer and Patrice Benneward attended funeral services for Alan Aronoff.
- With Alan's passing, the position of Vice-Chair will need to be filled; this item will be listed on the agenda for the next meeting (July 14, 2009).

Out of Agenda Order

3. Membership Applications:

Robert Wilson and Marge Wilson of the Pattersquash Creek Civic Association are present this evening. The Pattersquash Creek Civic Association is applying for membership on the CAC. CRESLI (Coastal Research & Education Society of Long Island, Inc.) has also submitted an application for membership on the CAC. The CAC will vote on CRESLI's application at the July 14, 2009 meeting. All CAC members should have received the application letters and reviewed them. Application for membership on the CAC was also received from Captain Don Harris of Captain Don's Nautical Adventures.

Robert Wilson gave a brief background on the Pattersquash Creek Civic Association. The group is involved in the Forge River cleanups, duck farm runoff issues, sewage entering the Forge River, and contamination from onsite wastewater treatment systems (septics/cesspools). They were established about 8 months ago. Paul Breschard is the Chairman of the Pattersquash Creek Civic Association Board of Directors. Robert Wilson will be the designated representative. Rich Troy asked if the association is a 501(C)3. It is not.

Maureen puts motion on floor to nominate Pattersquash Creek Civic Association for CAC membership.

MOTION by Dr. John Tanacredi to approve the membership application of the Pattersquash Creek Civic Association, seconded by Joe Kayal.

VOTE: 13 members vote in favor (Yea); 1 abstention.

Don Harris' (Captain Don's Nautical Adventures) application for CAC membership will be on the agenda of the July 14, 2009 CAC meeting.

Dr. Arthur Kopelman, president of CRESLI (Coastal Research & Education Society of Long Island, Inc.) has applied for membership on the CAC. CRESLI was started in 1996. Its mission is to promote stewardship and conservation through education and the research of coastal ecosystems. Most of their work has been offshore concentrating on marine mammal populations and for the past 5 years with seal populations. Dr. Kopelman explained the connection between populations and what is happening to ecosystems. He is a population ecologist.

4. Presentation: Dr. John Tanacredi, Chairman, Dept. of Earth and Marine Sciences, Dowling College: Horseshoe Crabs in the SSER.

Maureen introduced Dr. Tanacredi.

Dr. Tanacredi distributed handouts on the Horseshoe Crab (HSC) (*Limulus polyphemus*) to the CAC members. Dr. Tanacredi has been researching HSCs for approximately 35 years. The HSC presentation included information on the biology of the HSC, their habitat, range, food, geologic history, significance in medicine, threats to their survival, and recent bans on their harvest. Dr. Tanacredi has been organizing

HSC monitoring at 64 beaches on Long Island. There is a decline in HSC population. An inventory is the first line of data collection in an analysis of HSC populations. During the high tide and the full moon is the best time to monitor HSC numbers, as this is when HSC come upon the beaches and mud flats to spawn. The monitoring will help to find out why HSCs return or not return to certain locations each year. Monitoring for HSC will be held on June 7 and 22, and July 7 and 22.

About 15 species of birds, including piping plovers and red knots feed on HSC eggs. Many migrating bird species rely on HSCs for a food supply.

An extract of HSC blood is used by the pharmaceutical industry in the making of Limulus ameobocyte lysate or LAL. LAL is used to ensure that injectable medicines are free from bacteria. Today, HSCs are released after the harvest of their blood for this purpose.

Dr. Tanacredi concluded his presentation and a question/comment period followed.

HSC diet was discussed as well as the optimal mating time.

It was asked why the EPA, NYSDEC or USFW are not performing HSC monitoring. Dr. Tanacredi said the NYSDEC has funded \$90,000 to Cornell to perform HSC research.

It was noted that the boom and bust in HSC populations is dependent on the food supply and also on water quality. If the area receives an increased amount of rain, this will alter the quality of salt water, which is not beneficial to marine organisms, especially clams and the water quality in Great South Bay. It was also asked if the reason that HSCs appear on different beaches, is only because they come ashore on the beach they happen to be near, and not because they visited that beach the year before.

It was asked if HSCs have ever been grown artificially. Dr. Tanacredi said they have, at Virginia Tech, Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, Brooklyn College and at a small laboratory at Dowling College. They must be kept for a minimum of 10 years, until they reach maturity and are able to reproduce.

Maureen Dolan Murphy stated there was a recent announcement by the National Park Service banning the harvesting of HSCs in FINS effectively immediately. This ban extends 4,000 feet into the Great South Bay and 1,000 feet into the Atlantic Ocean. There is also legislation in the senate and assembly that would ban the harvest of HSCs in NYS for the next 5 years.

Maureen noted that research has shown a decline in the red knot population which coincides with a decline in the HSC population. There have been moratoriums on HSC harvesting in New Jersey, Delaware Bay and Connecticut. The CAC is not being asked to take a position on this legislation. Maureen notes that Citizens Campaign for the Environment supports this legislation. It was mentioned that the Dept. of the Interior does not consider HSCs endangered.

Dr. Tanacredi noted that the National Park Service has always had the ability to ban the collection of any resource within the park. FINS delayed the ban on the harvesting of HSCs due to a legal issue in the state of Massachusetts, regarding a technicality in the terminology; *are HSCs considered shellfish or part of the fisheries?* DEC has not yet banned or instituted a moratorium on HSC harvesting because their existing permitting process has not been impacted. He stated that more funding is needed for research. In some years, thousands of pairs of HSCs may have been sighted at a particular location, but during the following season, at the same location, none were sighted. New Jersey, Delaware, Connecticut and Virginia all have a moratorium on HSC harvesting. He feels the fishermen's perspective should be, to approach the NYS DEC and ask them to provide more funding to perform the necessary, comprehensive HSC research.

If anyone knows of a site to monitor HSCs, please complete one of the forms that Dr. Tanacredi has provided.

MOTION by Joe Kayal, for the CAC to recommend to the Reserve Council, that the Reserve Council send a letter to the proper governmental jurisdiction urging them to fund the proper amount of scientific research regarding the health of the Horseshoe Crab population on Long Island, or at least to determine its future. Motion seconded by Dr. Tanacredi.

Discussion on whether the CAC or the Council should write the letter.

MOTION, amended by Dave Schaper, that the CAC write a letter to the NYS DEC requesting appropriation of funding to research the status of the Horseshoe Crab population in New York; seconded by Kevin McAllister; motion unanimously approved.

Maureen Dolan Murphy will draft the letter and circulate through the CAC before it is sent.

Lou Siegel will send a link to a PBS special on Horseshoe crabs to the CAC.

5. SSER Office Update – Lou Siegel

Jeff Fullmer extends his regrets that he is unable to attend tonight's meeting. The staff was saddened to learn of the passing of CAC vice-chair Allan Aronoff. A short tribute to Allan was posted on the Reserve website homepage.

Sheri Lyn Jewhurst, Reserve Program Administration Manager has moved forward with her career and will be joining the staff of the Town of Babylon Department of Environmental Control. Sherry Forgash has volunteered to record the CAC minutes.

Since the last CAC meeting on March 10, 2009, the Reserve office has participated in the following activities:

1. Assisted with preparation for the Coastal America Award presentation on March 21 to the Carmans River Fish Ladder partnership. See article in packet.
2. Attended the Forge River Task Force meeting on April 6, 2009. Observed the presentation from SUNY SoMAS on impacts of nitrogen from groundwater sources on DO levels in the river.
3. Final report to the governor and legislature from the NY Oceans and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council: ***Our Waters, Our Communities, Our Future: Taking Bold Action Now to Achieve Long Term Sustainability of New York's Ocean and Great Lakes*** was delivered on April 8. Report is available on the SSER website. Great South Bay Ecosystem Based Management Demonstration Initiative is included in the report.
4. Petition prepared by the Baykeeper for a Reserve-wide "Vessel No-Discharge Zone", was approved as complete by the NYS DEC and forwarded to the US EPA for approval and implementation. See article in packet.
5. Western Bays cleanup by SPLASH earlier in the month. See article in packet.
6. Participated in Beaver Dam Creek Watershed Advisory Committee meeting on April 14, 2009. Public information meeting is scheduled for May 19 at 7:00 p.m. See Reserve website for details.
7. Attended a meeting of the Carmans River partnership on April 7 to discuss the development of a comprehensive watershed management planning effort for the river and its watershed. Efforts to include the L.I. Pine Barrens Commission in the development of this plan.
8. Reserve Diadromous Fish Workgroup is scheduled to meet on June 2 at the Connetquot River State Park. Diadromous Fish Workgroup also coordinates the alewife monitoring.
9. The Reserve Western Bays Water Quality workgroup is scheduled to meet on May 27; Batelle Research Institute received a \$500,000 grant for TMDL study in Western Bays.

10. The CAC subcommittee to identify potential CMP amendments/new implementation priority topics is scheduled to meet at the SSER office on May 28.
11. Attended annual SUNY Stony Brook-Southampton Coastal and Estuarine Research Program Environmental Symposium on May 1.
12. South Shore Bayway Strategic Implementation and Marketing Plan was made available electronically to the Project Advisory Committee, Reserve Council and CAC. CAC is encouraged to review the completed strategy and initiate the nomination of additional recommended Bayway destinations and connectors for consideration by the Reserve Council. Application for nominations can be found on the Reserve website.
13. Office staff attended meetings of the NYS DOT Byway advisory committee to develop byway corridor management plans for various state parkways, most of which are located in the Reserve.
14. Reserve office staff participated in the following outreach events:
 - a. Hecksher Spring Fair/Earth Day Event – Hecksher State Park – April 25
 - b. Nassau BOCES Conservation Field Day – Caumsett State Park – April 28
 - c. L.I. Regional Envirothon Competition – Old Bethpage Village Restoration – April 28
 - d. SUNY Farmingdale Health and Wellness Festival – SUNY Farmingdale – April 30
15. Reserve office staff sent stewardship certificates to students in the Ecology Club at Bayport-Bluepoints High School.
16. sSELF program continues to perform monitoring and has teamed with the Long Island Sierra Club which started a new group, the Long Island Water Sentinels, to do water quality monitoring on Long Island. Linda Freilich is the coordinator. The NYSMEA conference will be at Stony Brook – Southampton the first weekend in June. Jeff Herter from DOS will be speaking about the report to the governor, "NY Oceans and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council: *Our Waters, Our Communities, Our Future: Taking Bold Action Now to Achieve Long Term Sustainability of New York's Ocean and Great Lakes*" and the "Ocean and Great Lakes Atlas." See Reserve website for details.

Out of Agenda Order

2. Approval of CAC Minutes from March 10, 2009 Meeting:

MOTION by Bob DeBona to approve the CAC minutes of the March 10, 2009 meeting, seconded by Ben Sohm; unanimously approved.

Stewardship Award Subcommittee:

Pam Burford would like the names of potential award recipients. Decision will be made in the next 2 months; recommendations will be presented at the July CAC meeting. Maureen Dolan Murphy suggested that the Stewardship Award now be named after Allan Aronoff. This needs to be recommended to the Reserve Council. All are in agreement with the name change.

MOTION by Bob DeBona to recommend to the Reserve Council that the Stewardship Award be renamed "*The Allan Aronoff South Shore Estuary Reserve Stewardship Award*"; seconded by Joe Kayal; unanimously approved.

6. Public Portion/Announcements

The Town of Brookhaven will attend the July 14th CAC meeting to speak about Beaver Dam Creek and the Town of Brookhaven landfill plume.

Kevin McAllister described a study written by Chris Gobler of SUNY-Stony Brook SoMAS, "The Effects of Tidal Export from Salt Marsh Ditches on Estuarine Water Quality and Plankton Communities." The study describes the impacts of mosquito ditching and the conveyance of both nitrogen and pathogens.

The 4-year study appeared in "Estuaries and Coasts." The study will be sent to CAC members. Maureen will inquire if the author can attend a CAC meeting to speak about the study.

Lesley Kane reported that The Nature Conservancy approached the residents of 3 islands (Havemeyer, Captree and Sexton) to ask if they would adopt clam rafts in the area. Seven clam rafts were already adopted by the leaseholders. The local Girl Scouts did a shoreline cleanup. The Town of Islip amended its Jet Ski ordinance, to keep jet skis out of the wetlands. Signage is now needed in order for the ordinance to be enforced.

The Town of Islip received state funding to implement stormwater remediation, start the Great Cove Watershed Management Plan, and for signage in the Bayway.

Lou Siegel announced a symposium on clams, June 5 at Southampton College.

MOTION by Pam Burford to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m., seconded by Bob DeBona; unanimously approved.