

South Shore Estuary Reserve Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

December 6th, 2022, 10:00am – 11:30am

Zoom Meeting

In attendance:

South Shore Estuary Reserve (SSER) Office:

Jeremy Campbell

Sally Kellogg

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Members:

Tara Schneider-Moran, TAC Chair, Town of Hempstead

Kathleen Fallon, TAC Vice Chair, New York Sea Grant

Michael Bilecki, National Parks Service (NPS)

Elizabeth Cole, Long Island Regional Planning Council (LIRPC)

Maureen Dolan-Murphy, Citizens Campaign for the Environment

Maureen Dunn, Seatuck Environmental Association

E. Christa Farmer, Hofstra University

Shawn Fisher, USGS

Michele Golden, Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP)

Rich Groh, Town of Babylon

Josh Halsey, Peconic Land Trust (PLT)

Corey Humphrey, Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District

Artie Kopelman, Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island (CRESLI)

Nancy Pierson, Suffolk County Department of Health Services

Julia Socrates, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

Steve Schott, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County

Adam Starke, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Tom Wilson, Stony Brook University SOMAS

Guests

Jim Browne, Town of Hempstead

Alex Caputo, Town of Babylon

Dorian Dale, Suffolk County

Greg Gaxiola, Town of Babylon

Emily Hall, Seatuck Environmental Association

Sarah Healy, Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP)

Veronica King, Town of Brookhaven

Brad Peterson, Stony Brook University SOMAS

Ariel Santos, Seatuck Environmental Association

Anthony Valentino, Town of Babylon

Meeting called to order at 10:02am.

Approval of October 24th, 2022 Meeting Minutes

MOTION (M. Dolan Murphy): pass October meeting minutes. Seconded (M. Bilecki). Approved.

SSER CAC updates

M. Dolan Murphy encouraged members to register and attend the SSER legislative breakfast scheduled for December 13, 2022 from 8:30-10:30am. The event is an opportunity for promoting the SSER program to local legislators and ask for an increase to the program budget line item. Please send potential projects to Sally. The next CAC meeting will feature a talk about alternate boat bottom paints followed by a presentation from local high school students who are researching microplastics.

Presentation: SSER LAG Project: Maple Avenue Boat Ramp Stormwater Mitigation - Veronica King, Town of Brookhaven

Project site was described, before and after photos were shown. The Town of Brookhaven completed improvements to the Maple Avenue Boat ramp by redesigning the road end to redirect stormwater. The project included installing new drainage structures and constructing a new bioretention area to minimize stormwater runoff and improve water quality in Great South Bay. See slides for additional details.

Suffolk County Coastal Resiliency via Integrated Salt Marsh Management - Camilo Salazar and Dorian Dale, Suffolk County

A goal of the project was to improve marsh services such as nitrogen removal, resiliency of coastal ecosystems and communities, and for the areas to adapt to rising sea levels and extreme storm events. The project was implemented on four marshes within the South Shore Estuary Reserve watershed: Suffolk County Gardiner Park East and West, Timber Point marsh, and West Sayville Marsh. Additionally, there was tidal wetland restoration at Smith Point County Park with a purpose of restoring marshland to improve natural protection against flooding, storm surge, intense wave action, and to improve the marsh sustainability and resilience against sea level rise. The project site is the marshland at the Smith Point County Park in the southernmost portion of Shirley, NY. Sites were strategically chosen, and they would likely keep up with sea level rise by naturally accreting sediment. Integrated Marsh Management conceptual framework was described and specific techniques for each site were summarized. Through this project, Suffolk County has restored over 200 acres of coastal marshland to promote coastal resiliency, reduce the risks related to flooding and storm surge, and restore marsh functions. Other benefits include building capacity for additional restoration, applying integrated marsh management to address local conditions, and assembling a regional technical workgroup of experts. See slides for additional details.

Comment: A paper on the regional technical workgroup was published:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11273-021-09841-5>

Comment: Capacity building is not just about physical aspects of projects but also recruiting staff interested in working projects like these.

Question: Can you talk about how you used your workforce to accomplish this project?

Answer: A contractor was used for NEPA but Suffolk County employees from a variety of programs (vector control, water quality, DPW, etc.) were also engaged in this project which was a key factor to its success.

Question: How were sites chosen?

Answer: Selection criteria included: excessive mosquito pest application areas, aerial photography was used to identify areas not draining properly, and the sites needed to be county owned land.

Question: Did you consider adding sediment?

Answer: Yes, but that method did not give intended results. When sediments settle, they can clog drainage.

Question: Was equipment rented or bought?

Answer: Equipment was owned but maintenance was covered by the grant.

SSER Updates: SSER Saltmarsh Restoration Discussion, SAV Action Plan Approval update, Council Meeting update - Jeremy Campbell, SSER/NYS DOS; SSER TAC summary document

J. Campbell noted a new SSER staff person should be starting in January 2023. He also announced that there will be four Council meetings in 2023, meeting dates can be found here: <https://dos.ny.gov/sser-council>. The SAV action plan was reviewed by NYS DEC and they recommended additional outreach to stakeholders. A saltmarsh subcommittee was formed with the goal of identifying priority list/map of saltmarsh habitat. Volunteers to join the committee included: J. Browne, C. Salazar, A. Starke, C. Freudenberg and anyone else wanting to join should contact Sally.

Comment: TNC had started assembling a Marsh Vulnerability assessment model that was created for NYC marshes ~7-8 years ago that could be a good start. There's been a lot of new data and work on this topic in the past few years (USGS - UVVR, LINAP) that should be rolled in.

Citizens Campaign for the Environment created a document highlighting the accomplishments of the SSER. The document will be used at the legislative breakfast and can be circulated to those who want to see it.

Other Business: Partner Updates and Ideas for Future Meetings, Discuss SSER TAC Evaluation Survey- Tara Schneider-Moran, Town of Hempstead, and Kathleen M. Fallon, NY Sea Grant

T. Schneider-Moran asked members to complete an end of year survey, the feedback will help drive future meetings: <https://forms.office.com/g/wH86K8aA2V>. M. Bilecki was recognized for his contributions to the SSER and SSER TAC during his time at FINS. He was congratulated on his retirement.

Meeting adjourned at 11:29 am.