

Long Island
South Shore Estuary Reserve Office
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Final Minutes
March 8, 2011

L.I. Maritime Museum, West Sayville, NY
Chair: Maureen Dolan Murphy
Vice Chair: Pam Burford

CAC Members Present:

Maureen Dolan Murphy (CAC Chair, Citizens Campaign for the Environment)
Pam Burford (Fire Island Association)
Joe Kayal (Independent)
Pam Donovan (CRESLI)
Dave Schaper (NY Seafood Council)
Dr. John Tanacredi (Dowling College, Earth & Marine Sciences, CEECOM)
Lesley Kane (Islip Town Leaseholder's Association)
Jim Brown (South Shore Audubon Society)
George Costa (Trout Unlimited, Art Flick Chapter)
Rob Weltner (Operation SPLASH)
Ben Sohm (South Shore Waterfowlers/ South Shore Bayhouse Owners)
Judy Bird (League of Woman Voters)
Don Harris (Captain Don's Nautical Adventure)
Linda Frelich (Sierra Club, LI Chapter)

Guests Present:

Tara Bono, Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Adrienne Esposito, Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Kevin Morello, Senator Zeldin
Nancy Kearney, Town of Oyster Bay
Michael Tomossone, Assemblyman Graf Office
Doug Swesky, Trout Unlimited

South Shore Estuary Reserve Office Staff Present:

Nancy Rucks, (DOS conference call) (NYS Department of State, NYS DOS)

CAC Members Absent:

Association of Marine Industries
Bellport High School Students for Environmental Quality
Brookhaven Baymen's Association
Great South Bay Audubon Society

Mastic Beach Property Owners Association
Pattersquash Creek Association
Peconic Baykeeper
South Bay Cruising Club
Suffolk Alliance of Sportsmen

1. Called to Order/ Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Maureen Dolan Murphy, Chair.
Introductions were made.

2. Approval of September 14, 2010 & November 9, 2010 CAC draft minutes

Motion by R. Weltner, Second by G. Costa. Approved unanimously.

3. Presentation: Dr. Chris Gobler

Highlights:

- Nitrogen is the largest pollution problem in the US for our waters
- 54% of population live on the coasts
- Concerns:
 - Harmful algae blooms
 - Red tide algae can now be found in South Shore Bays
 - Loss of bottom plants (sea grass & eel grass beds provide oxygen, without them nitrogen increases.
 - Shellfish act as a buffer against algae blooms
- Western Bays Study
 - Summer nitrate for Reynolds Channel significantly increasing
 - Mean temperature is increasing in the Western Bays
 - Bathymetry studies show where water moves in bay. Stony Brook has run over a dozen scenarios, only one scenario shows that water is flushing out to ocean, most of water stays within the bay or runs back up into the channel.
 - Studies that looked to see if sewage components were staying in bay came back positive
 - There are 2 inlets close to Bay Park, treated sewage effluent should be flushing to ocean, but that is not happening.
 - Bay Park experiences extremely high phytoplankton blooms and chronic bottom hypoxia during the summer.

4. Presentation: Dr. Artie Kopleman

Highlights:

- From 2004-2009 CRESLI stopped Whale Trips because the whales stopped coming close enough to view on daytrips
- In 2010 CRESLI saw whales 10 miles offshore
- In 2010, due to warmer waters, CRESLI saw basking sharks and flying fish

- In 2010 they also saw 1600 common dolphins (with aggregations of 500 dolphins), 60 bottlenose dolphins, 92 Fin whales, 65 Minke whales.
- CRESLI also saw loggerhead and leatherback turtles and hammerhead sharks.

5. SSER Office Report—

The SSER Office Report was unable to be given due to the change of room and lack of phone. It was emailed out after the meeting to members. It was emailed to members.

- A. The DOS, with SSER Office assistance, is working on the development of the SSE amendment. Three internal teams are working on the issue areas of Water Quality, Habitats and Climate Change, as had been discussed at the Reserve Council meeting on September 28th. Each team is composed of several Albany DOS staff members and one SSER office staff member. Staff has begun reaching out to experts in the field to create small working groups that will provide input and review products prepared by the internal teams.

B. SSER Western Bays Projects

At the direction of the SSER Council, two projects have been funded by DOS under memoranda of understandings utilizing \$820,282 EPF open space money allocated to the SSER. These are:

The USGS physical and chemical monitoring station at Hog Island Channel in Island Park

(for \$223,380) which is up and running and can be accessed on line.

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv/?site_no=01311143.)

Work has begun on the Western Bays Water Quality Monitoring System Project (for \$596,902). The MOU is between DOS and SUNY SoMAS with DOS as the project manager. The Project includes 7 different studies designed for gathering the hard information needed to calculate a TMDL. Work began on September 1st. The exception is those tasks dealing with nutrient studies, which are seasonally dependent and are scheduled to begin in the spring. The work underway includes:

- reviewing historic and other available data,
- conducting bathymetry studies and creating GIS datasets,
- updating hydrodynamic models,
- conducting pelagic water column surveys,
- conducting sediment and residence time studies,
- estimating marsh subsidence,
- assessing fish species population dynamics.

Researchers from both projects and office staff reported on the status of the western bays research at a meeting held for members of the Nassau County Legislature and other interested groups on February 10th, 2011.

- C. Town of Oyster Bay Implementation of the SSER CMP, C006276:** This project consisted of 5 components. These are 1) Massapequa Creek Watershed Management and Corridor Restoration Plan, 2) South Oyster Bay Hard Clam Population Study, 3) Waterfront Development Plan, 4) Estuary Public Use and Tourism Study, and 5) Open Space Preservation Plan. All components of this contract relate to reducing nonpoint source pollution; increasing harvest levels of hard clams and other estuarine shellfish species; protecting and restoring coastal habitats; preserving open space; increasing public use of the estuary and expanding tourism; and sustaining water dependent use. All of the components to this project have been completed and approved by DOS and are available on the SSERC web page at <http://www.estuary.cog.ny.us/obrep11/obcmp.htm>
- D. Nassau County Canoe and Kayak Trail Plan:** As reported at the last meeting, the SSER office hosted a meeting of the *Nassau County Canoe and Kayak Trail Advisory Committee* at the office on October 14th. Since that time the SSER office has assisted the Village of Freeport in redrafting a request for proposals to plan and construct the trail based on the input of the advisory group. It is anticipated that an RFP will be issued sometime in March after approval by the Village Board of Trustees.
- E. NOAA Marine Debris Grant Proposal:** The SSER office and Albany DOS completed a draft work plan involving removal of recently accumulated debris from difficult to access locations in the western bays. The work program may be eligible for funding through NOAA, and the possibility of filing an application in 2011 is being evaluated. Other funding sources for debris removal projects are also being explored.
- F. Implementation Status Report:** The SSER office and the DOS are working on the final draft of the ISR. The report reflects the level of effort and funds spent on projects within the SSER that advance the recommendations of the CMP. The report will be submitted to the Governor and the Legislature to demonstrate the work and commitment of the SSERC, DOS, SSER office and partners, and will be posted on the SSER website in the future.
- G. New York State Coastal Interpretive Program (NYSCRIP) Signage:** SSER Office staff assisted the DOS in implementing NYSCRIP contracts in Babylon, Islip, East Rockaway, and Patchogue. DOS has approved one sign and others are being

developed in East Rockaway. The Islip Town Environmental Committee, which is serving as the advisory group for a NYSCRIP project in Islip, met on Dec. 6 to discuss the project, which involves eight signs. Work has begun on two signs. The Village of Patchogue held an advisory committee meeting to discuss a NYSCRIP project; the contract is for up to 12 signs. A writer and designer are developing four signs for the Town of Babylon featuring clamming, fish migration, inlet dynamics, and shipwrecks off Fire Island; the contract is for a minimum of eight signs.

H. **Ocean Beach LWRP:** The Secretary of State approved this first LWRP for the SSER on November 15th, 2010. Having a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is advantageous to the community because it provides a clear direction, technical assistance, the ability to use state and federal consistency to direct coastal projects and opens the possibility of financial assistance. A Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is both a plan and a program. The term refers to both a planning document prepared by a community, as well as the program established to implement the plan. The program is the organizational structure, local laws, projects, and ongoing partnerships that implement the planning document.

I. **Nitrogen Update:** As part of the DOS funded Ecosystem Based Management demonstration project in Great South Bay, Dr. Ivan Valiella and Dr. Erin Kinney conducted a study on “Modeling of Land Derived Nitrogen Loading to the Surface Waters of Great South Bay.” Two workshops were held during 2009 and 2010 to update interested individuals on the scope and outcomes of the report. On February 15th DOS staff attended an update of the previous workshop during which the researchers responded to several management options and buildout scenarios that had been suggested by attendees. Some of the conclusions of the study were:

- The watershed is very close to full buildout, therefore the need is to focus on existing land use.
- Control of wastewater input is likely to be the management action with the greatest impact on GSB nitrogen load.
- In future development projects, preserving forested tracts is key to keeping nitrogen load lower.
- Spatially targeted development of pre-engineered modular sewage treatment plants for new developments or industrial sites (package plants) to foster additional nitrogen removal and alternative septic systems can be part of strategy to lower GSB nitrogen load.

6. SSER Chair Report

M. Dolan Murphy reported on the Suffolk County Clam Committee has been actively meeting and there will be stakeholder engagement forums coming up. The committee is seeking to recommend new protocols and regulations regarding the harvest and restoration of hard clams in the GSB.

7. Public Portion/ Announcements

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.