

HEMPSTEAD HARBOR PROTECTION COMMITTEE

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

Sea Cliff Village Hall

September 10, 2014

NOTE: ACTION ITEMS ARE IN ***BOLD UNDERLINED ITALICS***. MOTIONS ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN GRAY.

Attendees: Tom Powell (Chair – Sea Cliff); Kevin Braun (North Hempstead); Mal Nathan (North Hempstead); Eric Swenson (Executive Director); Abby Kurlender (Roslyn Harbor); Catherine Chester (Sands Point); Erin Reilley (Glen Cove); Len Shaw (Roslyn); and Carol DiPaolo (Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor)

Call to Order

Tom Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 7:15 pm. Eric noted that Town of Oyster Bay representative Sean Jordan was unable to attend due to the fact that he was on his honeymoon.

Review and Approval of Draft Minutes of Meeting of June 4, 2014

Kevin Braun moved to approve the minutes of the June 4th meeting minutes. Tom Powell seconded the motion and the Committee unanimously approved them.

Administrative / Organizational Issues

Proposed 2014 Annual Dues – Eric advised that all municipalities have paid their 2014 dues.

Updates, Announcements, Reports, Reminders, & Upcoming Events

Eric Swenson made the following updates, announcements, reports and reminders:

Town of Oyster Bay Marine Education Day – Eric noted that the June 5th event was cancelled due to rain. HHPC was scheduled to be a presenter.

L.I. Green Infrastructure Conference – the conference was held on June 11th at the Town of North Hempstead's Yes We Can Community Center in Westbury. Concurrent technical sessions were held as well as tours and exhibit booths. The Committee has not held a wrap-up meeting but Eric believed that over 100 attended the event.

Cedarmere Pond Cleanup - the cleanup took place on June 21st with about 15 volunteers including Catherine Chester, Tom Powell and Len Shaw. Nassau County DPW assisted with providing boats and removing the debris. Another event is being planned by the Friends of Cedarmere, the Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District and HHPC. No date has been chosen.

Press Conference on Storm Drain Inserts with County Executive Mangano – Eric noted that he was invited to participate in a press conference with the County Executive in Mineola on July 9th to announce a pilot program involving storm drain inserts around Hempstead Harbor. The event drew a lot of media attention.

Press Conference on Sewer Feasibility Funding with County Executive Mangano and Others – Eric also noted that he was invited to participate in a press conference with County Executive Mangano, Congressman Steve Israel, State Senator Carl Marcellino, State Assemblyman Charles Levine, County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, Glen Cove Mayor Reggie Spinello, Sea Cliff Mayor Bruce Kennedy and others on July 15th to announce the county’s \$2 million budget proposal for conducting a sewer feasibility study in the Glen Cove Crescent Beach area (and possibly elsewhere) and to facilitate the connection of the Sea Cliff Avenue business district to the Glen Cove Wastewater Treatment plant. Funding still needs to be approved by the Legislature.

Long Island Sound Study Webinar for Municipal Officials – Eric attended a webinar earlier in the day which was aimed at educating municipal officials on the new draft 20-year plan for Long Island Sound (known as the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan or “CCMP”). The original 20 year plan was adopted in 1994 and ran through 2014. The proposed draft has been five years in the making and will be the subject of public hearings with one scheduled for September 16th at the Yes We Can Community Center in Westbury from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. The webinar featured a quick review of the conditions 20 years ago and a review of the outcomes of its recommendations as well as an overview of the new plan. The webinar included some polling of the participants regarding priorities they would like to see the plan address and suggestions as to how the Long Island Sound Study could best assist municipalities. **Eric will circulate his notes from the webinar.**

Center for Watershed Protection Webinar on “Stream Restoration as a Pollutant Reduction Strategy” – Eric also attended this webinar earlier in the day. While the title sounded interesting and relevant (especially to HHPC as we just restored a stream as part of the Scudder’s Pond restoration), the webinar proved not to be as useful as he had hoped. It was based on work in the Chesapeake Bay which has different requirements and different topography (e.g. – they incorporated use of flood plains into the restoration plans and we don’t have that luxury here). It was also very technical and only engineers who do those types of calculations would appreciate the first half of the presentation. **Eric will circulate his notes from the webinar.**

Long Island Sound Study CCMP Update Public Meeting – as mentioned above (under *Long Island Sound Study Webinar for Municipal Officials*), a public meeting has been scheduled for September 16th at the Yes We Can Community Center in Westbury from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. This meeting is co-sponsored by the three protection committees, the Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor, Friends of the Bay and the Town of North Hempstead.

Beach Cleanups – as part of the International Coastal Cleanups, the Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor will hold beach cleanups on September 17th at both Tappen and Sea Cliff Beaches from 9:30 am to 11:00 am.

Water Quality Symposium at Long Island University – on October 7th, a water quality symposium aimed at north shore elected officials and environmental groups which will focus on water quality issues (primarily septic) will be held from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm by invitation only at the C.W. Post campus’ Tilles Center. It is being organized by the Nature Conservancy, the North Shore Land Alliance, Friends of the Bay and LIU. Eric was asked to give advice on the organization of this event and had a long conversation with Stuart Lowrie of the Nature Conservancy. He was assured that intent of this event is primarily to help educate municipal officials on the issues and to listen to their concerns rather than

putting them on the spot and seeking consensus on policy changes or adoption of expensive alternative technologies at this point. *[Note that subsequent to the meeting, Carol DiPaolo reported that she spoke with Jessica Donohue at TNC and that letters went out to municipalities inviting elected officials to the meeting, but they are also looking for municipal people who are involved in both the environmental control and public works sections of the towns, villages, and county. Even though this flyer also says that attendance is by invitation only, Jessica said that is not necessary for the above.]*

Green Infrastructure Conference – will be held by Citizen’s Campaign for the Environmental and the National Wildlife Foundation on October 9th from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Huntington.

Sea Cliff Mini Mart – this year’s event will be on Sunday October 5th. Eric noted that Committee will have a booth and that members are encouraged to help out or at least stop by.

Cedarmere Bulb Planting – Len Shaw mentioned that the Friends of Cedarmere will be holding a daffodil bulb planting event on October 25th from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Volunteers are encouraged to come down and learn how to plant bulbs and help out.

Scudder’s Pond Subwatershed Improvements

Eric reported that the construction had been completed by the end of June and that all vouchers submitted to NYS DOS for grant reimbursement. DOS is still awaiting receipt of as-built drawings which have been received by Cashin Associates and are being reviewed. Claims still need to be submitted to Nassau County and these also await the as-builts as well as approval by the County Legislature for funding approval for the 2004 Environmental Bond Act (one of the two grants received from the county). The contractor (Galvin Brothers) still needs to return to perform herbicide treatment on the phragmites and expects to receive it’s NYS DEC permit by the end of September and perform the work during the month of October. Eric noted that a problem occurred with respect to the water quality unit installed along Littleworth Lane that resulted in a homeowner being flooded. The homeowner has initiated a claim against the manufacturer, the Village’s contractor and the Village itself. The manufacturer has denied responsibility. The claim against the Village is being handled by the Village Attorney. Subsequently, changes were made to the water quality unit and no further problems have resulted to date. Eric also noted that on the previous day, he had been interviewed by a reporter for the Anton Papers (Glen Cove Record Pilot, Roslyn News, Port Washington News, and others) about the Scudder’s project and that he and Tom Powell will be meeting her at the pond on September 11th. An article is expected in the next couple weeks.

Coastal Signage Project

Eric noted that this other long-standing project was also completed. Eight new signs were erected in Port Washington, Roslyn, Roslyn Harbor, Glenwood Landing, Sea Cliff and Glen Cove during the month of July and photo ops were held on two occasions collectively featuring 6 of the signs. An article appeared in *Newsday* on September 4th and an article in the Anton papers is expected next week. Local officials who participated in the events included North Hempstead Supervisor Judi Bosworth and Council members Zuckerman and Anna Kaplan; County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, Sea Cliff Mayor Bruce Kennedy, and Glen Cove Deputy Mayor Barbara Peebles. A claim for final payment has been submitted to the NYS Department of State.

2013 Shellfish Survey of Hempstead Harbor

Eric distributed copies of the Town of Oyster Bay's shellfish survey of Hempstead Harbor entitled 2013 Clam Density Survey Overview for Hempstead Harbor which was conducted by Cashin Associates in October, 2013 and finalized on July 9, 2014. The survey was a follow-up to a similar one conducted in 2008 to assess the health of the clam population in the harbor and any changes over the previous six years (especially given the fact that a large portion of the harbor was opened to shellfish harvesting in 2011). The survey found that although the general distribution and abundance have remained about the same, the density of seed clams in the harbor has decreased. While the seed clam population represents only a small percentage of the overall clam population, it indicates a potential weakening of the resource, especially if it continues for several consecutive years. The study also found the presence of *notata* variant clams, which were the type planted by the Committee in years past. Since this variety is extremely rare in nature, it indicates that the seeding program is still yielding results. Carol DiPaolo noted that she has had conversations recently with baymen harvesting in Hempstead Harbor and they reported that the shellfish beds in Hempstead Harbor continue to produce healthy quantities of clams of all sizes.

Water Quality and Monitoring Programs / Shellfish Opening

Eric noted that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is expected to announce its 2014 grant awards in mid to late October and that he is hopeful that the Committee will receive a grant for its 2014 water-quality monitoring program. He also noted that he is writing the reports necessary to wrap up the grant for the 2013 program. Carol DiPaolo noted that on September 9th, she had e-mailed an update on the current water-monitoring results and observations (a copy is attached to these minutes). On August 6th, it was likely that an algae bloom was in process as the water was very green. Bacteria and other levels are pretty much as expected. Comb jellies (both sea walnuts and sea gooseberries) were seen on all monitoring dates in August. Large schools of bunker and baitfish were noted throughout the harbor on August 16th and 17th. Both were breaking the surface as larger fish were under them. Wildlife continues to be abundant, with a total of 13 osprey observed on August 21st. Reports from fishermen show that this has been a good year for fishing in the harbor with striped bass as large as 39" (23 pounds) and bluefish as high as 14 pounds.

Long Island Sound Study Report Card Project

Eric mentioned that on July 1st, he, Tom Powell and Carol DiPaolo attended a meeting in Stamford with the University of Maryland staff to assist in the design of the pilot water quality report card for Hempstead Harbor. Since that time, there has been further communication via conference call. The report card is expected to be released sometime this Fall.

Long Island Sound Study Citizens Advisory Committee

Eric noted that the Long Island Sound Study has prepared a draft 20 year plan for Long Island Sound and its embayments and that a public meeting is scheduled to take place on September 16th at the Yes We Can Community Center in Westbury from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. The previous 20 year plan was adopted in 1994.

Nassau County Soil & Water Conservation District

Eric reported that the District has a new District Manager (Corey Humphrey) and a new Conservation Technician (K.C. Alvey) and that the District approved its involvement in organizing the next phase of the invasives removal project at Cedarmere. A meeting is expected to take place in the near future. Mr.

Humphrey has also arranged with the Anton Papers to write a regular column entitled "Conservation Conversation". Finally, Eric reported that the July 23rd "Whole Foods Day" netted over \$5,600.00 for the Long Island Envirothon.

C.E.S.S.P.O.O.L. Project Update

Eric noted that the Town of Oyster Bay has filed a grant application with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a second phase of the C.E.S.S.P.O.O.L. Project's onsite wastewater treatment system training program. This grant, if approved, will also provide funds to develop GIS maps showing which areas are most likely to become problem areas for our harbors and bays. The grant, like the previous one, is a partnership between the Town, the three protection committees and the Friends of the Bay and involves no cash match (only in-kind services) from the partners. Erin Reilley noted that Glen Cove recently completed a similar mapping project and that she would be willing to assist with this aspect if and when the grant is received. On a separate note, the C.E.S.S.P.O.O.L. Project is also in the process of releasing a Request For Proposals (RFP) for a professional public relations firm to design an effective public education campaign and materials. The RFP is being sent by the Town of Oyster Bay and has a return date of September 26th.

Municipal Updates

Town of North Hempstead – Mal Nathan reported that he has requested that the Town's Public Information department publicize the upcoming public meeting on the draft Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. Kevin Braun noted that the construction of the one mile long extension to the Town's harbor trail is going well. A retaining wall has been installed and the path is expected to be completed in about six weeks. Kevin noted that this project has been 12 years in the making.

Roslyn Harbor – Abby Kurlender nothing to report.

Sands Point – Catherine Chester had nothing to report.

Sea Cliff – Tom Powell noted that construction of the dwellings on the Sea Isle property is continuing and that the location of the public path has shifted slightly away from the property of a nearby homeowner. He also noted that property on Bay Avenue that suffered a collapse of its cliff during the summer is now up for sale. Finally, he noted that the Village will now be requiring that homeowners use paper leaf bags for putting leaves out for collection. This is due to the fact that their yardwaste contractor no longer has the capability of de-bagging leaves in plastic bags.

Roslyn – Len Shaw mentioned that the Village now has a Farmer's Market every Saturday morning at the intersection of Old Northern Boulevard and East Broadway. He also mentioned that the building that is behind and east of the post office is being converted from its long-time restaurant use to office space. The building is part of the "Biti" property that was approved for townhouses. In addition, the County has been doing some work on the drainage system next to the Gristmill although work seems to have stopped for now. No one at the meeting knew exactly the nature of the work although it involves the installation of concrete rings or pipes. Finally, Len noted that an article appeared recently in the Roslyn News about upcoming dredging of the ponds in Gerry Park. **Len will send a copy of the article to Eric.** [note: Len did send the article and it is attached to these minutes].

Other Items

Mal Nathan stated that the Town's Waterfront Advisory Committee is concerned that the public may misconstrue the county's pre-emptive shellfish closures in that they may think that the closure indicates that the water quality is unhealthy when it may not be. He asked if Eric would be willing to speak on the issue to the group at its next meeting on October 8th [Note that this is also the date of the next HHPC meeting]. Eric suggested that it would be better for someone from the Nassau County Health Department to address this as it is they who determine the pre-emptive closures. Currently they are closed when the 24 hour rainfall total in the area is a half inch or more. Eric noted that he often finds out about the beach closures the same way that the public does – by reading about it in the papers despite several requests that he be included on the county's distribution list. **Carol DiPaolo will provide Mal with contact information for the Health Department.** The discussion also included pre-emptive shellfish bed closures administered by the NYS DEC. The current standard is 3 inches of rain over a 24 hour period. Adding to the confusion is the fact that the type of bacteria used to determine safe levels is different for swimming than for shellfish harvesting. Carol mentioned that last year the Committee prepared and distributed a brochure aimed at explaining why and when beaches and shellfish beds are closed or pre-emptively closed. Mal asked if he could get some copies to distribute to the Waterfront Advisory Committee. **Eric will get some copies to Mal.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 pm

NEXT MEETING: October 8, 2014 at Sea Cliff Village Hall