

Jamaica Bay Task Force Meeting
Tuesday September 26th, 2006
6:30 – 8:30pm
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
Queens, NY

Minutes

Attendees: Co-Chairs Dan Mundy [Jamaica Bay EcoWatchers] and Don Riepe [American Littoral Society]; Bernard Blum, John Baxter [Friends of Rockaway]; Len Houston, Melissa Alvarez [US Army Corps of Engineers]; John Fazio, James Caruso [Queens Community Board 10]; Dan Mundy, Jr., Mike McGovern, Charles Lehr, Jeanette, Nick DeLucia [Jamaica Bay EcoWatchers]; Mike Keller [Diamond Point Yacht Club]; Manuel Russ [Citizens Advisory Committee, NYCDEP]; John Scialdone [CIESIN, Columbia University]; Catherine Doxsey [Ramblersville/Hawtree Civic Association]; Vincent Traina [Howard Beach]; Ida Sanoff [Natural Resources Protective Association and Brooklyn Community Board 10]; Gloria Wittels [Brooklyn Community Board 15]; Mike Steffens [Friends of Gateway]; Barbara Brown [Eastern Queens Alliance]; Kathleen Lawless [Broad Channel Civic Association]; John Hartigan [Rockaway Action Committee]; John McLaughlin [NYCDEP]; Paul Mankiewicz [NYCSUCO and Gaia Institute]; and Barbara Toborg [American Littoral Society]

Don Riepe and Dan Mundy opened the meeting, with Dan giving a short **history of the Jamaica Bay Task Force**. The 1978 Clean Water Act called for Citizen Advisory Committees, and in 1984 the Task Force was formed, with the chair rotating between various agencies. The Task Force was brought out of a decline in 1999, largely by the efforts of Eugenia Flatow. Dan credited the Task Force as the impetus to convene the Blue Ribbon Panel to investigate marsh loss in Jamaica Bay.

Melissa Alvarez and Len Houston gave a slide presentation on the restoration work being done by the Army Corps of Engineers at **Elders Point East**. Twenty-five acres have been planted, following the grading of thousands of cubic yards of sand dumped on the deteriorating marsh. The plants were grown from seeds taken from Jamaica Bay. Coir logs, made from coconuts, were used in the construction of the site. A waterfowl barrier has been erected around the site to deter predation. Next season, the plan is to plant 14 more acres. Agency agreements are needed for work on Elder Point West and Yellow Bar Hassock. Funding is said to be in place.

Dan Mundy gave an update on the **Jamaica Bay Comprehensive Plan** (a.k.a. Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan). A preliminary report was issued in June, with a one-year extension given by the New York City Council for the final report. The preliminary report listed 10 goals, with 62 recommendations to achieve these goals. Dan advised that DEP responded to the report, rejecting two recommendations (identifying chemicals discharged into the bay and a survey by NYC Department of Health on impact on subsistence anglers in Jamaica Bay). Sixty recommendations are being assessed with a March deadline. A public meeting on the preliminary report will be held on October 4,

2006 at the Ryan Visitor Center at Floyd Bennett Field from 6:30 to 9 PM. Read the report and DEP's response on the websites of the DEP:

www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/jamaica_bay/interimreport.pdf

and Jamaica Bay Research and Management Information Network (JBRMIN):

<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/jamaicabay/jbwppac/advisorycommittee.html>

Discussion followed regarding nitrogen loading in Jamaica Bay, borrow pits in Norton Bay, and what impact the DEP's Consent Decree with NYSDEC would have on recommendations made by the Advisory Committee.

Barbara Brown of Eastern Queens Alliance announced a **day of planting at Idlewild Park** on October 21 from 9 AM to Noon, with lunch provided. Work to develop trails at the park will be held on October 22 and in December.

Dave Lutz of Friends of Gateway and three City College students appealed to members of the Task Force for suggestions for a **plan to plant native species at Floyd Bennett Field in the area between the greenhouse and the bay.**

Don Riepe gave a slide presentation on Jamaica Bay, touching on the issues of erosion, pollution (including debris from religious ceremonies), and beach cleanups.

Meeting adjourned.