

Port Jefferson, New York

Village Court Hall Tuesday, June 27, 2000

Close to sixty people attended the ninth hearing of Listen to the Sound 2000. Lucy Betty Nash, vice president of Four Harbors Audubon Society, introduced hearing chair Marilyn England of Audubon New York's Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary .

“Although too late to save Grandifolia Sand Hills, which was bulldozed beginning the same day that the zoning change was approved, public access at such a site should be limited to passive observation of flora and fauna.”
~ Amie Hamlin

Having witnessed a slow and steady degeneration of wildlife habitat, water quality, and fish and shellfish populations over the last half century due to the excessive use of chemicals, insecticides and fertilizers, Camille Johnson, president of Stony Brook Civic Association, encouraged the creation of a Long Island Sound Reserve. The blue claw crab, which was abundant in Stony Brook, has been absent from its waters since the 1960's. Clam and oyster beds have been closed to the public from May to October for the last several years as a result of high bacteria counts.

“If Stony Brook, Forsythe Meadow and the Plock property are developed, they could have a negative impact on water quality with respect to runoff into the Stony Brook Harbor and, subsequently, into the Sound,” Johnson stated. She cites unified cooperation as the only way to successfully safeguard the environment for ourselves and future generations.

Comments on the Reserve Concept

Many voiced their full support for the reserve. “We will lend our support and our energy and whatever ability and talent we have to making the reserve come into being,” said Richard DeTurk of the Regional Plan Association.

Luci Betti Nash maintained that continued research and youth education would ignite the conservationist flame. Drawing from childhood memories Nash said, “We must recreate that wonder in children today by insuring the health of the Sound.” She also suggested that money spent on creating these new access points and parks could be matched with money for education and research. She insisted land for open space should be purchased, giving landowners an incentive to sell for preservation instead of development. “The time to do these things is now, while we have a booming economy,” said Nash.



Kathleen O'Connor, president of Great South Bay Audubon Society, spoke of the importance of purchasing even the smallest of parcels, "even if they're one or two acres...keep acquiring them and keep fighting."

Amie Hamlin of New York League of Conservation Voters



Mary Mulcahy

Sites in the area for the Reserve System

Amie Hamlin, the Long Island chapter director of the New York League of Conservation Voters and the New York Conservation Education Fund, expressed great sadness about the transformation of the hummingbird haven, Grandifolia Sand Hills, into a golf course. Hamlin encouraged locating new adjacent parcels of land and added, "Although it's too late to save Grandifolia Sand Hills, which was bulldozed beginning the same day that the zoning change was approved, public access at such a site should be limited to passive observation of flora and fauna."

Rebecca Grella, executive director of Aiza Biby, suggested Cedar Beach Nature Sanctuary and land on the south side of the Old Post Road be a part of the reserve system. She emphasized the importance of educating the youth to become stewards of the environment.

Luci Betti Nash suggested that the following properties be added to the reserve system: Forsythe Meadow in Stony Brook, the Plock property in Stony Brook, the Detmer Farm in Sautucket, east of the three village area, the KeySpan property in Jamesport (over 500 acres) and Chandler Estate in Mount Sinai.

Gary Halada recommended the Chandler Estate because it "is a site that's been listed for acquisition...one of the last remaining pieces of open land on Mount Sinai Harbor, and a valuable marine and estuary ecosystem."

Sarah Karpany, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Ecology and Evolution at SUNY Stony Brook, also recommended the Chandler Estate and strongly encouraged the creation of a



canoe access in the Nissequogue River State Park.

Louise Harrison, consultant for Conservation and Natural Areas Planning, cited Four Sides Meadow, a 40-acre forest in Stony Brook Village. Harrison also encouraged a close examination and incorporation of the recommendations of the

Long Island Sound Coastal Management Program, which included three outstanding natural coastal areas: Mitchell Creek wetlands in Nassau County, the 500-acre property in Jamesport owned by KeySpan and the Sharm property owned by KeySpan.

Harrison maintained that a collaborative effort was necessary to retain the regionally important natural areas where there's high concentrations of natural resources that are significant and cultural resources that are dependant on those natural resources.

Edward Luke, president of Nissequogue Canoe and Kayak Club, urged the assembly to create a water trail along the shore of Long Island Sound. A water trail is a series of sites spaced apart by a day's paddling distance where boaters can spend the night on multi - day journeys.

Guy Jacob, coastal resources chair of the Sierra Club, recommended 26 acres of nearly pristine coastal watershed buffer land between the Sunken Meadow State Park and the new Nissequogue River State Park.

Mechanisms to protect open space

Many resolved to find ways in which to protect the environment. George Priorios, chairman of Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District, stated, "The vast majority of all the problems that many of us have spent countless years trying to address have been the result of poor planning, improper planning or no planning at all. I believe that the Long Island Sound Management Committee working with the CAC, the Citizens Advisory Committee, should establish a timetable for all local governments along the Sound to change their zoning and local laws to become compliant with all the recommendations to the Sound's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan."

"How do you get funding to run the public education programs that are necessary to educate the public?" questioned Donald Coyle, chairman of Port Jefferson Harbor Advisory Commission. Coyle encouraged the assembly to endorse the reserve and seek funding for implementation and education of the public.

"We may need to consider creative solutions to create wetlands as many will be lost as the sea level rises."

~ Alex Kolke



Erik Dumont, Long Island program coordinator of Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE), referred to the Long Island Sound estuary as “the region’s greatest natural and economic treasure.” CCE believes that lands that act as buffers, key habitats and estuarine wetlands should be given priority. Many of the issues should be addressed by strengthening the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act, increasing funding for non-point source pollution control and appropriating substantial federal dollars to the Long Island Sound Restoration Act, recently approved by the House of Representatives.

New York State Assemblyman Steven Englebright recommended Detmer Farm and Ploch property. Englebright encouraged the group to urge Pataki to sign the legislation he sponsored (New York State Assembly Bill #10402 and New York State Senate Bill #7251) which will amend parks and preservation laws to include most of Long Island Sound in the North Heritage area. Most of Long

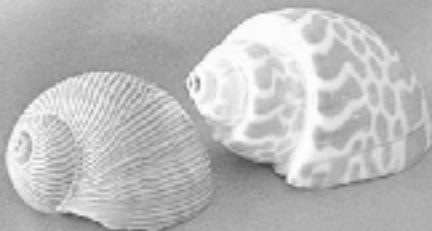


Island Sound has been recognized by both houses of the state legislature as an important resource that should be given the status of a “heritage area”.

Sarah Karpany suggested that boater fees at each of the harbors on Long Island Sound be used for educational purposes. Jack Finkinberg, board member of the Open Space Council, called for an aggressive plan to preserve the rest of eastern Suffolk.

Related conservation issues

Janet Lauber, president of Stony Brook Estuaries Council, expressed the frustration of not being able to use the harbor because of road runoff and other types of pollution. Lauber promoted the use



of catch basins and infiltration, a project undertaken by the council for the last five years. “But if you save your part of the Sound, that’s the start, isn’t it? That’s what you want, we all want to do,” exclaimed Lauber.

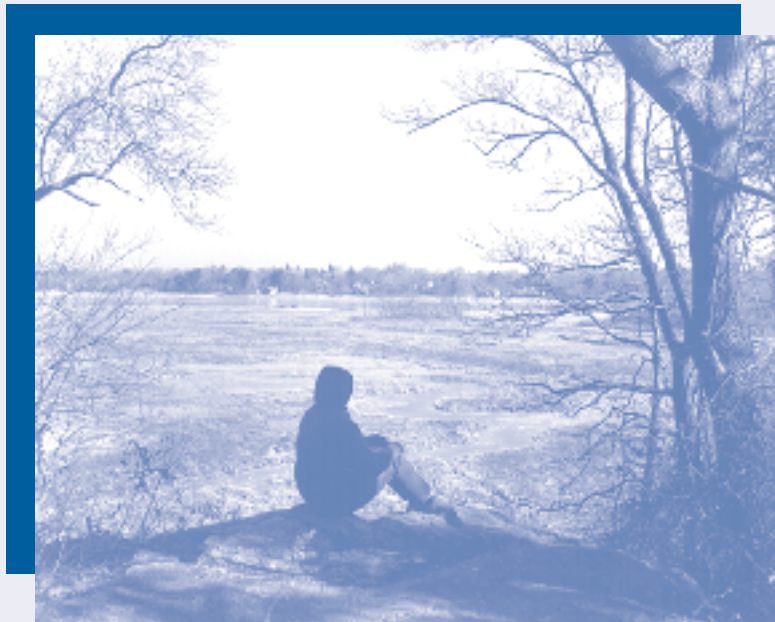
Sarah Karpany discussed the use of pesticides to control mosquitoes, where she encouraged Suffolk County to abstain from pesticides spraying until all other methods had been exhausted.

Louise Harrison asked the towns and villages to take advantage of the new state legislation that allows for the regulation of personal watercraft in the waters within 1,500 feet of their boundaries.

Alex Kolke, a graduate student at SUNY Stony Brook, said the sea level rise must be taken into account. Kolke maintained resultant flooding in marshes would require plans to be creative and reflective. She suggested the purchase of additional land to allow marshes to move inland. “We may need to consider creative solutions to create wetlands as many will be lost as the sea level rises.”

“I have and am listening to the Sound, and will continue to do so. What I hear is, ‘please stop abusing me, and leave my open space open and quiet, and used for quiet recreation only.’ My personal dream is that we get to save it all. And we fight to save it all”

~ Meg Engelman



Howard Pincus

Concluding Remarks...

Karen Chytalo, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, pressed for public access stating, “You should have the ability to use it, see it, touch it and get to it.” Chytalo encouraged working in partnership also with the Department of Transportation to erect directional signs for increased public access to sites.

Meg Engelman summarized the movement beautifully from another perspective, “I have and am listening to the Sound, and will continue to do so. What I hear is, ‘please stop abusing me, and leave my open space open and quiet, and used for quiet recreation only.’ My personal dream is that we get to save it all. And we fight to save it all.”