

**South Shore Estuary Reserve Council  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
300 Woodcleft Avenue, Suite E, Freeport, New York 11520  
Phone: (516) 470-BAYS Fax: (516) 378-2879 www.estuary.cog.ny.us**

MEETING MINUTES

March 10, 2009

Long Island Maritime Museum, West Sayville, New York

Chair: Maureen Dolan Murphy

Vice-Chair: Allan Aronoff

**CAC Members Present:** Maureen Dolan Murphy (CAC Chair, Citizens Campaign for the Environment); Allan Aronoff, (CAC Vice Chair, Brookhaven League of Women Voters); Jim Brown (South Shore Audubon Society); Pam Burford (Fire Island Association); Bob DeBona (Mastic Beach Property Owners Association); Linda Freilich (Sierra Club); Lesley Kane (Islip Town Leaseholders Association); Joe Kayal (Independent); Kevin McAllister (Peconic Baykeeper); David Schaper (NY Seafood Council); Florence Sharkey (Brookhaven Bayman's Association); Ben Sohm (South Shore Bayhouse Owners Association); Dr. John Tanacredi (Dowling College Dept. of Earth and Marine Science); David Thompson (Trout Unlimited); Rich Troy (South Bay Cruising Club); Rob Weltner (Operation SPLASH)

**Guests Present:** Nancy Kearney (Town of Oyster Bay); Adrienne Esposito (Citizens Campaign for the Environment); Don Harris (Nautical Adventures); George Costa (Trout Unlimited); Jeanne Ligets (Independent)

**South Shore Estuary Reserve Staff Present:** Jeff Fullmer (Director); Sheri Lyn Jewhurst (Program Administration Manager); Lou Siegel (Science Coordinator)

**CAC Members Absent:** Bellport Students for Environmental Quality; Hank Dam (Suffolk Alliance of Sportsmen); Ed Davis (Great South Bay Audubon Society); Curt Matzinger (South Shore Waterfowlers Association)

*1. Introductions*

- Maureen Dolan Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. She then began a round of introductions.

*2. Approval of CAC Meeting Minutes for January 13*

- All CAC members acknowledged that they have received and reviewed the draft minutes. The draft minutes from January 13, 2009 were amended to include the motion to vote for Chair and Vice Chair of the CAC by Linda Freilich, seconded by Kevin McAllister, and also amended to include the second motion to approve the September 9, 2008 minutes by Pam Burford.
- After these corrections, Pam Burford made a motion to approve the January 13, 2009 minutes, with a second motion by Joe Kayal. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### *3. John Tanacredi Membership Application*

- Dr. John Tanacredi submitted an application to join the CAC. He gave a brief explanation of his activities in relation to the CAC's mission and invites the CAC to visit the new Dowling College Center for Estuarine, Environmental and Coastal Oceans Monitoring (CEECOM) facility in the future.
- Joe Kayal commented that he strongly supports J. Tanacredi's admission to the CAC.
- Rich Troy made a motion to approve J. Tanacredi's application to join the CAC; Linda Freilich makes a second motion to approve. The motion was unanimously approved and J. Tanacredi was officially inducted into the CAC.

### *4. Presentation: Adrienne Esposito, Chair of Carmans River Task Force*

- The CAC Chair introduced Adrienne Esposito, Chair of the Carmans River Task Force. Ms. Esposito presented about the invasive plants cabomba and variable leaf milfoil in the Carmans River System. The Carmans River Task Force is charged with developing with a mitigation plan for these invasive plants that can be used throughout Long Island and New York State. Highlights from the presentation:
  - The task force has 20 voting members, including the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), assembly members, state senators, county officials, and ten non-profit organizations and businesses. In total, there are 10 people from government and 10 private citizens and representatives from nongovernmental organizations on the task force.
  - The invasive aquatic plants cabomba and variable leaf milfoil are widespread throughout New York State and infest approximately 80% of streams and tributaries on Long Island.
  - The Town of Brookhaven and Suffolk County are combining their efforts and funds to deal with the problem with recommendations by the Carmans River Task Force.
  - Several options are being considered for eradication of this plant, including the use of pesticides, a harvesting device that will remove the plant with help from volunteers, and dredging the bottom of the lake. Impacts to residents and the surrounding ecosystem are all being considered by the task force.
  - A contract is being negotiated with consultant Nelson, Pope, and Voorhis to assess the best method of removing these invasive species and when a solution is determined it will most likely be used as a model for dealing with this problem throughout Long Island and New York State. Due to the

possibility of widespread use of the methods the task force decides upon, the task force is committed to careful consideration and reaching a consensus about the most realistic long term solution to this problem.

- CAC members raised several questions about the presentation. P. Burford inquired as to who owns the lake. A. Esposito responded that some of the surrounding land is owned by the county, some by the town, and some by private landowners. Effects on these properties from any eradication techniques are being considered by the task force. B. Debona asked whether all the lakes are manmade, and is informed that they are manmade and were created many years ago and are now fully integrated into the community setting.
- G. Costa clarified that there are actually three dams in the area that were used many years ago as mills for lumber and grain, and despite the fact that there is an Upper and Lower Lake, they are all clearly part of the Carmans River and must be treated holistically as part of this system.
- J. Brown asked how the plants arrived in the rivers in the first place, and is informed that the most widely accepted belief is that they were introduced from private citizens emptying their aquariums into local water bodies.
- K. McAllister comments that the lake and its impoundments are not unique, and many of the tributaries are suffering. He made it clear that whatever approach is employed by the task force must be comprehensive, unbiased, and for the entire watershed. He feels it is vitally important that the product of this process is extremely carefully formulated because this will be setting the precedent for remediation throughout a large area. The plants thrive on nutrients and he suggests that property management be part of the solution.
- D. Thompson asked how ecosystem-based management will relate to the task force's plan. He also recommended that more stakeholders be informed about the activities of the task force since this is not a localized issue and many groups will be affected by the outcome. A. Esposito responded that they will deal with this when they select a consultant and that ecosystem-based management will be considered.
- B. Sohm asked whether anything eats these plants, and A. Esposito explained that they have not yet thought about this in detail because of concerns about introducing more species into the system that could disrupt the ecology further.
- G. Costa pointed out that if a pesticide were applied to kill the plants, it would most likely be a 60 day application instead of a 30 day application depending on the flow velocity of the waters. He also noted that the harvesting device mentioned in the presentation belongs to Peconic Sportsmans club, and that it was used for years to control cabomba in their area. Approximately 3 years ago the Sportsman's Club began applying sonar, which after the second year of application began to eliminate a lot of the invasive plants. However, there is monitoring of fishes in the area and there were recently three species showing signs of distress. There must be investigations to find out what is causing this distress and whether it is related to the sonar and other remediation techniques.
- A. Esposito clarified that all options and their effects will be considered in the report by the consultant. The task force is advisory to the Town of Brookhaven,

and implementation of the recommendations is up to them. She stated that she will keep the CAC posted when reports come out.

## 5. Reports

### SSER Office Report

Jeff Fullmer, SSER Director briefed the CAC on Reserve Office and Council activities:

- One of the SSER office's former staff, Clare O'Reilly, nominated the Carmans River Fish Ladder partnership for a Coastal America Spirit Award and the partnership was selected as award recipient. The Award presentation will be on March 21 during Trout Unlimited's annual Carmans River Clean-Up event.
  - G. Costa of Trout Unlimited invited everyone to Southaven County Park for the clean-up and barbecue and asked that if anyone is interested they contact him.
- The SSER Council adopted a set of bylaws in order to formalize the process of identifying priorities of the CMP and to clarify operational issues for the Council. There is recognition by the Council that there are new emerging issues and a way to formally recognize those issues and address them now exists. We hope the CAC takes an active role in informing the CMP using these procedures.
- The Reserve Council in partnership with the New York State Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Council have sponsored a number of community conversations to discuss the Ecosystem-based Management report released in February. You can find the report on the SSER homepage ([www.estuary.cog.ny.us](http://www.estuary.cog.ny.us)).
- Included in the meeting packet is a letter sent to DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis from the Reserve Council supporting the development of a No Discharge Zone in SSER waters as organized by Kevin McAllister of Peconic Baykeeper.
  - K. McAllister clarified that the petition for the No Discharge Zone was submitted in December, and the final form was submitted in February. It is now in the hands of the commissioner and will hopefully move forward from there.
- J. Fullmer continued that the watershed management plan for Beaver Dam Creek is now almost finished.
  - G. Costa asks if the Brookhaven Landfill plume is being addressed in the watershed management plan, and is informed that it is recognized as an issue.
- The final report of Inventory and Analysis of Barriers to Fish Passage in Six Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve Tributaries is now finished. You can access the report on the SSER website under Council Priorities/Living Resources. There was a Diadromous fish Workgroup Meeting on February 24 where the report was circulated to members. We are hoping that the workgroup will make recommendations to the Council about diadromous fish restoration.

L. Siegel updated the CAC on the sSELF program:

- Monitoring and posting data to the webpage continues. There is a meeting on Monday 3/16/09 with a group of Boy Scouts who want to do monitoring. Linda Freilich of the Sierra Club is acquiring new water testing kits. Within the next few months we should have four to five more groups doing monitoring. Rachel Haberstraw, a student, won the local science fair with her project that had to do with water monitoring. She is now working with ERM group to do a project on heavy metals.
- There is a conference on June 5, 6, and 7<sup>th</sup> called Estuaries Sustaining the Sea at Southampton College. There are also forums on the first Friday of every month, and the forum on June 5 will be Clamming on the Great South Bay.
- We are also still giving out Stewardship Certificates, and if you have anyone in mind please fill out an application as these are nice recognition awards.
  - M. Dolan Murphy asked how many total certificates we have handed out, and L. Siegel informed her that it is around 200 certificates.
- J. Fullmer informed the CAC of the 2009 Alewife Monitoring Survey and asked anyone interested to contact Seatuck Environmental Association. J. Fullmer discussed the Paddlesport Symposium at Dowling College on March 8, and also the completed Strategic Implementation and Marketing Plan (SIMP) for the Bayway that is nearly ready to be posted on the SSER website and on the Bayway website. There is a hosting agreement that must be funded first, but upon approval we will inform you.

Responses from EPF Letter:

- M. Dolan Murphy then discussed the two responses to the letter written to legislators about the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) money coming through the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) as discussed at the January 13, 2009 meeting. There is wide support in the assembly and the state Senate to keep the EPF funded by the RETT, and they are hopeful for success on this issue.

Beaver Dam Creek Task Force

- M. Dolan Murphy discussed the Beaver Dam Creek Task Force and gave background on the Brookhaven landfill plume. There is a formal task force established to make recommendations about the plume which M. Dolan Murphy is a part of. They are currently working on increasing the frequency of sampling from semiannual to quarterly. There is sampling being done from 22 different wells with hopes to expand these and identify areas to place new wells for monitoring. People using well water in the path of the plume have been offered a free switch to public water from Suffolk County.
- G. Costa pointed out that the landfill plume has been an ongoing problem for 30 years and feels that the next step should be investigating solutions and remedies to remove the pollutants from the groundwater.

- It is noted by the CAC that unless the severe levels of pollution in the groundwater are remediated, we will continue to have surface water quality problems in tributaries because they are groundwater fed.
- J. Tanacredi offered his ecotoxicology and waste management expertise if any members of the CAC wanted clarification on issues having to do with the landfill plume. He also noted that groundwater contamination is often almost impossible to remediate, and that New York State must be sure to look at a broad range of compounds and monitor repeatedly at appropriate detection limits for a study to be complete.
- M. Dolan Murphy agreed to have someone from the Town of Brookhaven come and speak to the CAC about the landfill situation at a future meeting.

#### Suffolk County Clam Workgroup:

- M. Dolan Murphy gave a brief overview on the Great South Bay Clam Restoration Workgroup and notes that there have been seed clams found in the bay. Active management must ensure that this population succeeds and be holistic in nature. She then gave an overview of the number of clamming permits given out by the towns in 1980 and in 2008 to illustrate the stark drop in the number of permits issued. The Great South Bay Clam Restoration Workgroup will be giving recommendations to the Council and the State and look into doing a large-scale management plan for the clam population.
- F. Sharkey stressed the need for having a new generation of clambers in the bay to support the industry and traditions.
- L. Freilich shared that she is beginning to raise baby clams in her classroom with students, and is working with The Nature Conservancy to accomplish this. She plans to take the clams she raises in the classroom and lower them into the bay during spawning to further increase the possibility of successful fertilization. She asked anyone who has a fish tank to donate to contact her. J. Fullmer suggested to L. Freilich that she contact the SPAT program through Cornell University Cooperative Extension who is currently running a program that helps waterfront property owners grow clams to release into the bay.

#### SSER Dredged Materials Management Workgroup:

- J. Fullmer informed the CAC that the Dredged Materials Management Plan is being developed in part by Woods Hole Group, a consulting firm based in Massachusetts. The goal is that there will be a plan for dredged material for the entire SSER and come up with possible beneficial uses for it.

#### 6. *Establish a new subcommittee to make recommendations to the Council*

- M. Dolan Murphy began a conversation about forming a subcommittee to go through the CMP document, particularly different sections that have to do with implementation and outreach, as well as past CAC meeting agendas and evaluate what new issues could be addressed and included in the CMP in the future.

- M. Dolan Murphy asked if everyone is in agreement that they should establish a new subcommittee to deal with CMP recommendations. There was consensus to establish the subcommittee, and M. Dolan Murphy asked for volunteers.
- Members of the new subcommittee are:

Pam Burford, Rob Weltner, Kevin McAllister, Jeff Fullmer, Linda Freilich, John Tanacredi, Dave Thompson, Maureen Dolan Murphy, and Jim Brown.

- J. Fullmer agreed to be the point person and work to set up the first subcommittee meeting.

### *7. Public Portion/Announcements*

- Don Harris (Nautical Adventures, Operation SPLASH) would like to request becoming a member of the CAC. M. Dolan Murphy stated that D. Harris had attended most of the CAC meetings in the past year.
- D. Harris explained to the CAC that he owns his own business, Nautical Adventures, teaching boat handling skills and sailing boats around the world. He hopes to join the CAC as an individual.
- M. Dolan Murphy explained the process of joining the CAC to D. Harris and noted that in January the CAC set the goal of having three new members by the end of the year and is on track to reach that goal.
- R. Weltner announced that there is a beach cleaning this Saturday, March 14 at 9am with Operation SPLASH.
- J. Tanacredi announced that Stonybrook University established the NYS Marine Science Consortium with 42 members. He represents Dowling College and makes recommendations with the consortium. He strongly suggests that the CAC appeal to the scientists on this consortium who are the resources in New York State that need to be tapped to shape the research and action agenda. He notes that if we are discussing ecosystem-based management and there are no research scientists with extensive knowledge and track records dealing with the ecosystem, management plans will not be able to fully fulfill the goals and types of projects the CAC is looking to explore.
- K. McAllister stated that a few years ago he asked the CAC to lend their support against a marina development and extensive dredging through flats and shoals. The application was withdrawn and revised, and the marina was scaled down to manage the dredging, but he asked that the CAC be attentive to this issue because it will most likely come up again.

### *8. Adjournment*

- M. Dolan Murphy asks for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- P. Burford motions to adjourn the meeting, seconded by R. Weltner. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting is adjourned at 9:15pm