

**Long Island Sound Study
Citizens Advisory Committee
Thursday, December, 10 2015
Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport, CT
Meeting Summary**

Welcome, Housekeeping & Logistics

Nancy Seligson, Supervisor, *Town of Mamaroneck* and the *Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) New York Co-chair*, welcomed the group at approximately 10:00 am. A quorum of 18 CAC members was present. Nancy announced and welcomed Jim Ammerman as the new *LISS Science Coordinator*, and reviewed the agenda. Curt Johnson, *Save the Sound* and former CT Co-chair of the CAC, has resigned (but remains a member); Nancy reviewed the protocols for nominating a new co-chair as well as renewing the three-year terms of the CAC officers (co-chairs and secretary). The floor was opened for volunteer nominations after the position descriptions were reviewed. Nancy Seligson suggested Sandy Breslin (former CAC member) as a nominee, citing her expertise and the respect of the CAC for her past work. Sandy is working to align herself with an organization in order to be eligible. David Miller, *NYLCEF*, nominated Nancy Seligson as the New York Co-chair; Mickey Weiss, *Project Oceanology*, nominated Marty Garrell, *Adelphi University* and current Secretary, for the position of Secretary; both accepted their nomination. Carol DiPaolo, *Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor*, volunteered as chair for the nominating committee; Curt Johnson and David Miller volunteered for the nominating committee as well.

LIS Management Committee Meeting Summary

Cassie Bauer, *NY DEC*, and Mark Parker, *CT DEEP*, presented a PowerPoint review of the two-day LISS Management Committee meeting held in New York on October 22-23, 2015, describing the process and recommendations that resulted. Nancy Seligson commented that several of the recommendations that emerged from the meeting came directly from the CAC, including the local and near shore embayment monitoring. Curt Johnson acknowledged the important role of the CT Institute of Research and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA), lead by Jim O'Donnell from UConn Marine Sciences, and the recent Restore America's Estuaries' (RAE) conference on Living Shorelines held in Connecticut, as examples of the emerging issues that are highlighted in the new CCMP. David Miller asked if a timeline has been established to address the recommendations, to which Mark Parker replied that the CCMP workgroups are working on two-year goals currently. David underscored the importance of having a constant flow of projects, particularly for land protection, not a hiatus for two years while everyone gets organized. David emphasized that the Sound Communities category of the CCMP needs a specific work group with people assigned to work with agencies and in communities. Tim Visel, *Sound School*, asked if living shorelines is addressing artificial reefs, citing a proposal to use reef balls proposed in the 1970's. Nancy pointed out that the Sound Communities final recommendation regarding public access should be a communications goal, not a Habitat and Stewardship Workgroup goal.

Nancy suggested that there is opportunity for CAC members to join on work groups. Chantal Collier, *The Nature Conservancy*, asked about the process from here and Carol DiPaolo asked about the membership profile for the workgroups. The workgroups are still being established, with the intent and desire to be inclusive. Tim Visel suggested that evening meetings should be considered to increase participation from members of the public; if agency and regulatory people are the only participants the work groups will be perceived as a "closed shop". Mickey

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commented that the best group for evening meetings should be the CAC, even if that is just once a year. Marty agreed that there is a challenge in engaging busy people and it's possible to use skype, phone, and webinars. Nancy pointed out that it was agreed to drop the term "Sentinel Monitoring" from the Climate Change work group because it is too confusing. Chantal suggested that all the water quality people should combine into one working group rather than have separate Watersheds and Embayments, the 5-state TMDL, and Water Quality Monitoring; it's too challenging to try to get to all these meetings. David Miller said that the CCMP is meant to tee-up action; what we currently have is 10% action and 90% organizing. Fifteen years ago the work groups drove the actions. We need a list of actions for our Congressional delegation, something that we could use to say: "And if we had another \$20 million, we could do this...." Sandy Breslin stressed the need for success stories: these need to be part of the instructions and charge to the workgroups. Curt agreed and commented that the work groups need to be teeing up projects and actions. There was some consensus that actions need to go beyond the LISS; new pots of money need to be identified, and we need to go beyond competitive grants, which is particularly problematic for annual water quality monitoring.

Presentation from new LISS Science Coordinator

Nancy Seligson introduced Jim Ammerman with the statement of how important his position is and that she is hopeful that Jim can help the CAC prioritize management needs with science. Jim presented a talk on *Global Coastal Eutrophication*, toward putting LIS into a global context regarding hypoxia. His talk covered the Gulf of Mexico and Lake Erie as examples of significantly impacted waters, with attendant issues of hypoxia and harmful algal blooms. Jim also pointed to the success story of Tampa Bay in Florida, where the acreage of seagrass has been increased to 1950's levels because of efforts in the surrounding watershed. Questions and discussion after his presentation revolved around the link between nutrients and harmful algal blooms, transferability of lessons learned from other regions, and interest in reinstating the LIS Research Conference. Jim was invited to attend future CAC meetings to help with specific science needs related to CAC goals.

LIS Coves and Embayments

Jamie Vaudrey, from the *UConn Marine Sciences* Department, presented her research on a comparative look at all the embayments of Long Island Sound (110 in all, with specific parameters taken for 15 embayments in both states). A number of diagrams illustrated the nitrogen loads contributed to embayments from septic, sewer, and fertilizer (primary contributors), with the concentration of the load and size of the embayment resulting in the amount of nitrogen to the estuary. High loads to small embayments display the greatest problems, with tidal restriction also a significant contributing factor. Those areas within 200 meters of an embayment receive no nitrogen attenuation (removal to groundwater), making these areas particularly important for action. Jamie's advice is to "*Think Local and Act Global*"; embayments are a powerful tool to address excess N in Long Island Sound, as well as an opportunity to engage local residents and communities. Jamie is working with *Save The Sound*

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and *The Nature Conservancy* using the results of her work. A longer report will be out the beginning of next year; this study is a first approximation, with more research needed.

CAC Policy Committee Update

Curt Johnson referred to three letters that were sent in advance of the meeting for CAC comment and action: one a letter to CT Governor Malloy regarding Funding for Water Infrastructure in the 2016-17 enacted CT budget. A second letter was addressed to Governor Cuomo requesting \$800 million in water infrastructure funding in the NYS budget. A third letter was to encourage the NY legislature to pass legislation banning microbeads. CT passed microbead legislation last year to be implemented by 2018. Nancy asked for any objections or changes to the letters; there were none from the Committee. She will provide another 24 hours for comments before sending the letters out on Monday. Curt wants to set a time to go to Washington, D.C. in the Spring of 2016, and also reach out to the EPA, Gina McCarthy's office, with a public CCMP event. Curt acknowledged the time spent by Curt Spalding, *Administrator of EPA Region 1*, and Judith Enck, *Administrator for EPA Region 2*, on the LIS CCMP.

Other discussion included sewage right to know legislation, which New York has, and pharmaceutical prescription collections that are not well publicized, but that yield a lot of collected medications that could otherwise make their way into LIS. Sandy Breslin suggested a letter to all coastal municipalities about collections and medication disposal best practices. Robert Burg, *LISS Communications Coordinator*, suggested that the CAC talk to Adrienne Esposito, *Citizen's Campaign for the Environment*, about the project that they did collecting medications in the city of Bridgeport, CT. Nancy suggested a Spring advocacy trip to Washington D.C. focusing on the reauthorization of the Restoration Act, and that representative Lee Zeldin, *Congressman from New York's 1st District*, and Peter King, *Congressman from New York's 2nd district* on LI would be key.

Announcements

Curt Johnson announced that the in the next couple of weeks, *Save the Sound* and others would be working through social media to advertise "*All I want for Christmas is to Save Plum Island.*" Nancy highlighted a recent article in the New Yorker about Seaweed aquaculture in LIS that mentioned Charlie Yarish; Carol DiPaolo, announced that a Humpback Whale has been seen in Hempstead Harbor, and that the Bunker fish have not yet left.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 pm. The next CAC meeting will be held on March 10th, 2016, in New York.

For additional information on the CAC, visit:

<http://longislandsoundstudy.net/about/committees/citizens-advisory-committee/>