

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM SECOND COMMUNITY OUTREACH SESSION HELD ON 6-5-14**

### **3.2.1 Community Involvement & Education**

#### **A. GOAL: IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES & OUTREACH**

- Crab Meadow Beach Bulletin Board – include interpretive/educational information about what people can see here; Prepare an educational pamphlet; Provide the natural history of the marsh at Fuchs building; Educate residents about the marsh so they have pride; Increase public outreach to schools & identify programs for school groups – what are the possibilities? Add Christian’s Crab Meadow Watershed Wildlife Manual to the web portal; Schools can adopt a habitat, area or activity; Marsh is currently underutilized for education Beach should serve as gateway to area programs; Crab Meadow Watershed is underutilized for the benefits that can be derived – Northport Schools should have trips to Crab Meadow; Prepare an educational curriculum relevant to the local ecology; Hold organized interpretive walks through the marsh; Promote research opportunities, including high schools
- Improve infrastructure to support visitors; Information in kiosk/gazebo at Crab Meadow Beach; There is interest from school districts, both inside and outside the watershed to use marsh for educational purposes; Increase use of Fuchs Building; Build a raised boardwalk around the marsh & a wildlife viewing platform and include interpretive signage
- Promote Historical outreach – how land use developed over time around the marsh (e.g., Bar at Waterside Avenue, Tent City at Blanchard Lake, Sound Shore Bluffs, Waterside Park Assn.); Brick factory history is of interest; Add links to the Northport Historical Society and Town Historian to the CMW portal; Put LILCO Study on portal

#### **B. PROMOTE PASSIVE RECREATIONAL USE NOT ACTIVE USES**

Strike the proper balance between park access and appreciation of park; how much traffic can the marsh take? Prohibit motorized boats, jet skis in the marsh itself and prohibit motorized dirt bikes; Concerns over dog waste entering the marsh & piping plover disturbances; Concerns about power boat activity in marsh channels and proliferation of kayaking – will these activities affect wildlife use in marsh?

### C. VANDALISM IS A BIG PROBLEM AND ENFORCEMENT IS NEEDED

- Loitering, parties and fires in marsh area; Consider adding a ranger at Fuchs educational center; Increase water quality education through the website;

### D. RAISE OVERALL PUBLIC STEWARDSHIP AWARENESS

- Understanding the regulations governing areas adjacent to the marsh; Need to teach residents how best to manage lands; use Town practices as examples; Mark storm inlets as to where they drain; Septic system education is needed tied to benefits to the marsh There seems to be a disconnect of people in the southern portion of the watershed; a mis-understanding the value of their actions on overall water quality in the Crab Meadow Watershed

#### Concerns of lesser priority:

- Town is interested in consistent 'branding' of public CMW materials;
- Town should consider 3 potential fish ladders to pass alewife and American eels, and increase educational outreach;
- How can public art be drawn into outreach & educational programs for Crab Meadow;
- Provide additional parking in area;
- Directions to different interesting locations (maps);
- The underutilized area that was formerly campground near Blanchard Lake, and Kirshbaum Park – how to get increased access to this park? Consider Master plan for these areas;
- Men's Club at Golf Course can provide history of course;
- Adopt a slice of the marsh;
- Drowned trees at Fuchs Pond;
- Increase in mosquito issues
- Marsh is healthy & remains healthy;

### 3.2.2 *Habitat, Plants & Wildlife*

#### A. PRESERVE EXISTING HABITATS & WATER QUALITY

- Belief watershed-wide that the CM marsh is healthy & remains healthy; Protection for nesting piping plovers at Makamah Beach; Protection for otters needed at sharp turn on Waterside Avenue; Audubon telemetry/otter survey project; Concerns about tree removals; buffers are necessary for protecting habitats; Create Monarch way-stations; Need for dog controls on beaches for shorebird protection; Piping plover nesting area on eastern side of Crab Meadow, at the western terminus of Makamah Beach Road; Canada Goose and Swan populations; concern with water quality, culling and potential food resource; Resident Canada Goose and mute swan populations; North side of Blanchard Lake is a haven for birds & other wildlife;

- concerns over the construction debris piles located between Kirschbaum property and lake, consider alternative area for long-term storage of beach maintenance equipment
- Invasive species controls needed (mugwort, Japanese Knotweed, etc.); Kudzu, Asiatic Bittersweet, Boston Ivy, common reed invasive plant issues; Use more native plants as ‘ornamentals’ – educate public about use of native plants; How can the common reed along the edge of the marsh be controlled? The monoculture crowds out native plants; Consider using goats for invasive species controls; Some areas of common reed used to be cattails; cattail marsh now limited; Japanese knotweed invasions in Fuchs Pond, on the beach, pipeline R-O-W and along Waterside Drive; On the north side of the pipeline R-O-W water levels have dropped and are being overtaken by common reed
  - Septic system input into watershed and effects on wildlife & habitat; Consider seeding of shellfish into tidal creeks in marsh; Concerns about impacts of dog feces & urine
  - Research opportunities, including high schools;
  - Consider dredging for Fuchs Pond and Blanchard Lake; Check board levels at Fuchs Pond – suspect that water levels are not where NYSDEC (Dan Lewis) stipulated; Scherer Pond drying up

## B. CONTROL DEER POPULATION

- Deer population controls needed; culling and providing meat to charities; human health threat in spread of Lyme disease; Deer strike hazards on 25A and Bread & Cheese Hollow Road; Deer browse on plants has been a problem the last 2-3 years; especially destroying early spring wildflowers; Public request for a cull of deer population

## C. IMPROVE FISH PASSAGES

### Concerns of lesser priority:

- Snapping turtle breeding habitat;
- Correlation between insects (macro-invertebrates) with regard to Environmental Health;
- Dam on Makamah, south of Breeze Hill Road, used to drain directly into marsh;
- Drowned trees at Fuchs Pond;
- Concerns about power boat activity in marsh channels and proliferation of kayaking – will these activities affect wildlife use in marsh? Strike the proper balance between park access and appreciation of park; how much traffic can the marsh take?
- Litter issues along west side of Makamah Road at Preserve;

- What is the impact on wildlife of boating, kayaking & canoeing in marsh channels;
- Insect problems – biting flies/green flies, mosquitoes to a lesser extent; but the DDT ban has resulted increases of larger birds;
- Fiddler crabs decreased 6-8 years ago (?);
- Identify which wildlife populations are now missing – beaver, wild turkey, turtles?
- Erosion of marsh may not be issue – ditches not getting wider, as per local residents;
- Loss of prickly pear cactus at parking lot;
- Compare the marsh lost at Duck Island Cove @ 3 miles away to the west, storms overwashed resulting in about 95% marsh loss;

### **3.2.3 Water Resources & Water Quality**

#### **A. IDENTIFY POLLUTANT SOURCES**

- Perform a nutrient budget for watershed;
- Impacts of the existing sanitary disposal practices on the environment;
- Septic system input into watershed;
- Establish sources of contamination through further studies;
- Majority of Crab Meadow Watershed system inputs by groundwater, not sewers; Need to know contributing areas for groundwater;
- Hydrology study should consider the LIPA lagoon & Waterside Avenue sumps;
- Suffolk County well & water quality data, and Suffolk County Pond data from Fuchs Pond and local golf courses;
- Winter sand from roads is affecting the silting of Seaside Court;
- Camp, Dresser & McGee did some water monitoring and travel times for SCDHS;
- Golf course management is (of concern) important because of elevation & proximity to marsh; nutrients/fertilizers, pesticides (requirements by State to have Pesticide Management Plan); groundwater monitoring wells;
- Use of low nitrogen & phosphorous fertilizers on Town properties – how is it controlled & monitored?
- Check board levels at Fuchs Pond – suspect that water levels are not where NYSDEC (Dan Lewis) stipulated;
- Consider cyclone separators and storm drain filter inserts for water quality improvement;
- Survey of private wells to sample water quality;
- Concerns over dog waste into the marsh;
- Establish sources of contamination through studies.

#### **B. ATTAIN BETTER MAPPING**

- Mapping of storm sewer system;
- Study of aquifer depth/limits;
- Identify Blanchard Lake sources & connections;
- Mark storm inlets as to where they drain;

### C. IMPROVE WATER QUALITY TESTING

- Survey of private wells to sample water quality
- Water quality of Blanchard Lake with goose poop & other pollutants
- Previous & current groundwater testing programs – room for improvement?
- Water quality testing protocols to reflect pesticide/fertilizer usage;
- Concerns over fertilizer applications & usage including: public education; code use restrictions; is water quality a good indicator of N & P levels? Use of low nitrogen & phosphorous fertilizers on Town properties – how is it controlled & monitored?
- Are efforts at water quality sampling diverse enough for potential contaminants?

### D. IMPLEMENT CONSTRUCTION APPROACHES

- Fresh Pond clogs with debris after storms (even pre-Sandy);
- Consider cyclone separators and storm drain filter inserts for water quality improvement;
- After storms, debris washes into Crab Meadow Marsh;
- Non-point source pollution controls needed as well as point source controls (e.g., Makamah Beach Road, Crab Meadow Golf Course).
- Concerns at Indian Hills GC – runoff controls needed and should protect Fresh Pond;

#### Concerns of lesser priority:

- Clean water and global warming are major concerns;
- Creek at Ingraham Preserve – road needs to be closed off sometimes during “superstorms” (e.g., Hurricane Donna); and Makamah Beach Road always floods, houses cut off (check 1972 & 1978 aerials that Andy has);
- Significant slumping at Indian Hills Golf Course, possibly due to springs;
- National Grid is using natural gas, resulting in a cleaner operation and diminished the need for barges & possibility of spills;
- Dam on Makamah, south of Breeze Hill Road, used to drain directly into marsh;
- Septic system education is needed tied to benefits to the marsh;
- Explanation for an apparent orange film?
- Oyster reefs for water quality improvement; good/bad idea? N is additional concern;
- GOBLER information regarding PSP/DSP;
- Water quality comparison between Crab Meadow (healthy) and Duck Island Harbor (unhealthy);
- Removal of historical structures at Fuchs Pond holding water back;
- Correlation between insects (macro-invertebrates) with regard to Environmental Health.

### **3.2.4 Access & Recreation**

#### **A. PROVIDE SAFE PARKING**

- Makamah at Breeze Hill Road proposed entrance north of Breeze Hill Road – traffic and safety issues with parking due to sight visibility around blind curve; too many cars on road shoulders & doors opening into road; no parking signs; speeding problems on Makamah Hill Road due to Golf Course traffic; Parking lot on 25A & Makamah Preserve south entrance is ½ mile away;
- Parking for northern Makamah Park entrance should be near the pond dike to access a prime birding area;
- Recommendations to expand Route 25A Parking Lot, and close Breeze Hill Road entrance;
- Concerns about the closure along the south side of Veterans Park;
- Ingraham Preserve Parking should be completed to solve parking along curved section of Waterside Avenue;
- Indian Hills Golf Course beach access intersected by stone groins, which makes beach access difficult – about 10 years ago, approx. \$35K was to be paid to provide pedestrian access;
- Parking on Seaside just north of intersection with Waterside, marked cross-walk needed to connect east and west side of road; avoid parking along the guard rail;

#### **B. EXPAND EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH**

- Educational kiosk at Geisslers Beach;
- Crab Meadow Beach Bulletin Board – include interpretive/educational information about what people can see here.

#### **C. ACQUIRE AND LINK IMPORTANT PROPERTIES**

- South side of NYS 25A at Makamah Preserve – possible public acquisition (2.75 ac.) for trail; traffic safety concern;
- Greenbelt Trail consisting of Ingraham's, Fuchs Pond, Makamah Preserve, Meadowlark Park, Veterans Park – need to confirm ownership LIPA vs. PSEG;
- Use LIPA Right-of-way as greenbelt and formalize public access.

#### **D. CONTROL NUISANCE USES**

- BMX issues, ATVs, Quads at County Park;
- Makamah Preserve/Suffolk County catering facility abuse of parking areas off-hours;
- Loitering, parties and fires in marsh area;
- Concerns about power boat activity in marsh channels and proliferation of kayaking – will these activities affect wildlife use in marsh? Strike the proper balance between park access and appreciation of park; how much traffic can the marsh take?

Concerns of lesser priority:

- Makamah at Breeze Hill Road proposed entrance north of Breeze Hill Road – traffic and safety issues with parking due to sight visibility around blind curve; too many cars on road shoulders & doors opening into road; no parking signs; speeding problems on Makamah Hill Road due to Golf Course traffic; Parking lot on 25A & Makamah Preserve south entrance is ½ mile away;
- Makamah at Breeze Hill Road - recommend safe crosswalk but no parking area;
- Recommendations to expand Route 25A Parking Lot, and close Breeze Hill Road entrance;
- Concerns for preserving Indian Hills Golf Course (and zoning);
- Underutilized Kirshbaum Park, should be opened;
- Finish Ingraham Preserve Parking
- The fence on top of the jetty is aesthetically offensive – provide warning signs instead;
- Broken, jagged concrete at jetty is ugly;
- Kayakers going over the jetty fence – need to place a kayak access sign;
- Piping plover nesting area on eastern side of Crab Meadow, at the western terminus of Makamah Beach Road;
- Recreational fishing at the LIPA outfall – water quality should be monitored there;
- Dedicate the old right of way at the end of Waterside into a park;
- Kirschbaum Park should provide public use; maybe just a pedestrian trail with no parking or limited parking like Geissler Beach once had;
- Vehicular speed is a problem on Waterside going to and from the beach;
- Control access points – provide paths in certain locations;
- Provide additional parking in area;
- Directions to different interesting locations (maps);
- The underutilized area that was formerly campground near Blanchard Lake, and Kirshbaum Park – how to get increased access to this park? Consider Master plan for these areas;
- Kirschbaum Park is currently used for storage – should be opened for public fishing access; consider access from the old road on National Grid site;
- The LIPA R-O-W should be maintained, kept trimmed and open;
- Evaluate more opportunities for recreational trail use with parking access; identify definitive parking areas;
- Concerns about the closure along the south side of Veterans Park;
- Erosion of beach and dunes east of the power plant – no longer provides access above high water line.

### **3.2.5 Land Use**

#### **A. CONTINUE WATERSHED LAND CONSERVATION**

- Protect more open space;

- VA Medical Center – future surplus property; consider impacts;
- Concerns for preserving Indian Hills Golf Course (and zoning).

## B. REVIEW ZONING

- Protect private golf courses that adjoin parkland as open space;
- Concern for the future of National Grid Site.

## C. SUSTAINABILITY

- Clay in Makamah area is a limiting factor, causing slumping, standing water, and septic issues;
- Potential conflicts of over-use/under-use as parkland need to be evaluated (e.g., channels & canals ok for canoeists, kayaks);
- Evaluate the channels in Ambro Marsh for remediation;
- Address bluff erosion along Geisler’s Beach;
- Concerns about flooding on south side of Makamah Beach Road;
- Kirschbaum Park is currently used for storage – should be opened for public fishing access; consider access from the old road on National Grid site;
- Concerns about tree removals; buffers are necessary for protecting habitats;
- Need to teach residents how best to manage lands; use Town practices as examples;
- National Grid is using natural gas, resulting in a cleaner operation and diminished the need for barges & possibility of spills;
- Golf course management is (of concern) important because of elevation & proximity to marsh; nutrients/fertilizers, pesticides (requirements by State to have Pesticide Management Plan); groundwater monitoring wells;
- Not a lot of observable changes past 4 years in grid ditch/channel networks as seen from kayak;
- Significant slumping at Indian Hills Golf Course, possibly due to springs;
- Creek at Ingraham Preserve – road needs to be closed off sometimes during “superstorms” (e.g., Hurricane Donna); and Makamah Beach Road always floods, houses cut off (check 1972 & 1978 aerials that Andy has);
- Marsh has not changed much in 60 years;
- Winter sand from roads is affecting the silting of Seaside Court;
- Sandbar at channel changes dramatically; last winter & Hurricane Sandy lost a lot of ground at Giesler’s Beach;



### **3.6 Infrastructure Restoration & Historic Resources**

#### **A. ADDRESS EXISTING SYSTEM WEAKNESSES**

- Examine what could be done to make the Crab Meadow area more resilient to severe storms (e.g., Hurricane Sandy)?
- Address Storm water run-off flooding of Waterside Ave and Eaton's Neck Road;
- Resolve SCDHS holding tank/sanitary system issue at Crab Meadow Beach;
- Litter issues along west side of Makamah Road at Preserve;
- Consider removal of historical structures at Fuchs Pond holding water back;
- Dam on Makamah, south of Breeze Hill Road, used to drain directly into marsh;
- Significant slumping at Indian Hills Golf Course, possibly due to springs;
- Makamah Beach Road floods during storms, houses cut off.
- Corner of West and W. Waterview Streets flooding concerns. There used to be an outfall directly onto beach about 300 feet east of Kirschbaum; catch basins not working.
- Galvanized pipe along east side of Waterside Avenue to Seaside Court enters a concrete structure at corner. Not sure if system is plugged or operational.
- Flooding at north end of Waterside Road – is it due to storm sewer system design;
- Flooding on Makamah Beach Road
- Remove old CMB asphalt ramp in wetland

#### **B. EROSION & BEACH ISSUES**

- Main tidal channel leading from LIS to wetlands has shifted to the west since Hurricane Sandy;
- Groins on private beaches that are not maintained may result in additional erosion;
- Dune replenishment on LI Sound side;
- Erosion of beach and dunes east of the power plant – no longer provides access above high water line;
- Sand accretion on east side of jetty at LIPA power plant and desire move it to Asharoken; ½ dredged material & ½ upland source at Soundview Park;
- Concerns about the main tidal creek: length is growing on both sides; limits flow rate in and out of marsh; is there a remedy for the inlet shifting to the west?

#### **C. WATER QUALITY ISSUES**

- Establish sources of contamination through studies
- Introduce rain gardens to filter runoff;
- Install additional Stormwater filters;
- Examine causes of water level drop north side of the Iroquois pipeline R-O-W
- Non-point source pollution controls needed as well as point source controls at Makamah Beach Road, Crab Meadow Golf Course, etc.

- North side of Blanchard Lake is a haven for birds & other wildlife; concerns over the construction debris piles located between Kirschbaum property and near lake. Consider alternative area for long-term storage of beach maintenance equipment;
- Desire for a better understanding of the existing stormwater system;
- Implementation of green infrastructure practices;
- Impacts of the existing sanitary disposal practices on the environment;

Concerns of lesser priority:

- Feasibility of hydro-electric power installation at mouth of tidal creek?
- Status of fish ladder installation at Fresh Pond;
- Ditches used to be maintained, cleaned every 1-2 yrs., now backing up more;
- Hydrology study should consider the LIPA lagoon & Waterside Avenue sumps;
- Cranberry Hill/Pond with controlled outflow: possible former trout pond; what would happen if outlet structure was removed?
- Channel was once deeper leading into marsh – ponds being dammed on Makamah; Fuchs level is higher
- Intersection at Waterside and Eaton's Neck Road needs speed bumps, signage, ROW maintenance;
- Historic cranberry bogs of interest;
- Crab Meadow Beach Boat ramp maintained until 1966