

Shinnecock Hills/Tuckahoe/Southampton CAC Minutes
Tuesday, August 7, 2012

CAC Mission Statement

Our charge is to represent the concerns of our communities to the Town Board and to provide input and recommendations

CAC Members in Attendance: Evelyn Boxer, Lyn Fitzgerald, Frances Genovese, Bonnie Goebert (Chair), Valerie Harte, Ken Moffa, Diane Sadowski, Rick Sobrevinas, Susan Van Olst.

Absent CAC Members: Bill Dalsimer and Lorraine Duryea emailed that they would not be in attendance.

Approval of July, 2012 minutes: Motion to approve July minutes by Frances Genovese, seconded by Ken Moffa, unanimously approved.

Guest: Tom Neely, Executive Director, Southampton Transportation Commission.

Discussion with Tom Neely: Tom reported that 2 new bus shelters would be installed on CR-39, Westbound. CAC members support the installation of bus shelters along CR-39.

Several members commented on the danger of turning left off CR-39, Eastbound, onto Tuckahoe Road, going North through the Shinnecock Hills Golf Course. It is virtually impossible to see oncoming traffic. Although there is a dedicated left hand turn lane, without a signal vehicles wishing to make a left hand turn are always in danger of a head-on collision. We think that the County needs to become involved in this issue since it is a County Road.

Diane noted that the curb cut on Greenfield Road and CR-39 is so badly angled that a vehicle has to enter into both lanes of Eastbound traffic in order to make a right hand turn onto CR-39, or else go over the curb. Tom said he would look into it but feels that the existence of a telephone pole on that corner was what caused the curb cut to be placed where it is. In order to fix this situation, the Shell property owner would have to give up property to the county.

The intersection of Sandy Hollow Road off CR-39 where almost 50% of traffic leaves CR-39 to head North to Sag Harbor is "an accident waiting to happen."

In the morning, Eastbound traffic is queued up to the Sunoco station. Drivers get impatient and race to make the turn, hence narrowly escaping a head on collision with vehicles racing West.

Additionally, because the lanes are so narrow, drivers are often fearful of making the turn from the designated left hand lane with traffic signal, many go up to the next left hand turn (across from PC Richards) to make an “illegal” left onto Sandy Hollow Road. Tom said that the road had been striped to alert drivers that this is an illegal turn. Ken suggested that a sign be put up, “No Left Turn.”

Tom said that that turn had originally been put in for the people coming off North Bishops. CAC members felt that the turn had been put there for PC Richards’ benefit. Members said that this situation would get totally out of hand if the Tuckahoe Mall is built since it is right in this area. Tom concluded that it was “not an ideal situation.”

Susan said that the left hand turn lanes by the Dunkin Donuts is a “death trap,” and she almost suffered a collision. She was driving East in the right turning lane to turn into the Village. A vehicle driving West, was in the left hand turning lane to make the turn into Dunkin Donuts. A driver in one of the Eastbound lanes let the vehicle through and she almost collided with Susan. Our feeling is that the County should re-think that particular left hand turn since drivers are crossing 3 lanes of traffic “to get a donut.”

Several members said that all left-hand turn lanes on CR-39 are dangerous especially when they are used by vehicles coming from the East and the West, each vehicle wanting to make a left hand turn at the same time. We know that businesses along CR-39 probably want these left hand turn lanes, but allowing left hand turns off CR-39 may be contributing to accidents. Additionally, many vehicles use the left hand turn lanes as “merge lanes” if they want to make a left onto CR-39. We feel that this whole issue needs to be very well analyzed and examined by the County, especially if and as new high traffic volume generating businesses are asking for development rights along CR-39 (Tuckahoe Mall in particular).

We asked if the County was aware of all these problems along CR-39. Tom said that part of the long-term plan was to put in median dividers along CR-39 but that has been put on the back burner given the economic woes of the County. “There are no silver bullets to a lot of these problems,” he said.

In view of the critical traffic conditions of this past summer, Valerie suggested that the county invest in speed cameras to monitor speeders and send them tickets in the mail. Ken said that they are in parts of Florida and that it has stopped running red lights in those areas. He also said that when he is observing the speed limit on CR-39, buses and trucks (often school buses) speed by him. In addition, we need enforcement.

Of a general concern, re-striping of all the roadways is very much needed. It's dangerous now. Out-of-towners have no idea of what they are supposed to be doing. Susan said she called Town Hall and got a "run-around" of blame. Ultimately, it would appear to be the responsibility of the highway department.

Discussion of the traffic problem/tie up of July 24th when an accident at the end of Sunrise Highway caused a 7-hour traffic jam when no one was able to head West and all north-south feeder roads were also jammed. Tom said that he was scheduled to attend a Town Board work session on August 8th to discuss the situation and what could be done in the future to assure that the problem doesn't re-occur.

The Chair questioned whether it was legal for Southampton Ventures to propose that their Tuckahoe Mall parking lot be used as a "public access." Page 3, of their EAF attachments of July 3, 2012 notes: "A significant benefit to be provided by the proposed action is the creation of a public access easement across the site that will provide a connection from Magee Street to CR 39. This easement will allow northbound traffic on Magee Street destined for eastbound CR 39 to traverse through the subject property and avoid the signal at CR 39/Magee Street."

The Chair knows that it is illegal to go through the Gulf Station (CR-39 and North Sea Road) to avoid that traffic light, so what's the difference if the Tuckahoe Mall parking lot is used? Tom said that he was checking this out with the County Engineers and that it would probably be covered in the project's upcoming SEQRA review.

Also with reference to the proposed Tuckahoe Mall, has any consideration been given to how the delivery trucks for the King Kullen will be handled given that they would be accessing residential streets (mainly Village streets) as well as Hill Street to make their deliveries?

Discussion of how the LPGA at the Sebonack Golf Club will affect traffic along CR-39. Tom said that his commission was due to discuss that issue in the fall.

The CAC thanked Tom for his time and information.

CR-39 Corridor Study: Members wanted to know when this was due to be completed since they had heard from Town Board members that no action would be taken on the Tuckahoe Mall Zone Change Petition until the CR39 study was completed. Bonnie said that she had heard it would be completed by end of August.

Since Kyle Collins has been appointed the new Town Planning and Development Administrator, some members wondered if he or Freda Eisenberg would be responsible for the final version of the CR-39 study. Bonnie said that she would ask at Town Hall. (Since that time, Bonnie has been told that Freda will be completing the CR-39 study, due to be ready by end of August).

In further discussion, several members expressed the concern that in its final version, the CR-39 Corridor Study might be re-worked so that it would give credence to the development of a Tuckahoe Mall along CR-39. As the DRAFT reads, members felt that it left little room for doubt that a supermarket/retail shopping mall along CR-39 would be traffic-generating and hence, an inappropriate land use for the acreage is question. The Chair noted that once the final version of the CR-39 Study is submitted, all members should review it and comment accordingly.

One member said that Kyle Collins might think about recusing himself from consideration of the Tuckahoe Mall project since he may have worked with or for Robert Morrow/Southampton Ventures, LLC, the developer who is asking for the zoning changes. Bonnie said that before we jump to conclusions, we should find out from Kyle Collins if the rumor is true that he has previously worked with Bob Morrow. (Since that time, Bonnie has asked Mr. Collins about past associations with Mr. Morrow and he answered that his past associations were only “on the other side of the table” during the Hampton Bays King Kullen Mall project when Mr. Collins worked in the Town Planning Department and Mr. Morrow was asking for a PDD.)

Valerie feels that our CAC should work to get the County involved, since in the long run they are the officials who are responsible for safety along CR-39, including ingress and egress from businesses.

Evelyn who lives in Southampton Commons reported that her community is opposed to the Tuckahoe Mall because delivery trucks will be using Hubbard Lane to get to the King Kullen and other retail stores. According to the current concept plan for the Tuckahoe Mall, 3 delivery truck spaces and the trash compactor are all located at the King Kullen site so that the easiest access would be from Magee Street which trucks would probably access from Hubbard Lane off CR-39.

Evelyn has met with the Supervisor and Town Councilpeople all of whom said that nothing was going to happen until the CR-39 Corridor Study was completed, slated for end of August, 2012.

Rogers Memorial Library Trustees Vote: The Chair reminded members about the Library vote for Friday, August 17, 2012, and encouraged people to read up on the trustee candidates.

Water Quality Resolution: The Chair reported that Councilperson Scalera has re-written the Water Quality Protection Fund Resolution that will be reviewed by the Town Board at their 1:00pm meeting on August 14, 2012. The Resolution may be reviewed on the Town Website.

Discussion: The CAC continues to feel that while the intent of this law is commendable, our greatest concern is the source of funding. In reviewing the document, it appears that the re-write eliminated any specific reference to "land use approval" as a source of funding under paragraph 75-2, "Source of Funding", but in the previous paragraph, it is noted that "should monies be derived from any land use approval, monies so collected shall be separated relative to the hydrogeological zone from which they came for purposes of a rebate program." So, land use approval is still being considered as a source of funding.

Tuckahoe School Board report: Rick recently attended a Tuckahoe School Board meeting and left with the impression that the School Board feels that if the Town enforced its codes pertaining to legal vs. illegal housing, substantial savings would occur. The school board's apparent reasoning is that the escalating budget may be due to lax town enforcement of housing laws. The Tuckahoe School Board will be writing a letter to the Town Board petitioning them to enforce the housing code so that single family houses are lived in by single families. In some instances, Rick believes, as many as 6 families may be living in a single family house.

Discussion: The CAC feels that the School Board may be reaching for straws on this issue, and continues to feel that consolidation of school districts and/or consideration of the Hampton Bays High School as an alternative to Southampton High School are better avenues to pursue regarding the Tuckahoe School's budget.

Bonnie reminded everyone that the next meeting would be the day after Labor Day, September 4, 2012, at the Tuckahoe School Library, 7 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Bonnie Goebert, acting secretary.

cc: Supervisor Throne-Holst and Town Board members
Town Attorney
Kyle Collins, Town Planning & Development Administrator
Freda Eisenberg
Tom Neely
Town Clerk
Tax Receiver
Hon Mark Epley, Mayor, Village of Southampton
Water Mill CAC, Sag Harbor CAC, North Sea CAC, Hampton Bays CAC
Bob DeLuca, Group for the East End