

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**  
**OF THE**  
**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**  
  
*Minutes*

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on Wednesday, September 3, 2014 at 12:30 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Deputy Presiding Officer Jay Schneiderman - Chairman  
Legislator Tom Cilmi  
Legislator Bill Lindsay III  
Legislator Kevin McCaffrey

**Member Not Present:**

Legislator Kara Hahn - Excused Absence

**Also In Attendance:**

Lora Gellerstein - Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature  
George Nolan - Counsel to the Suffolk County Legislature  
Sarah Simpson - Assistant Counsel to the Suffolk County Legislature  
Greg Dawson - Commissioner/Suffolk County Department of Parks  
Robert Doering - Budget Review Office  
Benny Pernice - Budget Review Office  
Tom Vaughn - County Executive Assistant  
Jason Hann - Aide to Legislator Schneiderman  
Ali Nazir - Aide to Legislator Kennedy.  
Lance Reinheimer - Director/Vanderbilt Museum  
Elaine Renner  
Joanne Solana Greco  
Paul Zandler  
Gene Zandler  
Claire Russell  
Bob Sikora - Forestwood Civic Association  
Richard Yashowitz  
All Other Interested Parties

**Minutes Taken By:**

Gabrielle Severs - Court Stenographer

**Minutes Transcribed By:**

Denise Weaver - Legislative Aide

**(\*The meeting was called to order at 12:33 p.m. \*)**

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

All right. Good afternoon. I'd like to call this meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee to order on this 20 -- oh, it's not the right day, what's the day today, 3rd day of September of 2014. All rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Cilmi.

**(\*Salutation\*)**

Please remain standing for a moment. I'd like to ask you to join us in a moment of silence in memory of General Steven Sotloff, as well as James Foley, who died in brutal executions and also on Monday I learned of the passing of a friend of mine from Montauk, the owner of the Marine Basin, Carl Darenberg who was found dead in the harbor there. So if we could just pause for a moment in their memories, I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

**(\*Moment of Silence Observed\*)**

Thank you. Okay. So we have no presentations scheduled today. I do have a number of speakers who filled out yellow cards. If you wish to be heard by the Committee, you do need to fill out a yellow card. If you haven't done so, please do so, they're available at the front table. So the first speaker I have is Elaine Renner. Each speaker will have three minutes to make their comments known. Elaine, if you'll step up to the podium, identify yourself for our records.

**MS. RENNER:**

My name is Elaine Renner, I live at 10 Rosalia Court in Smithtown and I'm here to address the water flooding issue with the 347 project.

Here we are again attending another meeting concerning the flooding issues in our area after the town and County have positively been working with to help us. The numerous phases on the flooding project are still not completed that they are working on and yet another roadblock is here for us to deal with. Last year it was because Bellone took away the capital money out of the capital project that was approved for our flooding project and we all had to come out to address it to have the money put back. This time it's because the State want to take one-and-a-half acres to put a sump to discharge all the water from the 357 road project into the County parkland that will hold a capacity of 660 thousand -- hundred thousands of water into the flooding area. This area was made for parkland not only to preserve wildlife but was designated because of the flooding issue to preserve the waterway flow out of the area. This sump will not only compromise the work that has been been today but also add a concentration of pollutants into the area.

Also in our area is a pumping station for the Water Authority for all our area where our water comes from. There are over 3800 families directly affected by this. This sump was not in the original plan in the project. And although it's not illegal what the State is the doing, since it is -- and they chose to do this, it's not really right or fair since it's an unconventional way New York State chose not to address this with the elected local officials and without soliciting this with the local residents to give them the opportunity to comment and raise concerns or objections and find out what the plans were before doing it.

After the last rain event we had two weeks ago everybody's pumps were pumping again around the clock. The water table was up there and some neighbors had lakes in backyards taking four to five days for the water to recede just below ground level to see the grass again. All those trees that are in the parkland where -- were left there for a reason. It is a known fact that trees help absorb water from the ground and through photosynthesis relieve *[sic]* oxygen into the air. What are they going to replace them with and where will the money go that they want to give the County for it? To the flooding issue; I doubt it. We're all here to stop the placement of the sump in the flooding area and have their engineers redirect the water in another way to areas that will negatively affected

by this as we will be. The County sump, a few blocks away, is a shallow sump, which overflows into the street and peoples' basement whenever the water table rises.

There are many of us -- others here that are unable to show up to this meeting because when they have these meetings a lot of people can't take off from work or school to attend. So we're here -- the few of us that are here are here to represent those that can't attend this meeting. And we also want to thank the efforts of Legislator Kennedy for all that he's done on our behalf with this water issue. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Next up is Joanne Solana Greco.

**MS. SOLANA GRECO:**

Hi, Joanne Solana Greco, 286 Bow Drive, Hauppauge. I bought my house back in 1994, only one pump was running and one catch basin. By 2010, we had three catch basins along with four pumps; however, when it rained, each member of our family, my three kids, my husband and I, had to man shop vacuums because the water and our pumps could not keep up with it. Since the dredging my pumps turn on once in a blue moon, they rarely run, no longer do we have the stress, the health issues, financial outlaying; the burden was lifted.

Now proposal is to add a water quality basin and have it piped into the small stream that has trouble handling the existing water when we get significant rainfall or the water table is high. Pipe running under 347 is not fully capable of handling the runoff water. The last rainfall, about a month ago, was backed up over our sidewalks onto our property. This was due to the fact that there was too much water that needed to run under 347, the pipe could not handle it nor the stream across 347 could handle the flow. So now you want to add another water source into the stream. The stream is going to bottleneck up, debris from the excess water is going to be pulled from the sides and eventually clog up the stream further down. While this happens our pumps are going to start running more and more until they can't keep up with it.

Questions I have: Did you consult with Smithtown engineers on this project? Where's your DEC approval? Smithtown had to jump through hoops to DEC approval. How come the State does not? Where's your environmental impact study? Did it even take into account the rare high groundwater tables we have in Smithtown? Who is going to maintain and pay for the cleanup of the stream each year that you are adding the water to?

When 347 widening was being proposed, we were able to come and see the rendering and ask questions. The water table issue was brought up and the DOT stated that they were aware of it and will be taking care of it. The south side of Brookside Drive, after all the construction is completed, still need pumper trucks to make that road accessible during heavy rains. The DOT did not take into account that water problem so why would we think it will take care of our area any better.

I understand that you want to make travelling better on these roads, however, it shouldn't come at the expense of thousands of Smithtown/Hauppauge residents. The \$547,000 is not going to go to any water problem issue, I am sure the County already has that money allocated for other fiscal needs, therefore, I am asking you to put your money where your mouth is. I'm asking for the State to take responsibility for cleaning and maintaining these tributaries if they are going to add the sump and add all this water into it.

I'm also asking for a legal signed document with no end date stating that the State will pay for any water problems that are incurred due to this water quality basin being added. This legal document is to cover all municipalities involved; the town, the County, the DEC, the State. No roadblocks, no studies required, just fix the problem, action and complete fiscal backing --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Joanne, you'll have to wrap up.

**MS. SOLANA GRECO:**

Okay. That will arrive once the water tables rise again. That's it. Thank you.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Mr. Chairman, if you would suffer just a quick comment or query, if you will, even though we're in public portion. There are probably about a dozen people here to go ahead and speak on this particular resolution, but just before Committee commenced, I had an opportunity to speak with Mr. Vaughn from the County Executive's Office and since this is a County Executive's resolution, he and I were able to quickly go ahead and talk about the fact that this resolution may be ripe for one more cycle of tabling to allow us to have some dialogue with State DOT. In the effort of saving time for the Committee members, I believe the balance of the speakers would be willing to go ahead and defer, if in fact, that is the case.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, this is a road project. It's not our project, but Commissioner Anderson from Suffolk DPW is here. I would need to know the time sensitivity of this. I mean, I understand the issues with the water table and flooding in that area. I'm not 100% clear of the connection between this project and that flooding.

**UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER:**

That wasn't clear enough?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But maybe -- but maybe, well, this isn't going to solve the flooding problems.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Well, Mr. Chair, to your specific question, and I'd be happy to go ahead and show you the schematics and the proximity, but more importantly when we deliberated this the last time you did raise that issue of time and so let me make sure that I go back to, and again, address this. The funding, the federal highway funding, that's the support and the impetus for this next phase is not available until 2016. This is what's known as a design build project. So the taking and the exchange of compensation are before us now but the earliest that there will be any earnest or substantive work on this is probably at least 18 months away. In the meantime, there certainly is an opportunity to be able to look at exploring alternatives and, again, as you know, since federal funding is the primary conduit, this project is subject to NYPA.

The County Executive's Office, has agreed, they would be willing to go ahead and entertain one more cycle of tabling. I don't want to put words in Mr. Vaughn's mouth but I -- that's -- that was our conversation.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And now, you know, has the State already taken the land? They have, right?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Well --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

We're just debating compensation here, right, so it's not -- the project design isn't before us, right, it's only the question of the -- whether we think it's just and fair compensation. Isn't that correct?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

No, it's not just and fair compensation. As a matter of fact, as I said right from the beginning, my

objection here is not with the appraised amount, as a matter of fact, we had an independent appraisal done by our in-house folks that it was their opinion that the amount, 574,000, was roughly equivalent to what the value is. My objection is to, A, the failure on the part of the State to explore alternatives to the construction of this one acre sump right in an area that's heavily impacted with all these folks with groundwater flooding. And then, B, the methodology that they elected to bring forward. Appropriation is a very rare act, if you will, and as a matter of fact, Robert Moses was known for his use of it when he basically plowed down the Bronx. It really has very little due process associated with it in that impacted parties really have no opportunity to come forward and to even hear what the proposal is let alone give comment before the act. So it really is about not accepting the compensation and then forfeiting the right to object. You know, a deed is -- is something that can be filed in a County Clerk's Office but acceptance is still something that's a critical part to transfer of any property.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, currently -- and that's the road runoff now is going somewhere, right? Or is this a new ramp, off ramp or something that's going to be constructed?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

No, there is -- there is road runoff at this point that actually goes into the median, a grass median. This project will actually wind up taking road runoff, you've gone on 347, you know it, all the way up to King O'Rourke Cadillac, roughly about one and-a-half to two miles east of where this -- the tension pond is now. So while the State has said that there is no additional road runoff that's going to be aggregated; that's not true, as a matter of fact. And -- and that is a subsequent segment of the 347 extension. So the piece now that's under consideration from Mount Pleasant to Terry will aggregate the runoff but then future sections as well will take it, which is not the case at all then.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

So it could potentially bring more water into this area than --

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

660,000 gallons, Mr. Chair. 660,000 thousand gallons right in the backyards of people that have two foot of water in their basements during heavy rain. That makes no sense.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Commissioner Anderson, could I call you up for a moment. I mean, I know this is not our project and the design is, obviously, not our design. Have you been communicating with DOT on this project? Is there a time sensitivity here? What's the situation we're in?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

I have spoken with the State briefly upon the Legislator's initial request. I have not looked into what has been stated. You know, again, I don't believe there's any time sensitivity in talking with the engineers, you know, they're --

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Quite a ways out.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Yeah.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

The engineers are aware of the flooding in this area obviously.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Yes, correct.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And the potential to exacerbate that.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

They're aware of the situation. I'd have to look at the design, I was not, again, I haven't even seen plans on what's being proposed.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Mr. Vaughn, this again is an administrative resolution.

**MR. VAUGHN:**

Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is an administrative resolution. We would be fine with the tabling for one more cycle. Just to quickly clarify though, while this is an administrative resolution, as think as Commissioner Anderson just so ably stated, this is not an administrative project, the project's being done through New York State. And I do agree with the way, Mr. Chairman, that you represented the nature of this bill and that is the acceptance of the payment, it's not a -- it's not a sign-off on the project, it's not an endorsement of the project, it is an acceptance of payment, but we also understand that there are community concerns. The Legislator has stated that he would like to try and see if it's possible to put together a meeting with DOT. Again, I don't -- just as you didn't want to put words into my mouth, I would not like to put words into yours, but in our conversation you did say that you would like to see if you could get a meeting together with DOT. We would be happy to both try and assist you with that effort and provide you the time that you need to do that and I think to do that we should table this for one cycle and we would be happy to do that and the spirit of working with you and the community.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. So I have only two cards that have asked to speak on this issue. I don't want to take away somebody's opportunity to speak publicly. If they want to forgo it in light of pending tabling resolution they can pass, I guess, and if tabling fails we'll give them an opportunity to speak. So the two individuals I have is Claire Russel and Gene Zandler. Can you raise your hands please? Are you -- nod if you're okay that.

**MS. RUSSELL:**

If you table it, I will pass.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. All right. Is there any -- let's get through the public portion, the other cards. Okay. And if there's other people who wanted to speak on that issue who didn't fill out yellow cards, I'll give you the opportunity to speak or pass as well.

All right. Next up is Lance Reinheimer.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Thank you very much. Lance Reinheimer, Executive Director of the Vanderbilt Museum. There's no resolution here before you. There is a resolution that is -- has been tabled at the full general meeting of the Legislature. I'm just here to make a brief statement to clarify some misconceptions about that resolution.

That is a general resolution to appropriate \$200,000 through the Capital Program for waterproofing of the Vanderbilt Museum. Those funds are not earmarked for any specific building or project. Public Works is now doing buildings on the property, the mansion, specifically, they're working on waterproofing areas there. So they inform me that that's progressing nicely but they are running low on funds. This is all the money we have in the 2014 Capital Program, \$200,000. It's a general appropriation for waterproofing buildings at the museum and at this point the mansion is our number one priority.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you, Lance. Any questions? Next up is Bob Sikora.

**MR. SIKORA:**

Hi, I'm Bob Sikora, the President of the Forestwood Civic Association, which borders Blydenburgh Park and was instrumental in developing the plan for Blydenburgh Park adopted in April 1997 with Lee Koppelman.

I would like to address the open issues our civic association is still working on to resolve with Legislator Kennedy and Commissioner Dawson regarding Blydenburgh Park. After several phone conversations with Commissioner Dawson and Mrs. Joan Mersec (ph), Vice President of Forestwood Civic Association, and I met with Commissioner Dawson approximately six weeks ago to once again address the concerns our civic association has outlined in a letter to John Kennedy, which was shared with Commissioner Dawson, approximately June 16th of 2014.

Unfortunately most of the civic association's concerns and issues still remain and they are as follows: Canoes and kayaks are still being allowed to launch at the north end historic district. In fact, canoes and kayakers have been told by the attendants at the boat dock on the south end of the park, off Route 347, that they must use the north end of the park. Please keep in mind that until August 2013 there was no personal watercraft allowed anywhere on the lake at Blydenburgh Park. The sign stating that was {removed} a few years ago at the north end of the park. Commissioner Dawson indicated to us that there are a lot of requests to use the lake by canoes and kayakers. We pointed out that there is a launch site for such use less than two miles away at the Paul T. Given Park, which allows canoes and kayaks. As a compromise, we agreed that if the lake is to be used for such purposes, that the south end entrance where the boathouse and docker should be used.

Commissioner Dawson requested time to review how to manage the move to the boat ramp and on the south end where Mr. Nick Gibbons, as he was on vacation. That was six weeks ago. This continues to be a major inconvenience and concern of our members.

Caleb Smith Park, which abuts Blydenburgh Park on the northwest side of the park, in close proximity to Blydenburgh historic district, also has a pond. We asked Caleb Smith's park manager if canoes and kayaks were allowed on their pond; the answer was an emphatic no. The reasons given were due to liability issues. There was not enough personnel to monitor such use and, however, the more critical issue is the silt on the bottom of the pond, which is estimated to be more than four feet deep in some areas. If a person fell off a canoe or kayak they could get trapped in the silt and drown. Blydenburgh Park's -- Blydenburgh's stump pond has the same, if not more severe silt issue, then the pond at Caleb Smith. After all, the pond was created by cutting down trees and damming the underground streams that ran through it.

Some other issues: Safety material for the playground that was supposedly ordered in June is still not in place. Little toddlers continue to use the equipment with no cushion material under the playground equipment to soften falls. Fencing around the playground has still not replaced. Entrance sign foundation still in need of repair or replacement. Storage trailers have not been removed that were being used to renovate the mill at Blydenburgh Park and parts were stored but the mill is now complete and we've asked that the storage trailers be removed.

There has not been an attendant at the north entrance in over six years. We have requested that an attendant be placed periodically at this entrance to ensure green key compliance and to collect park fees.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Bob, the time expired. I'll let you wrap up if you would.

**MR. SIKORA:**

Okay. Basically, what we're saying is that there's no attendant at the end, you're allowing canoes and kayaks, which could be a major liability to the County. There's no monitoring. We've had people coming out of Blydenburgh Park using canoes and kayaks at 9:00 PM at night and it's creating a major problem for us our civic association and we would really like to it to be addressed.

There is a couple of more things but due to lack of time I'll end it now. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. The last speaker card is Richard Yashowitz. Thank you. Yashowitz.

**MR. YASHOWITZ:**

Gentlemen, my name is Richard Yashowitz and I live in Sound Beach, New York. And my problem is with Commissioner Dawson and with Cupsogue Beach State Park.

Friday the 15th of August myself, my wife and my two grandchildren went to Cupsogue Park. When we got there it was barricaded more than the border on Texas. Okay? We were not allowed to enter the park because we were told that there are no spots. A friend of mine who was in the park counted spots and there were spots, but we were not allowed to park. We were told that has to be 15 open spots. I begged to please let me drop off my two grandchildren and let them go in the park with their cousins for a party that was to be given for my daughter who had passed from cancer. Again, the Suffolk County official who was at that barricade forbade us to open our doors. I went through the circle and I went out into Southampton, I tried to park on the road to wait until some more cars were turned away so I could get in, a Southampton police officer did the same approach to me and told me the same thing. I said *look officer, I'm pleading with you, please, follow me in, if there ain't a spot, I won't park.* But there were spots and I was denied. I am a veteran, I fought during the Vietnam war, I am a Suffolk County taxpayer, I have a green card right here and I was still turned away. That's ridiculous when there are spots.

And then the other thing that really teed me off, and I was in Sarah Anker's Office on speaker with a Miss Kimberly Tucker and Mr. Dawson and myself and he made a statement that was the most unbelievable statement that anybody with his title could ever say telling me that I am not allowed or anyone is not allowed to drop off their children to go swimming on that beach because the beach would get too crowded. Are you people out of your minds? Too crowded for who? How many people can that beach fit? First of all nobody owns anything up to that high tide line. You know the laws, start enforcing them to favor the people and not because you're afraid of Southampton police and because the Southampton -- when you end that -- when that gets on there and I get onto Suffolk County park there should be a place there for me to go and drop the kids off and there should also be if there's a spot there I should be able to park. I was denied access. You denied a veteran access when I was given the right to go to a foreign country to fight. You denied a grandfather to take his two children to the park to play with his other friends. You denied me by putting your people against my car and say, *if you get out of there you're going to be in a lot of trouble.* And Mr. Dawson made that statement to myself and to Kimberly Tucker in Sarah Anker's Office on speakerphone. Period. I'm done and I want it ended. Here's my green key, I hold this, I'm a taxpayer.

And another thing if you can't have room for Suffolk County taxpayers then put a fence up and stop the people from Westhampton coming onto our beach because I sure as hell am not allowed on their beach. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you for your comments.

**MR. YASHOWITZ:**

Yeah, I'd like a comment and I'd like something to be done about it too. Can't do something this year but how about next year? Denied two children.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. To any questions? Questions for Mr. Yashowitz?

**MR. YASHOWITZ:**

I'm fed up with it.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. We will look into it. You can call my office for followup.

**MR. YASHOWITZ:**

Can I have your phone number?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

852-8400. It's easy to find.

**MR. YASHOWITZ:**

When they stop children from doing something, something is wrong.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. (631) 852-8400. Okay.

I don't have any more yellow cards. Is there anyone else who wishes to be heard? I know there may be some people who want to be heard if for some reason the tabling the motion fails. Other than that, okay, I see no other hands. Okay. Why don't we go to the agenda. Commissioner Dawson I'll ask you to come up to the table. And, you know, perhaps at the end of the meeting I might have a question or two unless you wanted to preface our debate on the agenda with any response to the last speaker.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Yeah, actually, I was actually at the park that day on the date in question when Legislator Anker was, she actually called me on Monday. The issues at Cupsogue are there are only 660 parking spots. If you've ever been down there you see that the -- that there's a traffic jam that runs three or four miles. The policy is that when the parking lots full, it's full. There's a sign out by the bridge, five miles up the road, that says that alerts the -- it alerts, you know, people coming out to the beach that that the lot is in fact full.

We found the best way to mediate the traffic congestion down there is to keep the traffic moving through a circle set up in the parking lot. The crew does not allow entry into the park until we have at least 15 spots open. And that's the way they've managed the park, I've been down there to see it -- see how it works myself. If they were allow -- if they allowed for a one for one car people would just wait there and traffic would just be jammed, I mean, it's happened in the past where traffic jams up.

So we don't allow -- we do not allow drop-offs down there. One of the reasons is that, again, it's one of our most popular beaches and it would create all kinds of traffic jams because people drop-off, they have to get out their coolers, their umbrellas, and their sun -- it just takes forever. So the rule is no drop-offs. They are -- the pedestrians are instructed to, you know, go back down to the village, come around and when 15 spots are open, they'll gladly open up -- they'll gladly open up the park so that's how the park is managed. It seems to be managed well. I've been down there four or five times this summer. It seems to be working for us, so.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is that -- well, it's clearly not working for this individual, he's out in the hall, I believe, so he can't benefit from our conversation unfortunately. In Smith's Point, do we not drop-off at Smith's Point?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

We do allow drop-offs at Smith's Point, yes, but there's not really a big traffic issue at Smith's Point and there's a much larger circle with there's a space -- there's no space like that at Cupsogue.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I mean, I could understand somebody's frustration, they're a taxpayer, it's their beach and they want to use it. Typically, even at the town level, they may have restricted parking because there's only so many spaces but it's the first time hearing that you can't drop-off. What if you came by bicycle? You can come by bicycle.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

You can come by bicycle. Well, you have to understand, by the end of the day all those people that are going to be dropped off are going to be -- need to be picked up and the traffic would be incredible trying to get people out of that park and winding up along -- if you've ever been down there --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Have we looked into creating more parking spaces there or trying to figure out a better traffic load? I know we changed the queuing there at one point. And we don't, you know, we have a lot of people here on another issue so we could come back to this rather than belaboring it. Why don't we do that. Why don't we go to the agenda and either another day or later in the -- at the end of the meeting we could come back to this issue. All right.

**TABLED RESOLUTIONS**

So let's go to **1561 - Establishing new sun protection protocols for lifeguards at County Parks. (Hahn)** You know, I should say the sponsor, Legislator Hahn, has an excused absence from today's meeting. She can't be here because of a personal family emergency. So summer's almost over anyway. I guess officially it is, so, with Labor Day.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Summer is over. We will have lifeguard coverage on the beach this coming weekend, after that we're done.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'll make a motion to table, I don't know that we should be discussing it without her presence, second by Legislator McCaffrey. Any other motions? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. 1561 is tabled. **TABLED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)**

**1587 - Authorizing the determination of just compensation and securing payment thereof in connection with the acquisition of properties by the State of New York to be acquired for public highway purposes, Town of Smithtown, Suffolk County, New York (SCTM No. 0800-133.00-02.00-006.001 p/o). (Co. Exec.)** This is the resolution that several people spoke about. Who made the motion, I'm sorry? Legislator McCaffrey made the motion to table, I will second.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I'll second.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislator Cilmi's seconding.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

On the motion, Mr. Chair, what I'll do is as we've discussed I'm requesting that meeting with DOT, I will let your office know once we have it set and I will brief all members of the Committee so that they

know fully beforehand, before our next session, where things sit with this and, you know, be able to kind of lay out what the outcome has been. I appreciate the accommodations of the Committee.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

On the motion, Legislator Lindsay.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Legislator Kennedy, my -- through the Chair, my question is if we don't act on this what could the State do in response?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

You know, I've done some research on it, Legislator Lindsay. In essence, what the State has done is, they have placed the money in escrow at this point. Again, as I said right from the very beginning, let me be very clear, my objection does not go to the 574,000. It was externally appraised and that we had our own internal folks from DPW look at it and their sense is that it's fair and just compensation. The issue goes to the methodology in which the State elected to purportedly take the property in the first instance. Now I did speak with Dennis Brown today too to explore whether or not we may have some legal options available to us because, you know, it's ironic that we have gone through such great debate and certainly for some of us in our collective decade here we've gone through herculean efforts to acquire and to protect park property and yet we're contemplating or face-to-face with an act by another level of government that really involved essentially no involvement on our part. They simply told us *we're taking it, this is what we're doing* and they did not give any of these people the opportunity to weigh in or to go ahead and express concern or to look at alternatives. That's really what this is about, the opportunity to at least have some dialogue with the DOT engineers and with Grey's (ph) Industries who's been selected to build this next section, the exploratory dialogue for alternatives, that achieve containing the road runoff but don't impact folks in their homes. That's really all it's about.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

And I agree with you and, you know, after hearing the residents speak I sympathize with them and hope that we're able to stop this. I just want to make sure there's not a method in place where the State can circumvent this whole process and just say *we don't care what you say as a local Legislature, we're going to do what we want to do anyway.*

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Well, you know, I mean, it's good to be king, I guess, you know, the crown really has very little constraints upon it but when folks stand up, and this Legislative body has been extremely responsive and receptive, as some of my colleagues have supported prior acts for 477 funding as has the County Executive's Office, and I appreciate Mr. Vaughn's offer. The County Executive agreed to my request the last time and certainly I will make sure that the County Executive's Office is part of this meeting so that we can have a -- hopefully a positive outcome across the board. So, thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

It would, I think, be helpful too if we could get some input from our own engineers to look at what they're proposing and how it might, I mean, in the ideal world they would propose something that would help attenuate the flood, you know, make it, you know, not flood as bad.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Absolutely. So I will make sure that Commissioner Anderson's involved too.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

-- this design will make it worse. I haven't seen the design, but it would be good if we had our own professional expertise look at it and go, *yeah, that's going to make things worse.*

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay, will do.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

We have a motion and a second to table. Mr. Vaughn.

**MR. VAUGHN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to add that the County Attorney's Office will also take another look at the legalities that's involved in this process as well and Commissioner Anderson spoke to me and also offered, Legislator Kennedy, if you'd like him to reach out to New York State DOT to arrange that meeting or if you'd would like the handle it yourself, however -- whatever path you choose but we would be happy to try and facilitate that.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And, Tom, there's a minor issue involved with this as well and I brought this up at the last meeting, if something like this does happen where parkland is taken for highway use by the State or any other feds, whatever it might be, and money comes back into the County for that, I would like to see that dedicated toward parkland so it was -- we lost parkland, we should be spending that money on acquiring additional parkland. And that's not in the resolution but maybe that could be made part of it. Okay. Okay, so there's a motion and second to table. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Resolution is tabled. **TABLED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)**

**INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS**

Okay. **IR 1657 - Authorizing the use of Smith Point County Park, Cathedral Pines County Park and Smith Point Marina by the Long Island 2 Day Walk to Fight Breast Cancer, Inc., for Breast Cancer Walk in 2015. (Browning)** I'll make a motion, second by Legislator Lindsay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **APPROVED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)**

**IR 1719 - Authorizing use of Cupsogue County Park by Blessings in a Backpack and Backpacks for Fellow Students for their Run For A Reason Fundraiser. (Co. Exec.)** Same motion, same second, same vote. **APPROVED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)**

**IR 1720 - Authorizing use of Cupsogue Beach County Park by the American Cancer Society, for the Amazedness Kite Fly Fundraiser. (Co. Exec.)** Same motion, same second, same vote. **APPROVED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)**

**IR 1721 - Authorizing use of Manorville Hills County Park by the Long Island Greenbelt Trail Conference for its 15k Trail Race Fundraiser. (Co. Exec.)** Same motion, same second, same vote. **APPROVED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)**

**IR 1734 - Appointing Terence McSweeney as a member of the Suffolk County Board of Trustees of Parks, Recreation and Conservation (Town of Babylon). (Pres. Off.)** Is this a new appointment?

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Yes, Jay.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is Mr. McSweeney present? Okay. We're going to have to table.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

You have to table if he's not here?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

If you could, Commissioner, have somebody reach out to him and tell him he needs to be present since he's a new and not a reappointment.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

We'll reach out.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. So I'll make a motion to table, second by Legislator McCaffrey.

Hold on one moment.

**MR. VAUGHN:**

I would just ask that perhaps the Committee considering discharging without recommendation, maybe seeing if Mister -- we have a night meeting on Tuesday, it might be easier for Mr. McSweeney to attend a night meeting then -- we heard other constituents actually speaking about the peril of attending day committee meetings. It might be easier for Mr. McSweeney to attend an evening meeting. We are meeting on -- at 4 o'clock on the ninth so maybe we could entertain a discharge without recommendation and if he can't attend then we can kick it back to Committee and recommit it.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

My feeling is that you -- you know, there's a lot of -- a lot on the agenda for the Legislative meeting and it is a night meeting and they often -- they've gone well past midnight at times and I don't want to add to the agenda. I mean, typically, you know, to have the whole committee interviewing him, I mean, the whole Legislature interviewing him, all 18 of us, I think they rely on us to make that judgment call and this is -- if it was a -- if I felt like it was an emergency, it'd be different, but this is a vacancy for the Parks Board of Trustees, I think we should table it and have him appear before the committee. Do my colleagues agree?

**MR. VAUGHN:**

Fair enough.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay, all right. So I'll make a motion to table, second by Legislator McCaffrey. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **1734 is tabled. TABLED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)** I would say, Commissioner, if you're having a meeting in the interm and Mr. McSweeney wants to attend, please invite him.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Actually, yeah, he has made the last two trustee meetings. It was my understanding he was going to be here today. I'll reach out.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right so at least he's up to speed and he's participating in the conversations, he just can't vote.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Has been to the last two trustee meetings.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. **IR 1740 - Authorizing execution of Cooperative Grant Agreement and Ancillary Agreements with the Army Corps. of Engineers and Cornell Cooperative Extension in connection with a restoration project at Cedar Beach County Park in Southold (SCTM No. 1000-093.00-02.00-024.000) (Co. Exec.)** Just Commissioner, were there details on that?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Yeah, Cornell Cooperative got a grant to do a -- not a renourishment, a restoration project at Cedar Beach. This document allows us to enter into an agreement -- allows the County Executive to enter into an MOU with them so they can -- they can move forward with their funding. That's pretty much what it is. Do you need details on the project? Nick Gibbons is here if you'd like to hear what the project's about.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

It's basically beach nourishment?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Not beach nourishment it's a wetland restoration.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Wetland restoration.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Right.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

So it's like removing invasive species?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Nah, they're going to be putting some sand up and planting some different types of grasses and whatnot. So, like I said, next year if you want details on --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Not really.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

This agreement allows us to enter -- allows them to move forward with the project because it's on a -- Cedar Beach is our property.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Any questions from the Committee? All right. So, motion by Legislator Lindsay, second by Legislator McCaffrey. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **APPROVED (VOTE: 4-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn)**

Now that gets us to the end of the agenda. Commissioner, I mean, like I have a -- somewhat of a not only a soft spot for veterans but a soft spot for anybody who wants to use your beaches. I hate when people get turned away. It's actually come up a couple of times this summer and it's great that our parks are being heavily used. Whether we have enough camping spaces, camper spaces, parking spaces; I know we're trying to get that North Fork Preserve opened at some point and that may alleviate some pressure.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

I couldn't agree with you more.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, I certainly -- somebody ought to be able to drop somebody off. I mean, maybe we can take a look at that issue and work with the village over there at Westhampton Beach, Westhampton Dunes, to see if we could come up with something that would allow people to get in and out. Shuttles, whatever it might be, but I hate turning people away. It just bothers me.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

There is a capacity -- in that parking lot and there is a capacity for that roadway and have a responsibility to make sure traffic doesn't jam up. If there's an emergency down there we have to be able to get ambulances in. And if you've been down there on a Saturday --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Well, it's also -- it's a extremely long drive to get there.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Absolutely. That's why we put the sign up at the bridge indicating that that packing lot is indeed full and generally by Sunday morning, Saturday morning and even on Fridays in nice weather the parking lot is full by 9:30, 10 o'clock in the morning. We would love to have another 500 parking spots in there; absolutely.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But the beach itself, I mean, if people were able to -- if there was some kind of shuttle bus; the beach could handle more people?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

The beach, I mean, we have people on the outer beach all the time. So, yeah, I think it's more, if we allow people to drop-off -- first of all, there's no area there and people do, it does take some time to get coolers out and umbrellas and everything else. But I think the other concern is, and I would have conveyed this in this conversation but was cutoff when I was discussing this at Legislator Anker's Office, it's at the end of the day when people need to be picked up at the end of the day, you're going to have the same -- people trying to get out of the park and people trying to pick up their guests. It's --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But what about if there was another parking lot somewhere else with a shuttle to it?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

I don't know if there's anything either within the village or the town that -- we do have -- we have a parking lot down the road about, I want to say about two miles, but that -- that fills up too. That's maybe 20, 30 cars -- 15 cars.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Any other places where are could put a parking lot in?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

No, we don't have any property along that -- along that stretch of -- along that stretch of road. I'm sorry, we do, we do have two parcels and parking is available, but you're talking minimal ten, fifteen spots.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

What about, and I haven't been there, but what about road improvements so that you could maybe create a cut-in or something like that where folks could drop off.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

There was a proposal a number of years ago, I'd have to drag it back up again, where they were going to put a turnaround in where the -- where the village's police department is located. I don't know where that -- I don't know where that ended up. I don't know if it's funding issue, a

permitting issue or an issue with the town, I don't know where that was.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I thought there was an approved capital project to do that.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

I don't think that project moved forward. I can't -- I can't tell you why at this juncture.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I know we had done something to improve the queueing there because people couldn't get out of their driveways at one point, a real problem.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Traffic is an issue, no question.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

We located the booths maybe further onto the property.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

They're in pretty far now, I mean, you know.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Commissioner.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Yeah, there was a project, I recall, probably about five years ago to see what we could do about increasing the ability to actually just turn around within the -- within the park itself and the Parks Department actually facilitated that. There has been complaints and issues with the village and with the residents right there with the queueing and bringing up so it's a -- it's a real issue to park that they've been trying to deal with. The configuration of the park itself isn't the same as Smith Point. Smith Point you have a large front area where cars can, if they have to, pull in, drop off and come back and get access to it, you know, easily. Inside the park, I mean, anybody whose been can say it's really tight. You know, when you get in front of the pavilion you only have a couple of rows where, you know, you can start to move and you start bringing people in there, you know, on a large basis with pedestrians walking back and forth it can get pretty dicey.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

And we have maximized the parking spots in that lot. I think, like I said, I think the number's at 660. And the other issue is it's one lane coming in and one lane going on out along the whole Dune Road.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

We're kind of stuck with the parking -- the asphalt that we have is the asphalt that we have. Going outside of that is going to take permitting that is, you know, it'd be a large undertaking to get anything beyond that; widening the road, then you're talking about acquisitions and that would be a -- that would be huge as well.

We did have something, we were working with the village for north side immediately outside of the park and I don't know where that is, I can look into it to see if they ever finish the takings but there was some objection to communities in the area, residents, I'm sorry.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislator Lindsay.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

For Commissioner Dawson, if we had, theoretically, if we had somebody in town that wanted to allow people to park on their property, run a shuttle service back and forth, would that be something --

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

I would highly tend to doubt that that would -- that would happen.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

If it did, though, would that be something we would be able to accommodate?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Even if you had it -- even if you had a homeowner, you'd allow three cars. I mean --

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

I'm not talking about a homeowner, I'm talking about the commercial space and a shuttle bus back and forth.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

I think those houses are packed on right next to --

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

I'm talking about in town up on Montauk Highway before you come over the bridge.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

No -- I don't.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

(Inaudible)

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

I mean, it's not our concern if anybody can do that, I'm saying theoretically if we had somebody that came to us and said, *hey, I want to do a drop-off and pick up regular shuttle service at the beach*, can we accommodate that?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

I certainly think we can look into it.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

And just to go back to the other thought, nobody is denied access for the day it's a matter of just having patience, going back down the road, making a turn around and coming back eventually 15 -- when 15 spots open, they, you know, they let people in. So, like I said, coincidentally I happened to be there that Friday, I wasn't there for this particular incident but I was there on that day, so, and had multiple conversations with the park supervisor who stands -- who stands at the entrance way, it's very difficult to --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I know that you share my sentiments of wanting to get as many people in as you can and I appreciate the work you did with Shinnecock East and opening up some camping spaces that had --

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Yeah, Michael Barbara {ph} the area supervisor did a very nice job out there.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And just in time for Labor Day weekend, which is great.

I mean, it was great to see our parks so heavily used this year and they are owned by the people. So maybe we need, not today, but, you know, to take a look at, you know, as our population grows and the usership grows if there's ways to increase parking in some of these places or shuttle buses or whatever it might be or additional parklands that we can open up for public use.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

We're all about access so the more people the better as far as we're concerned. We need to do it safely and responsibly.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Jay, on that, you know, maybe we should look at the possibility of doing an RFP through any private transportation company that wants to accommodate these people, and bring them in and out if we're able to accommodate the shuttles coming out so at least you're offering something to them other than, you have to -- you know, *the beach is full, you have to wait*.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I think we just need to vet the idea a little bit more before we get to that point.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

And that's what I'm suggesting.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I mean, if you're worried about congestion it seems like -- you started to have a shuttle come in it might, well, I was thinking it might congest it even more if you have a big bus that's coming in waiting at a spot to pick up or drop off.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Just thinking all those cars that queue up there waiting for the 15 spots to open wouldn't queue up there, they'd go to the parking lot and they take the shuttle.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah, maybe.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

That's the problem, I mean, that's the concern is we don't let them queue up there because we don't want the traffic jam they need to come in, go into the parking lot, and turn around.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But they keep circling. Right?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

Eventually they open up.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

They keep circling so that they would be able to park maybe at a lot even if it was a couple miles away and wait 15 minutes for a shuttle that would take them there.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

I'm not familiar with the area up on Montauk Highway so I don't know if that's a viable solution or

not.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I don't either.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

We're starting to look into it.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Worth exploring because it might solve some problems for the -- that Village of Westhampton Dunes. It could solve the queuing potentially by not having a long line of people waiting to get in because they were parking, let's say, in the west village -- Village of Westhampton Beach in a large municipal type of lot and then taking a shuttle bus or --

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

And for you, Commissioner Dawson, it would eliminate the complaint, angry phone calls that you'd be receiving that's, you know, now at least you're offering them some type of option to get to the beach.

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

From somebody who stood out at the front of these parks and dealt with the constituents, I feel for the employees who have to do it every single day. I mean, it's not something we cherish doing, turning people away from our parks, I mean, we're all about access. We try to get as many people in.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

There's no Suffolk County bus that goes there. Right?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Because I know it does go to some beaches. Right? Smith's Point there's a bus too?

**COMMISSIONER DAWSON:**

There's a bus that goes to Smith's Point but not down -- certainly not down Dune Road that I'm aware.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right I don't think so either.

Okay. Any other questions or concerns for the Commissioner? Commissioner, anything for us? All right. Seeing no other business we are adjourned.

*(\*The meeting was adjourned at 1:24 p.m. \*)*