

**A REPORT ON THE BRIDGEHAMPTON CAC MEETING HELD ON
MARCH 22, 2010 AT THE BRIDGEHAMPTON BANK**

A. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

Those present were Richard Bruce, Fred Cammann, Jenice Delano, Jeffrey Mansfield, Weezie Quimby, Michael Kapon, Steve Long, Cathie Gandel, Christine Smith, Alejandro Saralegui, Jeffrey Vogel, Peter Wilson

B. The following resolution was passed and sent to the Town Board

RESOLUTION March 23, 2010

The Bridgehampton CAC (CAC) firmly supports the revival of the Mecox Yacht Club as proposed by the group headed by Jeffrey Mansfield. The Club has been a beloved part of the area's heritage since the beginning of the last century. Many of our towns oldest families have enjoyed the virtues of sailing via the use of the Club...the Halseys, Hildreths, Ludlows, Thayers, Toppings, Louchheims, Ritzs, Wesnofskes, and McCoys to name a few.

The revival of the club will be a boon to the community as a whole, but it would be especially beneficial to the children of the area. Learning to sail will get our children off the couch, and from behind the video game screen, while giving them physical exercise, self-esteem, confidence, and teaching them the spirit of competition and good sportsmanship.

In a time when few too many of our beautiful potato fields remain, and historically significant structures are bull dozed to make way for mega-mansions, here is a chance to preserve, and use in a practical manner, a piece of our community's history.

In short, we ask that you also support the revival of the Mecox Yacht Club because it is a valuable part of our area's heritage, and so that it may be enjoyed for future generations to come.

C. Discussion Concerning the CAC's relationship with the Southampton Town Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and Planning Board using the MIACO (Bulls Head Inn) development project as its most recent experience.

This application has been in the works for over 3 years. The CAC has joined with the project site neighbors and with the Group for the East End in worrying about the zoning implications, appropriate uses for the site, and size of the planned expansion of the buildings and usages on the site of the Bulls Head Inn.. The CAC has filed numerous questions, resolutions, and oral testimony with the Land Management Department, the Planning Board, and the Zoning Board of Appeals during the three year application process. All have been accepted with varying degrees of interest, The Planning Board has

approved the final Environmental Impact statement which is virtually unchanged from the original application filed three years ago. We cannot discern any meaningful reactions to the questions nor to the alternative suggestions offered by the Neighbors, CAC, nor other interested parties including the Group For The East End.

The Planning Board voted to approve the application in its entirety in December of 2009 with only one dissenting vote, from Jacqui Lofaro, who is, coincidentally the only member of the board who lives in Bridgehampton.

The MIACO application was then forwarded to the ZBA. Three members of our CAC went to the ZBA meetings on Thursday February 4 and seven members attended the meeting on Thursday February 18. It was apparent to us that the application to the ZBA was prompted by the applicant's need for a change of zoning from residential to commercial for one of the two lots that make up MIACO.

The Bridgehampton CAC made the following presentation to the ZBA.

March 4, 2010 Presentation to the Southampton Zoning Board of Appeals in the matter of MIACO LLC; application 1000020 900-71-3-7 &8 Bridgehampton

GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS FREDERIC CAMMANN. I AM A LONG-TIME AND FULL-TIME RESIDENT OF BRIDGEHAMPTON AND AM SPEAKING TONIGHT IN MY CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF BRIDGEHAMPTON.

I AM GOING TO LEAVE WITH THE BOARD TONIGHT EXCERPTS FROM WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CAC TO THE ZBA AND OTHER BODIES OF THE TOWN SETTING FORTH THE REASONS FOR THE CAC'S OBJECTIONS TO MIACO'S PROPOSAL TO REDEVELOP THE BULL'S HEAD INN AND AN ADJOINING LOT. THE PROBLEMS THAT THE BRIDGEHAMPTON CAC IDENTIFIES CAN BE BOILED DOWN TO THE FOLLOWING THREE.

ONE: ECONOMICS.

WE BELIEVE THAT THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT MAY BE INHERENT IN OWNING AND OPERATING THE BULL'S HEAD PROPERTY WERE KNOWN AT THE TIME THE PROPERTY WAS PURCHASED AND WE ARE CONCERNED THAT THE APPLICANT HAS NOT DEMONSTRATED THAT ITS PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT PLAN IS ECONOMICALLY VIABLE.

ONE OF THE REASONS GIVEN BY THE APPLICANT IN REQUESTING THE ZONING VARIANCES IT SEEKS IS THAT, WITHOUT THOSE VARIANCES, APPLICANT'S COMMERCIAL USE OF ITS PROPERTY WILL BE UNECONOMICAL. WHILE THIS MAY BE AN ACCURATE STATEMENT, THE CAC BELIEVES THAT THE APPLICANT WAS, OR SHOULD HAVE BEEN, AWARE OF THE ECONOMIC HURDLES HE FACED IN HIS PROPOSED USE OF THE BULL'S HEAD PROPERTY AT THE TIME THE APPLICANT PURCHASED THE PROPERTY AND SHOULD NOT NOW BE HEARD THROUGH THE PROPOSED APPLICATION TO REQUEST VARIANCES TO HELP IT OUT OF WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN AN ILL-JUDGED INVESTMENT.

IN ADDITION, THE CAC IS CONCERNED THAT, IF THE APPLICANT'S REQUESTS ARE GRANTED AND THE PROPERTY IS REDEVELOPED AS THE APPLICANT PROPOSES, THE PROJECT MAY INDEED PROVE TO BE UNECONOMIC AND, AS A RESULT, THE PROPERTY MAY BE ABANDONED OR SOLD BY APPLICANT. EITHER SUCH ACTION RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ONGOING MAINTENANCE OF SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER STRUCTURES THAN THOSE PRESENTLY ON THE SITE. TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CAC THE APPLICANT HAS NOT FOLLOWED THE CAC'S SUGGESTION THAT THE APPLICANT PRESENT PROJECTIONS OR OTHER SUPPORTING FINANCIAL RESEARCH INDICATING THAT THE PROJECT CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE.

TWO: PRESERVATION

THE CAC BELIEVES THAT THE PROPOSED PROJECT CANNOT FAIRLY BE SAID TO "PRESERVE" THE BULL'S HEAD INN. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE APPLICANT HAS SAID THE INN WILL NOT BE RAZED, WE BELIEVE THAT THE TOTALITY OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES ARE SUCH THAT THE PROJECT, FAR FROM "PRESERVING" THE INN, EFFECTIVELY CHANGES ITS NATURE AND APPEARANCE.

THREE: ZONING.

THE CAC'S THIRD AND MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTION TO THE RELIEF SOUGHT BY THE APPLICANT IS THAT IT EFFECTIVELY EXPANDS THE DESIGNATED COMMERCIAL ZONE OF BRIDGEHAMPTON HAMLET INTO A RESIDENTIAL ZONED AREA.

WHETHER PERMITTED BY VIRTUE OF A VARIANCE OR BY VIRTUE OF A CHANGE IN ZONING, THE PLACING OF A PARKING LOT AND A SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT IN THE PRESENTLY RESIDENTIAL ZONED LOT SEVEN EXTENDS A COMMERCIAL USE PREVIOUSLY LIMITED TO PROPERTIES PRESENTLY ZONED COMMERCIAL AND FOR THE MOST PART FRONTING ON THE MONTAUK HIGHWAY.

FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS THE BRIDGEHAMPTON CAC HAS ALWAYS RESISTED THE EXTENSION OF THE BRIDGEHAMPTON COMMERCIAL ZONE BEYOND ITS PRESENT BOUNDARIES TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH. WE BELIEVE THAT RECENT CHANGES TO THE ZONING CODES FOR THIS COMMERCIAL AREA ENACTED BY THE TOWN DO NOT SUPPORT NORTH SOUTH EXPANSION NOR INTRUSION OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES. THE CAC IS, OF COURSE, COMMITTED TO OPPOSING ZONING VARIANCES, EXCEPT IN HARDSHIP CASES.. THE CAC CONSTANTLY SEEKS TO PROTECT THE FRAGILE CHARACTER OF BRIDGEHAMPTON. ALLOWING COMMERCIAL SPREAD INTO ANY RESIDENTIAL ZONE WORKS IN OPPOSITION TO THAT GOAL. IN ADDITION, REGARDLESS OF ANY PROTESTATIONS BY THE APPLICANT, THE GRANTING OF THE REQUESTED VARIANCE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY AND UNDERSTANDABLY BE CITED AS A PRECEDENT FOR FUTURE VARIANCE APPLICATIONS.

IN THE APPLICATION THERE IS REFERENCE TO SUPPORT FOR THIS PROJECT FROM THE BRIDGEHAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY . THE SOCIETY IS, OF COURSE, INTERESTED IN THE PRESERVATION OF ANY AND ALL HISTORICAL ASSETS WITHIN BRIDGEHAMPTON, AND THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT BULLS HEAD DESERVES TO BE PRESERVED. THERE IS ALSO NO QUESTION THAT THE SOCIETY HAS NOT AGREED THAT THE PROPOSED COMMERCIAL ZONING CHANGE OF AN ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL LOT, OR THAT THE PROPOSED DRAMATIC CHANGES IN USE FOR THE PROPERTY ARE APPROPRIATE

The questions that arose from this experience are relevant to most applications that are discussed our monthly CAC meetings, so it seemed prudent for us to figure out how we can overcome our frustrations in our interactions with the Planning and ZBA boards. For the most part we are allowed only limited access to the boards through presentations limited to five minutes and written comments which are seldom, if ever, referred to again; whereas, applicants and their representatives are permitted unlimited time to present their side of the application to be judged. Indeed applicants are invited, we believe, to work extensively with the board members or their staff in advance of the board's consultations. In other words CAC input is treated as negligible input by the boards. As one CAC member remarked, "the CAC system was invented by the town so as to give community members a safe place to vent." Our frustrations, it seems are often manifested in our attendance problems. (Admittedly we had an awful winter, so journeying out for a Monday meeting was no pleasure.) We then had a productive discussion, exploring steps we might take to make our CAC participation more influential in matters affecting the development of land and other property uses in Bridgehampton. Since some of these steps involved possible reorganization of the CAC structure, we decided to adjourn our formal meeting before addressing them.

The next CAC meeting will take place on Monday April 26, 2010 at 7:00 at the Bridgehampton Bank meeting room ... All are welcome.