

HORSLEY NEWS

WAYNE R. HORSLEY

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HORSLEY TOURS BABYLON WATERWAYS

*Legislator Organized a Fact Finding Mission
Shallow Waters are Troubling and Raise Safety Concerns*

Lindenhurst, NY – Prompted by residents’ concerns regarding unsafe waterways after Tropical Storm Irene, Suffolk County Legislator Wayne R. Horsley organized a boat tour of the Great South Bay to view damage in at-risk waterways including Frederick Canal and Strong’s Creek Canal.

Legislator Horsley was joined by Babylon Village Mayor Ralph Scordino, Suffolk County Commissioner of Public Works Gilbert Anderson who is also a member of the SC Dredging Project Screening Committee, and Brian Zitani from the Babylon Town Coastal and Environmental Management Division. The purpose of the trip was to highlight the dire need for dredging in the area.

While aboard the vessel, testing the depth of the water was conducted at the mouth of the canals, as well as the middle and at the end of the canals. After completing this process it was duly determined that the depth in many of the canals is extremely shallow. Some areas only had a depth of 1 ½ feet at low tide.

Currently there are eight dredging applications for Babylon canals pending approval before the dredging committee and many factors must be taken into consideration prior to approval. Dredging spoils from the west end of the County are often “muck” and it is harder to find disposal sites, whereas the east end is usually sand. The Department of Environmental Conservation has more stringent disposal requirements in effect now than in previous years, making disposal more difficult. Another key factor is funding the project. Most of the funding from the state and federal government has dried up.

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Horsley made it clear to the Commissioner that Babylon's canals are just as important as east end canals and must be treated equally. He was assured his concerns would be relayed to the dredging committee. Commissioner Anderson will explore new disposal sites and revenue sources before next season's dredging schedule is set into motion with the hope Babylon will be included on the 2012/2013 schedule.

"The need for dredging in Babylon Town waterways is clearly known and the next step in the process presents its own obstacles. I will continue to work to open the lines of communication between the Town and County to push the process forward," stated Legislator Horsley. "We need dredging and it needs to be approved as soon as possible," he concluded.



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