
CAC-WEST NEWS

Southampton Town Citizens Advisory Committee
Westhampton-Speonk-Remsenburg Eastport-
Quogue
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Meeting Minutes January 22, 2015

CAC -West Next Meeting Thursday, February 5, 2015 at the Westhampton Beach Free Library - 7:00 PM

Present: Hank Beck, Janet Beck, Councilman Brad Bender, Christian Bruun, Ruth Bruun, Douglas Adams, Bob Mozer, Steve Rosemarin.

Guests: Christian Killoran and Michael Tessitore both of the "Hunters for Deer" organization (Hunters for Deer - (www.huntersfordeer.org)). Alecia Moore an opponent of "Hunters for Deer" was present. Wendy Chamberlin, a member of the Southampton Town Wildlife Management Committee and an opponent of "Hunters for Deer" was too ill to attend.

Hank opened the CAC Meeting with a collection of plans for Phase 2 of the Hamptons Business District at the Gabreski Technology Park, showing the phases and positioning and sizes of two new proposed buildings. There were several sets of plans showing the overall plan, plantings, parking areas, floor plans, and infrastructure. The plans appear to be in concordance with the original plans and the Planning Department is expected to approve them (with minor corrections).

Councilman Brad Bender gave an update of the Hills Project in East Quogue. He told us of two separate meetings he attended with the builders, council members and local community. The first at Town Hall, where Discovery Land development made a presentation to the Town representatives. An additional meeting with the East Quogue CAC and local community, the builders gave a significantly different description of the proposed project.

Hank talked about the history of the plans for the Westhampton Community Center. There were a couple of sets of plans, beginning in 2005, when plans were designed and paid for to build a new building at the current location. Later, with the changes in the "Shark" project, another version was planned to be incorporated into that community project. The Shark project was subsequently abandoned, and money that was raised was supposedly refunded to the donors. One of our members commented that he'd never seen a dime of his contribution.

Now many years later, it is 2015 and the original community center has been used until recently. The town is now refusing to let any new groups meet at the building. We used it, hot in the summer and cold in the winter, for many years. When the WH Beach Library opened their doors with a warm, clean, space for public meetings, we changed our venue.

The roof on the old WH community center is in deplorable condition; shingles and siding falling off the building, the parking lot which had been graded a while ago, now has several deep pools of water, mud and at times ice. Recently Hank called someone in Town Hall, about using the building when room was not available at the Library, he was told it is no longer in use.

Ruth Bruun asked if we really need a community center. She added that we have the WHB Free Library which is now heavily used for many functions and groups. Wasn't that enough? We discussed the difference between the two. The library is first a library and the other features it offers such as some public meeting rooms are add-ons and not part of it's main function. For example there is no kitchen and town programs for seniors are not possible. There are several private meals on wheels programs in the area for some who need them. There are only two other community centers west of the Shinnecock Canal. One is in Hampton Bays, with a full working kitchen, the other center is in Flanders which was built and cost almost 3 times the original estimate. Even though all the equipment is in place it still has no useful kitchen, due to the lack of a fire suppression system. The Hampton Bays community center is very large and costs the town a substantial monthly rental to the developer of the King Kullen Shopping Center

Janet Beck asked Councilman Bender for an update on affordable housing and the town housing authority. The Sandy Hollow project has been approved. Some individuals, as members of the local CAC in Tuckahoe are filing suit about the affordable housing against Southampton Town.

Steve Rosemarin and Michael Tessitore both asked about accessory apartment legalization. For example there are often needs for housing relatives. There are also

many problems with the sizes of properties and the ultimate population density within some communities.

Hank introduced Chris Killoran. Chris is a Remsenburg resident who has been involved with the Remsenburg Association and is an active bow and arrow hunter. Michael Tessitore, a resident of East Quogue and another active bow and arrow hunter had asked to address the CAC-West about deer control methods used by their organization, Hunters for Deer, a 501c(3) group. They have worked together to organize bow hunting in the Remsenburg area where the deer population has been a big problem for many residents complaining about property damage, garden and plant destruction, vehicular accidents, deer ticks as a vector for Lyme Disease and the overall health of the deer herd. Some residents use deer fencing, but the deer are then further restricted and concentrated in other areas. Nothing done up to now has led to any change to the high numbers of deer in Remsenburg. They have held a series of public meetings at the Remsenburg academy and other places.

They claim to operate with a strict code of conduct pledge including leaving the property as if they had not been there. There is no fee or charge for what they do. They also have a liability waiver. They only use bow and arrows, no firearms. Hunters for Deer have removed 73 deer (71 does and 2 bucks) during this year's hunting season as of this date. NYS DEC regulates the hunt. Bow and arrow only and no bating is allowed. The owner must give permission and also provide a calendar of dates when they will permit hunting on their property. At the request of local lawmakers the set back law was changed from 500 feet to 150 feet and the season in our area was extended to January 31, 2015. Although there are other methods of controlling the deer, bow hunting, according to them, is especially effective. Last year Southold taxpayers paid for a cull that was not as successful as first desired.

Several members of our group closely questioned Mr. Killoran and Mr. Tessitore about the ethics of what they were doing. They advanced ideas that there were other methods that could be used to control the deer population other than by killing. Alecia Moore presented the case for capture and surgical sterilization of does as a more humane, though difficult and expensive, alternative. Although this is often a very emotional subject to discuss in public everyone at the meeting was committed to a fair and open exchange without rancor or acrimony.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM. Our next CAC-West meeting is on February 5th, 2015 at 7:00 PM at the Westhampton Beach Free Library.

Respectfully submitted

Hank Beck
Chair - CAC-West