

Cold Spring Harbor, New York

Cold Spring Harbor High School Thursday, June 22, 2000

Over fifty people attended the eighth hearing of Listen to the Sound 2000. David Miller, executive director of National Audubon Society of New York State chaired the event.

Marilyn England, executive director of Theodore Roosevelt Audubon Sanctuary, maintained that the timing of the hearing could not be better, as development on Long Island has intensified under today's economic boom.

Tangredi stated that public education and legislation would increase appreciation of the Sound and a sense of responsibility for the environment. "We have to really change the individual, what the individual thinks of the land," began Tangredi. He added that we should turn away from materialistic values and turn towards a future with "clear water, and maybe the return of dolphins and lobsters for Long Island Sound."

According to England, the Sound has troubles, "from annual dead zone events to the recent lobster die off, to over-development of its shorelines. Ten years ago, Audubon helped lead a campaign to address declining water quality in the Sound. Today the water is 25 percent cleaner, and there is increasing momentum and support to get the rest of the job done."

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Basil Tangredi, member of the Huntington Conservation Board, claimed that the group supports marine conservation laws to protect the shoreline of the Town of Huntington, which contains bay complexes, deep harbors and the projections of Eden's Neck and Lloyd's Neck that provide interesting habitats and quality shellfish.

Comments on the Reserve Concept

Action for Preservation and Conservation of the North Shore of Long Island member Caroline DuBois enthusiastically supported the united efforts of citizens and government officials in producing a reserve that permanently protects open space. "We share the vision of an emerald necklace, a network of wild shorelines ringing the Sound forever." Dubois challenged citizens to empower leaders to adopt smart growth, a practice that emphasizes the



control of sprawl, and other sustainable development stewardship policies to create “a living environmental legacy for the greater good for all mankind.”



Tappan Marina adjacent to KeySpan owned property.

Resident Mary Malloy supported the British concept of access and open availability of the waterfront for the community and recommended that Americans mimic the policy. Malloy took issue with the low quality of the water in the Cold Spring Harbor estuary. Malloy and resident Lisa Marks also insisted that the oil tank area at Cold Spring Harbor Mobil Oil Terminal be cleaned.

The Sierra Club of Long Island supported the idea of a Long Island Sound Reserve system. The group pushed for expansion of environmental protection once “all the properties that are already in public ownership and more of the undeveloped properties are

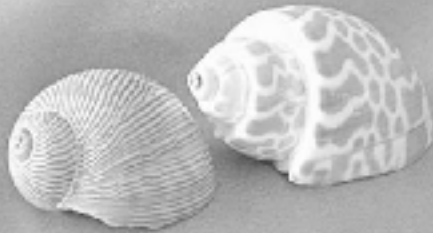
properly mapped so that the public shoreline access exists,” said the group’s treasurer, Barbara Josepher.

Sites in the area for the Reserve System

Dyan Freiberg of Save the Sound said, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Connecticut has lost some 74 percent of its wetlands dating from the 1780s, while New York has lost some 60 percent during this same time period. Freiberg included sites identified by the Habitat Restoration Initiative: 18 sites in Oyster Bay, including Beaver Brook,

Shoe Swamp, Beaver Lake and Cold Spring Ponds. In Huntington, 11 sites, including Betty Allen Nature Park, Center Port Ponds and Twin Ponds Park.

Marilyn England, executive director of Audubon New York’s Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary suggested the Chandler Estate, KeySpan Jamesport, North Fork Preserve, Dam Ponds parcels and the KeySpan property, formerly owned by LILCO.



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According to Maria Kelly of Huntington Audubon, “KeySpan has not yet decided what to do with the land where the tanks were buried.” Other speakers had ideas about how to transform the land.

“The Mobil Oil terminal site in Cold Spring Harbor...could reclaim its historic maritime heritage if

it were transformed into a passive beach and marine environmental education and research site,” said Caroline DuBois.

Basil Tangredi recommended the former Morgan Estate, which includes tidal wetlands, freshwater wetlands, old fields and climax woods, the Fuke’s property and Crab Meadow.

Joanna Radin, citizen of Kings Park, recommended that the state retain the Kings Point property for use as an educational tool. “ I grew up there. I played there. I went to camp in the area surrounding there, and I really think that the state’s retention of that land would help unify it.”

Amy Hamlin, Long Island chapter director of the New York League of Conservation Voters and the New York Conservation Education Fund, suggested Nissequogue River State Park. “On its northern border, Long Island Sound, and on the eastern border, Nissequogue River designated by the Audubon Society as one of the most important bird areas in this state.”

Ed Mohlenhoff, resident of Oyster Bay Cove, recommended Beaver Lake, Shoe Swamp, Francis Pond and the Commander Oil terminal area in Oyster Bay.

Denise Woodin, executive director of Friends of the Bay in Oyster Bay, also encouraged the bay’s inclusion, “We know from first-hand experience the pressure that can transform open space and waterfront property into high density development,” said Woodin. “However, protecting our natural resources means constant vigilance from environmentalists, community residents and our public officials.”

Woodin encouraged “sustainable economic development, environmental protection, historic preservation and the creation of additional open space that would link Bayville,” the western waterfront and the eastern waterfront of Oyster Bay. Woodin contended that if the Commander Oil terminal was phased out, as recommended by the state’s Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Program, public use of the site should be encouraged.

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~ Alexander Treadwell



Mechanisms to protect open space

“Governor George E. Pataki has put forward an ambitious agenda for Long Island Sound...a fully-funded Environmental Protection Fund, and through his leadership the resources of the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act are being devoted to improving the Sound’s environment,” declared Secretary of State Alexander Treadwell.



KeySpan property recently cleared of propane tanks.

Through the governor’s vision the Nissequogue River State Park has become a reality. The governor has provided for the transfer of 153 acres of this former psychiatric center in order for it to become one of our newest state parks.

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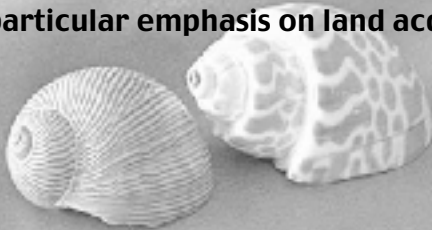
“There is no doubt that the record of these Listen to the Sound forums will expand ideas of how to provide greater public access,” said Treadwell. “We share a joint optimism that together we will not only achieve the governor’s goal for access, but also exceed the public’s expectation.”

“This Listen to the Sound campaign is very timely for providing identification of priority Long Island Sound watershed acquisition sites for inclusion in the 21st Century Open Space Plan, as well as for the reserve system.” Treadwell concluded with a call for federal funds to enhance the state’s efforts.

Nancy Douziman stated that a great number of people care about the reserve and encouraged more groups to work together. “I think what we need to do is in line with what was said before as far as smart growth, we really need to take a bigger perspective,” said Douziman.

Suffolk County Legislator (District 18) and vice chair for the environment committee, Jon Cooper grew up near the Sound and was very concerned about its present state of dying commercial fisheries and therefore strongly supported the Long Island Sound Reserve system. Cooper intended to introduce a bill in the legislature shortly that would increase funding in 2001 for open space preservation with particular emphasis on land acquisition in Western Suffolk.

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Ed Mohlenhoff, resident of Oyster Bay Cove, also driven by the noticeable decrease in the quality of life and environment over his lifetime, emphasized the need to begin “cluster zoning, or up-zoning, of some of these villages to stop the cookie-cutter two-acre or quarter-acre developments that are just shoved into areas and destroying whatever is in its path.”

Legislator Brian Muellers said Nassau County called for a partnership between local like-minded organizations, government officials and the public. “I’ve read through the Nassau County draft open space plan and there’s no mention of it anywhere, of the Long Island Sound Reserve,” stated Mueller and he encouraged it to be part of the plan.

Related conservation issues

Horseshoe crab eggs play a crucial role in shorebird migration and their copper-based blood is used for human medical research. They are continuously threatened by over-harvesting from the conch and eel bait industry. “The entire Sound should become a habitat refuge for these fascinating creatures,” said Caroline DuBois.

Ceil Stepanian requested money for research, stating that he is “seeing better wildlife in the salt marshes, more herons, more egrets, more young fish being hatched, but something is happening when they get out there on Long Island Sound. We need more money for research, as to what exactly is going on. The lobsters in the last two years that have been dying off, something is going on.”

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Concluding Remarks...

Echoes for public education were heard when Fritz Coudert, president of the Center for Marine Education and Recreation, voiced his perception: “People who don’t care, or don’t know enough to care, about what to do for their environment must be a target of our educational efforts.” Coudert encouraged laws, purchasing properties and community education. “We need the regional concept, but we need to educate people, and that’s where I think we will be supporting this as much as anybody and our way.”

Maria Kelly of Huntington Audubon called for maintenance and expansion of public access. According to Kelly, “nature’s way of filtration is wetlands” and she encouraged other organizations’ participation in the reserve incentive in order to retain the natural defense.

