

SOUTHAMPTON/TUCKAHOE/SHINNECOCK HILLS CAC MINUTES

Tuesday, July 5, 2016

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: Linda Ashcraft, Elaine Bodtmann, Evelyn Boxer, Lorraine Duryea, Lyn Fitzgerald, Bonnie Goebert (Co-Chair), Valerie Harte, Bernice Haase Lask, Ken Moffa, Renee Morrisson, Bob Schepps, Susan Van Olst.

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Bonnie Goebert.

Minutes

Motion was made by Ken Moffa and seconded by Valerie Harte to approve the minutes of June 7, 2016. All in favor.

Guests

Jay Schneiderman, Supervisor, Town of Southampton; Richard Casabianca, resident of Hampton Bays.

County Road 39 East and Westbound Bus Stops East near Lobster Grill

Marilyn (Lyn) Fitzgerald presented a letter for review and approval which she had prepared for Bonnie's signature on behalf of the CAC to send to Gil Anderson, (w/cc:'s to appropriate other county and town officials) concerning the "bus stops" on CR39 west of Hills Station Road. Copies of photographs providing visual reference of the concerns were included.

The goal of the letter to the county is to get real bus stops with shelters. Photos of the poor existing bus stops by the Lobster Grill (westbound) and across CR39 at the same area (eastbound) are reviewed and discussed.

Lyn made observations walking from Hills Station Road to Inlet Road. She took photographs, spoke w/ workers waiting at bus stop, and noticed people walking on the side of CR39 instead of on the narrow, uneven dirt path beside the road.

Upon her return to Hills Station Road, Lyn met with a resident who said that the postal service has taken away 12 mailboxes from both (north and south) sides of CR39 due to safety concerns for postal workers delivering mail. The boxes are now a set of cluster boxes on the south side of CR39 road. The person Lynn spoke with lives on the north side and told her how dangerous it is for him to cross over to the south side of CR39 to access his mailbox.

Jay advises that the county has just lost \$10m they thought was in their budget for the transportation system, and in this climate to ask for road improvements and shelters won't go anywhere. However, he does not mind the town stepping in to help with this concern as he has experience from working 12 years at the county and if the town wants to fund it, it is possible. It would have to be some sort of partnership, with no liability for the town.

Lyn mentions funding she is aware of, such as funds LaValle has got for Bridgehampton. Jay mentions Bridgehampton is a state road and this is a county road. But Senator LaValle has got money for capital type programs and this may qualify. Discussion about the cost to do a bus stop, including shoulder improvements.

Bonnie brings up the \$500k community benefit fund from the building of Sebonac Golf Course. Could some of this money be used to build the bus shelters? Jay says this is a possibility, but the conditions of the funds' use need to be reviewed, as this money is to go to the Hamlet of Tuckahoe, and the bus stops in question may be in the Hamlet of Shinnecock Hills.

Review of letter by Jay to determine all appropriate parties are being cc:d. He suggests including the head of the transportation committee at the county, Gary Lenberger.

Lorraine says she just met w/ Bridget Fleming, and the county is doing a study of bus stops and crosswalks on CR39. Discussion about possible difficulty of creating sidewalks along CR-39 due to eminent domain payments that may be required.

Susan mentions the new building, Pelican Pools, on the corner of CR39 and Magee Street and wonders why there were no new sidewalks, especially since this building is on Magee Street, where the Tuckahoe Elementary School is. Aren't sidewalks required all along for new builds per zoning?

Lyn said that when she went to the town planning department, Tony advised that since there are no curb cuts directly on CR-39, no sidewalks on CR-39 would be required. The same holds true for the new Squires & Pierson building on CR-39 and Tuckahoe Lane.

Bob Schepps points out that since both of these new buildings were 'as of right' rather than 'special exceptions' there is no claim for the county to provide sidewalks.

Bonnie makes a motion to approve Lyn's letter. Elaine seconds the motion, all were in favor.

Shinnecock Hills Golf Course/Tuckahoe Road.

Jay discusses the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club (SHGC) request to close Tuckahoe Road through the golf course due to safety concerns and build a new road at their expense to replace it. He was approached by the Club prior to coming into office with their idea which they had been working on with the prior administration.

SHGC would like to eliminate the section of Tuckahoe Road that runs through the golf course and create a new road from Sebonac Road between SHGC and Southampton Golf Club (SGC), connecting on the south end with St. Andrews Road at the 'u' section of St. Andrews road just north of the underpass with CR39. At this point, a new road would be created to run parallel to CR-39 from St. Andrews to the light on Tuckahoe Road for a distance of approximately 900 feet.

SHGC determines the new road would cost \$5million, and that the Club would foot the bill.

Jay advised the SHGC that they needed to do something beyond this to create a community benefit. He proposed SHGC provide an additional \$7million fund to be distributed as follows: \$1m to Tuckahoe School as a donation, \$2m for road improvement east of the canal, \$2m west of the canal and \$2m north of canal/Riverside. This \$7m plus \$5m for the new road would total \$12million that the SHGC is willing to ante up to eliminate the town-owned Tuckahoe Road from their property

Jay also included a new Paumanok Path along the new road in the negotiations.

After negotiating, SHGC agreed to the amount and Jay explains that there will also need to be public hearings and that there is concern about the

elimination of the beautiful vista mid-way through the golf course on Tuckahoe Road. Can there be a pedestrian right of way or a drive up to a cul-de-sac which would let people travel up who want to see the vista without creating a cut through the golf course?

However, this is not a done deal because it would have to be brought to the community for a public hearing. In Jay's opinion, it is a good deal because the road would be safer for residents and for club members; the community would still get the vista; the community at large would benefit from improved roads to the north, east and west. The SHGC also seems willing to provide their Club for fundraisers as they have done in the past.

Richard says that Jay's point is exactly what offends many people. There is a real gap between people who have and those who don't and this is one more attempt to privatize some of the best views we have. As for the money, it doesn't matter how much they spend it is just an attempt to get what they want.

Susan agrees that this is elitism, with SHGC bringing out Mayor Bloomberg to promote this scheme.

She also questions whether private money can be given by the Club to the Town. In her previous experience of trying to reduce traffic on Sebonac Road, residents in the area were willing to pay for certain changes along the road if the town could not. At that time, residents had been told that private money could not be used.

She questions the ability for emergency vehicles to access the hospital when it moves onto the campus with this new plan since there would be additional intersections.

A couple of members suggest that we all keep an open mind until we learn more about the plan.

Jay discusses recent observations when he parked at SHGC to watch traffic going through including commercial traffic. In particular, he noticed a woman in a Range Rover talking on her cell phone while an elderly couple was trying to cross the road in an area with little visibility.

(Lyn points out similar dangers on CR39 at Inlet Road where people are trying to cross the highway in darkness from the bus stops.)

Jay reiterates if this is a problem in any community we should address it.

Bonnie asks about putting simply putting a 'no commercial traffic' sign up on the existing road. Jay advises he thought of that, and discussion ensues about enforcement.

Discussion that this new road proposal would put a lot of traffic in front of the Montessori School. Discussion about the Montessori School being sold and a synagogue possibly buying it also to use as a school.

Ken asks what Southampton Golf Club has said about this new road proposal and Jay advises they are part of the discussion.

Discussion about putting a left turn (northbound) arrow light at the CR39/Tuckahoe Road intersection for eastbound traffic turning left/north onto Tuckahoe Road from CR39. Currently there is only a turning light for westbound CR39 traffic to turn left (south) onto Tuckahoe Road at the intersection.

Discussion about the increased volume of traffic turning (north) onto Tuckahoe Road being able to take back roads all the way east to avoid CR39/Montauk Highway traffic and that the closing of the turn onto Shrubland from CR39 has probably created more traffic using Tuckahoe Road north of CR39.

Bob Schepps discusses community benefit of \$7million. Jay asks what he would recommend and Bob suggests a continuous and ongoing contribution from the SHGC. "Once you have the road, it is forever and \$7m is gone in a blink of an eye. The advantage to SHBC is far greater than \$7m."

Bernice asks about bike lanes. Jay advises it is included in the road improvements with the path next to it.

Richard points out this is making happy "a small group of people who golf part of the day part of the year."

Discussion about available money for improvements via property taxes. Discussion about whether or not there has been a pedestrian incident on Tuckahoe Road at SHGC.

Bonnie reiterates importance of keeping an open mind and points out that residents north of CR39 will be further separated from residents south of CR39. "Rather than building another road, why not just have stop signs along Tuckahoe Road where there are designated golf cart crossings, and limit commercial traffic."

Lyn brings up increased volume of traffic and difficulty of going north and south from CR39. Jay points out the displaced work force and how traffic used to be north-south and now is west-east; and increased local housing is going from year round to summer homes with work force coming from the west.

The volume east-west is enormous causing over use of back roads. One of his goals is to get the main artery flowing again to get traffic off of the back roads; also to watch our development patterns; and to consider the importance of land preservation but also the need to provide housing for some of our work force east of the canal. He is open to ideas to get some quality of life back as it is ridiculous how long it takes to get anywhere because of the traffic.

Bonnie points out how long it takes to get anywhere for locals. Jay points out also how long it takes for commuters.

Susan discusses this significant change and loss of this road to residents who use it year round for the golf course which only uses it a few months a year.

Jay reiterates they are bringing forth a proposal and it its his job to listen and bring it to the public. The community has to decide. If the current idea is not enough, the pubic can ask for more, such as Bob's idea of a continuous donation.

Susan asks about the scheduled work session to discuss the new road, and suggests that designated member(s) from out CAC also be invited as we are equal stakeholders. (Work session may be August 4, 2016)

Renee suggests considering the SHGC's current tax underassessment. "If we are being asked to give up this road forever, they should give up something so the residents' tax burden is relieved." Jay likes the idea of some kind ongoing contribution from the SHGC.

Linda asks if there is review now to rearrange the roads, shouldn't factoring in the hospital be included? Jay advises the original underpass idea was something the hospital liked and that the hospital time frame is to be there in six years and that they are one of the stakeholders.

Richard brings up work force housing. There used to be worker housing at the golf course. Couldn't there be some kind of housing at the Club? He recalls when estates provided worker housing in carriage houses, above garage apartments, which would also reduce stress of incoming work traffic.

Another point he asks about is whether or not the SHGC's clubhouse is landmarked. Ken advises it is.

Lorraine points out that she cannot get out onto the highway safely where she lives nor can others at this meeting and she has been working on this for twenty years. She points out that we take our lives in our hands everyday and nobody listens. She has been arguing for road improvements for this for twenty years.

Elaine discusses the work she has done for years in an effort to improve curb cut at Greenfield Road. Jay agrees to check in with Town Attorney, Kathleen Murray, to see where this currently stands.

Bonnie points out that this gets back to respecting the needs of the local community. Jay agrees that the local community issues are also just as valid and the SHGC is a public conversation.

Valerie asks about ability for Greenfield community to get access to Montauk Highway via Hills Station Road and further discussion about what has been brought up and current status working on this issue.

Susan asks about back up of commercial traffic on Tuckahoe Road heading south through the SHGC and stopped at CR39 light and compares this to the issue of traffic stacked up northbound on Magee Street at CR39. This evening, traffic was backed up south of the railroad tracks on Magee. Jay points out there was an accident causing additional traffic. Susan points out there is often back up to the railroad tracks. One idea (back to existing Tuckahoe Road) is reducing the speed limit, regardless of what happens with this plan. And to not allow commercial traffic. Questions of enforcement and where would commercial traffic go?

Valerie points out the really bad intersection with stacked traffic is westbound at CR39 turning left onto Sandy Hollow Road.

Bonnie summarizes importance of keeping an open mind and that good points were made by everyone.

Elaine expresses need to focus on prioritizing improvements of roads for local residents.

Jay agrees to keep an open mind and suggests whether or not this moves forward, consider that with the \$2m each for roads west, north and east of the canal, many of these improvements can be accomplished. Not that they cannot be accomplished with bonds or raising taxes, but this should be considered too.

Bonnie thanks Jay for coming to the meeting and sharing this information.

Jay thanks the CAC for inviting him to present this information from his perspective and the history of the issue.

Bonnie brings up plan for new co-chairs, Linda Ashcraft and Elaine Bodtmann. No objections.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Ashcraft

cc: Supervisor Schneiderman and Town Board members
Town Attorney
Kyle Collins, Town Planning & Development Administrator
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,
Bridgehampton CAC, Noyack CAC, Bob DeLuca, Group for the East End