

# June July Newsletter

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Speaker for July	1
Minutes for June— continued on page 3	1
Common Core Social Studies Framework	2
Viewpoint Kevin McAllister	4
Viewpoint Ed Romaine	5

**Garden Tour  
Coming in  
July!**

## 2014 Meeting Dates:

**July 1**

September 9

October 7

November 4

December 2

**First Tuesdays**

## Civic Speaker July 1st

### Charlie McAteer

#### Architect for Rails to Trails

Chairman of Friends of the Greenway, an organization that supports a similar trail that is being extended from Setauket into Port Jefferson Station, said the trail has created volunteer opportunities for Scouts and civic groups. He said he rarely fills half a bag of garbage when he is walking the trail because the community maintains it.

The Friends of the Greenway was formed several years ago under the auspices of the Three Village Community Trust. Open to all, the Friends of the Greenway is a volunteer program working to maintain, protect, and enhance the trail. Currently, members include representatives of service groups, bike clubs, civic organizations, government officials, neighbors, and area residents. Everyone is encouraged to join the Friends with a tax-deductible donation to the Three Village Community Trust.



### July 1st Agenda:

Pledge of Allegiance 7:30 PM

Roll call of Officers and Trustees

Reading of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Report of Officers

Report of Committees

COPE Report

Old Business

Land Use Committee Report

Adjournment

Who to call? List of important numbers

Police and Emergency: 911 and Address: 400 Middle Country Rd, Selden, NY 11784 Phone:(631) 854-8600 Non emergency 852-COPS

Fire Department(631) 744-2390

Dangerous road complaint? Pothole repair call Highway Supt Losquadro (631) 451-9200, (631) 732-2584, fax

For Councilwoman Jane Bonner: 451-6964, phone / 451-6447, fax councilwomanbonner@brookhaven.org

For Supervisor Brookhaven Ed Romaine: One Independence Hill , Farmingville, NY 11738 (631) 451-TOWN

For NYS Assemblyman Anthony H. Palumbo District 2, 400 W. Main St., Suite 201, Riverhead, NY 11901 631-727-0204

For Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker: (631) 854-1600 620 Route 25A, Suite B, Mt. Sinai, New York 11766

### MINUTES:

Rocky Point Civics Meeting of June 3, 2014

7:45 Pledge

Board in Attendance

Kathy Weber, President

Maria Farley, Vice President

Pat Adamko, Corresponding Secretary

Joan Sele, Membership Chair

Trustees: Rory Rubino

Susan Bevington, and

Virginia Heslin

Motion was made by Albert Hoppe to waive the reading of the May minutes, Seconded by Rory Rubino. All in favor.



**2014**

**Rocky Point Civic  
Association**

**President - Kathy  
Weber**

**Vice President - Maria  
Farley**

**Treasurer - Maureen  
O'Keefe**

**Recording Secretary -**

**Corresponding  
Secretary Pat Adamko**

**Sergeant at Arms -  
Charles T. Bevington**

**Membership Secretary  
- Joan Sele**

**Trustees -**

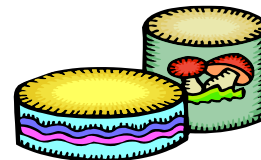
**Rory Rubino,**

**Virginia Heslin,**

**and Susan Bevington**

**Call for members' \$10  
Annual and \$15 Family  
Dues Renew Now—  
PLEASE RENEW NOW**

**Bring Pantry items  
each meeting...**



**Grade 12: Participation in Government and Civics**

This course aims to provide students with opportunities to become engaged in the political process by learning the knowledge and practicing the skills necessary for active citizenship. Content specifications are not included so that the course can adapt to present local, national, and global circumstances, allowing teachers to select flexibly from current events to illuminate key ideas and conceptual understandings. Participation in government and in our communities is fundamental to the success of American democracy.

12.G1 FOUNDATIONS of AMERICAN DEMOCRACY: The principles of American democracy are reflected in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and in the organization and actions of federal, state, and local government entities. The interpretation and application of American democratic principles continue to evolve and be debated.

12.G1a Enlightenment ideas such as natural rights, the social contract, popular sovereignty, and representative government greatly influenced the framers of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

12.G1b The Constitution created a unique political system that distributes powers and responsibilities among three different branches of government at the federal level and between state and federal governments. State constitutions address similar structures and responsibilities for their localities. ...

New Regents Social Studies framework for Grade 12: Participation in Government and Civics (see specifically Page 45, 46, 47 at [www.nysed.gov](http://www.nysed.gov))

12.G4e Citizens participate in civic life through volunteerism and advocacy, including efforts such as contacting elected officials, signing/organizing petitions, protesting, canvassing, and participating in/organizing boycotts.

12.G5 PUBLIC POLICY: All levels of government—local, state, and federal—are involved in shaping public policy and responding to public policy issues, all of which influence our lives beyond what appears in the Constitution. Engaged citizens understand how to find, monitor, evaluate, and respond to information on public policy issues.

Learn more... New York State Common Core Grades 9-12

Social Studies Framework

The State Education Department

The University of the State of New York

No Treasurers Report – Treasurer absent, excused

Correspondence Received:

Board of Zoning Appeals notice

Copy of letter sent by Sarah Anker to the Postmaster General with an appeal to not close the Rocky Point P.O. Box Depot Annex next to McCarricks Dairy.

North Brookhaven Chamber of Commerce newsletter

Copy of letter sent to individual property owners by the Brookhaven Town Board regarding the resolution adopted on April 8th on Phase II of the planned re-zoning. The hearing date is June 5, 2014 at Town Hall.

Correspondence sent:

RP Civics sent a thank you letter to Dan Losquadro; RP Civics sent a letter in support of SNAP program

No cope report

Land Use Committee Report:

The committee is working on the Town/County grant. The grant application will request funds for new signs at each end of the bypass.

Speakers:

Susan Silhan of the North Shore United Methodist Church in Wading River

The Church is building a Good Samaritan House on south east corner of the Church property. It will be a 3000 square foot bldg. and will house a fellowship area, thrift shop and a commercial kitchen from which they can prepare and ship food out to the homeless and people in need. Please send questions or suggestions to [building@northshoreumc.org](mailto:building@northshoreumc.org)

Susan Hansen, resident of Rocky Point and involved in various animal welfare organizations. They are forming a coalition of animal welfare organizations with the purpose of privatizing and running the Brookhaven Animal Shelter. They need a viable organization who can take on the responsibilities of the Shelter. They are currently looking for people to serve on the Board of Directors of the Coalition. They need people with expertise in Animal Welfare, Business, Finance, Law, Marketing, Non-Profits, Fund Raising and Veterinary Medicine. If you are interested in volunteering or in exploring this option please visit their website at <http://www.abettershelter.com/>

From Jane Bonner's Office – The Town of Brookhaven is offering a free rabies clinic.

Board of Education Election was won by Sean Callaghan and Melissa Brown. The school budget was passed.

No 50/50; No old business; No new business

Kimberly of Sarah Anker's office – Rails to Trails update. There has been no response from NYS. Sarah Anker placed a call the Gov. Cuomo's office.

Discussion followed regarding the possibility of sewers in downtown Rocky Point. Per Kimberly, if we were interested in getting sewers in the community we would have to go through the entire process again. They would have to do another feasibility study, etc. Since the community/civics sent a letter asking to be removed from the list of communities interested in the project they cannot add Rocky Point back onto the list. Susan Wilson made a motion that we draft a letter to Sarah Anker's office to request the reversal of the decision to exclude sewers from Rocky Point. 2nd by Maria Farley. *Added to minutes: Article 8: Quorum: A meeting quorum shall be fifteen (15) members in good standing. Please note that according to Article 8 there was not a quorum at the June Civics meeting and any business resolutions could not be considered official. Charles Bevington, Sergeant at Arms*

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:20 by Rory Rubino, Susan Wilson 2nd the motion

**Attention: Garden Tour Coming in July! The Rocky Point Civics will be hosting a Residential Garden Tour, Tour of Hallock House (open 1Pm—3PM) and lunch at Sweets of the Spoon for \$35. Get details at the July 1st meeting.**

## Sewage Treatment Plants Are No Panacea

Any discussion regarding sewer construction in Suffolk County should begin with the current state of our waterways. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation classifies the entirety of our South Shore bays and their tributaries as “impaired waters” (polluted). Additionally, numerous water bodies that comprise the Peconic Estuary also are classified as “impaired.” The next time you drive past a pond, creek or bay in your community, ask yourself if it’s on the list. Very likely, it is.

These unfortunate designations are due to excessive levels of bacterial contamination and/or too much nitrogen. High levels of bacteria have caused the closure of thousands of acres of shellfish beds, while excessive nitrogen levels have triggered algal blooms that turn our bays to opaque colors of green, brown, red and every shade in between during the months when we want to enjoy swimming, boating and fishing.

Academic, governmental and civic entities have acknowledged that water pollution from sewage wastewater discharges have degraded both the water we drink and our estuaries, the engine of the East End economy. While there is general consensus that wastewater nitrogen needs to be aggressively addressed to protect and restore water quality, the question is: How are we going to do it?

The Suffolk County Department of Health Services regulates nitrogen levels in groundwater for the sole purpose of protecting public health. Specifically, they manage the collective sewage wastewater discharges into groundwater to ensure safe drinking water. The limit for drinking water is 10 milligrams per liter (mg/l). Unfortunately, this level of nitrogen is 20 times higher than our coastal waters can sustain in order to remain ecologically healthy.

Although nitrogen-rich groundwater is diluted as it mixes with marine waters, in many locations it’s insufficient to abate harmful algal blooms. Western Shinnecock Bay, Flanders Bay and Great South Bay are good examples of inadequate flushing.

As for the state of our drinking water, Suffolk County’s Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan reported increases in groundwater nitrogen levels in the Upper Glacial and Magothy aquifers of 200 percent and 38 percent, respectively. This should be of great concern to residents and public officials alike, given our reliance on these water supplies.

There are approximately 200 sewage treatment plants throughout Suffolk County. Although they are being touted by some as the answer to the region’s water quality problems, there are concerns that need to be addressed before we jump on the treatment plant bandwagon—namely, their track record of poor performance, actual benefit to water quality, and pretext for increased housing density.

During my 16-year tenure as the Peconic Baykeeper, I spent considerable time monitoring the performance of Suffolk’s sewage treatment plants. My review pertained to a plant’s ability to effectively treat wastewater (i.e., remove nitrogen) and compliance with permit requirements, which include effluent discharge standards. Additionally, I assessed the performance of both the Suffolk County Department of Health Services and the State Department of Environmental Conservation in fulfilling their regulatory responsibility and enforcement of the discharge permits they issued.

My conclusion is that while these facilities have the capability to significantly reduce wastewater nitrogen concentrations as compared to conventional household septic systems, benefits to local water quality are usually not realized because:

- Numerous sewage treatment plants are not functioning properly.
- Permit compliance and enforcement are deficient.
- Nitrogen loading is significantly increased because sewage treatment plants are tied to dramatic increases in housing density.

The best technology available for sewage treatment systems can attain nitrogen reduction as low as 3 mg/l. In Suffolk, however, most of the systems are designed and managed to meet the drinking water standard of 10 mg/l of nitrogen. Managing wastewater nitrogen with the sole focus of drinking water protection ignores the implications to water quality in our bays. Achieving the highest level of performance should be a prerequisite for approving new sewage treatment systems.

Compliance and enforcement of the existing systems are woefully deficient. My review of discharge monitoring reports over a three-year period revealed significant violations. Specifically, the drinking water standard of 10 mg/l was exceeded so often that the responsible agency, the Department of Health Services, should be embarrassed. Clearly, the bar for both performance and compliance has to be raised. No more excuses.

Where sewage treatment plants are servicing residential areas, the common denominator remains increased housing density. When the narrative of our elected leaders emphasizes economic growth over cleaning up our waters, their logic warrants scrutiny. That said, the introduction of new sewer districts has its place in smart growth initiatives and should not be rejected out of hand. For example, sewerage our hamlet business districts can enhance economic growth while providing benefits to water quality.

In contrast, extending sewer lines into outlying areas leads to sprawl development that diminishes environmental quality and places additional financial burdens on government services and school districts. The bottom line is, more human waste leads to more pollution, no matter how effective the treatment is.

While small-scale private and municipal sewage treatment systems are viable tools in managing water quality, so too are alternative systems and other technologies that have demonstrated high denitrification performance. Regulatory authorities around the country are far ahead of us in implementing innovative technologies. While Suffolk County is beginning to authorize their use, albeit at a snail’s pace, they have yet to require them as a condition for permitting new sources of effluent. Instead, they are perpetuating the use of antiquated septic systems that are acknowledged to be the primary cause of the poor water quality of our estuaries.

It’s time for Suffolk County to remove the bureaucratic barriers that stymie innovation and a competitive marketplace for more advanced systems.

Sewage treatment plants are not a panacea, and our elected leaders need to move beyond an economic development agenda and address the root causes of our water pollution problem. The thousands of homes on conventional wastewater systems looms large. Going forward, we must define the level of nitrogen removal necessary to protect our waters and employ the right strategies to achieve meaningful results.

Clean water must be our top priority.

Mr. McAllister is the former Peconic Baykeeper and served in that position for 16 years.

The Honorable Audrey Zibelman  
Commissioner  
New York State Public Service Commission  
Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 3  
Albany, NY 12223-1350

Dear Ms Zibelman:

PSC Open Hearings on Energy Siting and Repowering Port Jefferson

As the Supervisor of one of New York's great towns and in all of my previous history of elected and appointed office I have always tried to intelligently and fairly represent my constituents. There is a raging debate in Brookhaven Town regarding the siting of a 752 MW gas plant by Caithness energy of Yaphank (that already operates a 350 MW gas powered plant at that location). Its competitor is a, now brownfield, obsolete 350 MW plant, which can be repowered to state of the art standards, in Port Jefferson.

I have come to the conclusion that a 750 MW in Yaphank is too large. Long Island seems to be exempt from national and New York State standards for energy competition. LIPA has the authority to determine and contract for new plant siting but LIPA seems to ignore the few regulations that New York and the FERC have put in place that restrict its authority.

A very credible London Economic Study, commissioned by the Village of Port Jefferson (attached) has determined that approximately \$200 million a year would be saved by ratepayers by repowering the Port Jefferson power plant vs. a 2 to 3% increase (not including gas line and power line infrastructure costs if Caithness is built). Only the PSC has the authority to step forward and resolve conflicting claims before decisions are made and foundations laid. We must have open public hearings.

I am a champion of the environment, yet the possible effects of gas pipeline trenching and electrical cable extension on the Pine Barrens, Brookhaven's aquifer and the CarmansRiver Watershed will only be considered after the Yaphank plant is approved. Is it more advantageous for the environment to maintain existing distributed power siting or to focus 1.2 GW of power production in the middle of Long Island? Will 750 MW in Yaphank and a "Must Use" PSA preclude renewable energy for 20 years?

FERC has ruled in the case of Port Jefferson Village vs. National Grid that National Grid must either repower or sell its Port Jefferson plant and property. In an amended power supply agreement (PSA) between LIPA and National Grid article 11.3 of the PSA states that an RFP to repower Port Jefferson must be issued within 30 days of commencement of the contract, announced October 2, 2012. Neither LIPA nor National Grid will advise us as to how the agreement has progressed except that it is certain that LIPA has not come close to meeting its 30-day deadline.

The PSC must intervene in this matter in the interest of fairness and openness for the ratepayers and residents of Brookhaven Town and all of Long Island.

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, I spoke to a large gathering in support of repowering Port Jefferson with Ken LaValle, Steve Englebright, and Mayor Garant at Port Jefferson Harbor. Fair hearings on repowering will not occur without the intervention of the PSC. Please step forward for Brookhaven Town and Long Island.

Yours truly,

Ed Romaine, March 23, 2014