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These informational meetings were held to inform local officials, various interested parties and the general public about the project as it gets underway. A presentation was given by the Department of Planning and Cashin Associates, P.C. on the various work components and the expected timeline for completion. The following presentation topics were discussed:

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A copy of the presentation and submitted written statements will be available on the project website: [http://www.co.suffolk.ny.us/webtemp3.cfm?dept=11&idd=2742](http://www.co.suffolk.ny.us/webtemp3.cfm?dept=11&idd=2742).

The following synopsis is a staff interpretation of the public portion/comment section where 16 individuals provided oral comments and 5 written statements were submitted.

**Public Portion/Comment:**

- **John Holzapfel:**
  - Orient oyster grower/oyster grant holder
  - Encourages ALPAC to follow through
  - Believes that small lease areas for individuals would be best
  - Major benefits of aquaculture include:
    - Environmental benefits: increases local oyster and clam populations
    - Economic benefits: creates jobs, will bring back an industry (Historically, Greenport had 300-400 people alone harvesting oysters.)

- **Tom Kehoe:**
  - Village of Northport official
  - Presented a written statement on behalf of the National Fisheries Institute: Molluscan Shellfish Institute:
    - NFI is the nation’s umbrella organization whose members are major shellfish growers from the East Coast, West Coast, and Gulf.
    - Aquaculture is necessary to meet the demands of a growing seafood demand.
    - The major benefits of aquaculture would be creating jobs on the East End which would encourage a growing industry and for ecological benefits.

- **Dean Yaxa:**
  - Oyster grant holder
  - Concerned about bad press surrounding this program due to 5,100 acres on the North Shore being closed due to illegal oyster growth occurring in uncertified waters
  - Encourages strong screening of aquaculture lease applicants
  - Believes that aquaculture gives back economically and ecologically
  - Due to real estate taxes increasing over time, he believes that permit prices should also increase over time.
• **Bill Pell:**
  - Oyster grower
  - Oyster grant holder in Southold and TMAUA site in Southampton
  - Provided written statement:
    - Shellfish aquaculture improves water quality by reducing nutrient pollution.
    - Cultured shellfish and the gear used to protect them from predators provide habitat and refuge for juvenile fish and crustaceans.
    - Aquaculture provides jobs and economic development.
  - Believes aquaculture is positive but people need to respect the rights of other baymen such as draggers, oystermen and conchers
  - Promotes small business not big business

• **Dave Relyea:**
  - Frank M. Flowers & Sons Inc., oyster grower in Oyster Bay
  - Successful aquaculturist for past 60 years
  - Supplies oyster and clam seed to growers in the Peconics
  - Believes program will provide more people with an opportunity to continue aquaculture
  - Offered to help in any way

• **Robert Hamilton Jr.:**
  - Provided a written statement:
    - Opposes leasing of any public bottomland which is currently and/or has been historically used by commercial fishermen in Peconic and Gardiners Bays
    - Commercial fishermen need to be located and consulted before potential aquaculture locations are identified.
    - 100% of Gardiners Bay has been used by fisherman in all five East End towns.
    - All correspondence needs to be sent in a timely manner in order to receive comments i.e: EIS, etc.
    - Aquaculturists need to take care of equipment such as markers and buoys.
    - Will bonding be necessary?

• **Nathan Andruski:**
  - Commercial dredger from Milford, Ct.
  - Encourages use of hydraulic dredges and believes hand raking clams in 30-40 feet of water is not possible
  - Need to respect other people’s gear
  - Encourages referencing Connecticut’s aquaculture program
• Michael Craig:  
-Oyster grower in Peconic Bay/ TMAUA  
-Read a statement representing East End Marine Farmer’s Association  
-Not looking to displace other fishermen, plenty of room for both  
-Aquaculture improves water quality, increases jobs and improves economic development  
-Supports small family farms  
-Lease program would provide an opportunity to establish a shellfish farm in NY State  
-As a TMAUA holder, he wants to be able to stay where he is currently situated because he is familiar with the product that results from being harvested in his specific assignment site.  
-TMAUA holders should be a special case in the lease process.  
-Reminds committee that the weather has a lot to do with the success of this business. For example, protection from wave action and proximity to the shore are important considerations for baymen when choosing a lease site.  
-Baymen need affordable waterfront access for boat storage and docking.

• Pete Wenczel:  
-Commercial fisherman for conch  
-Conch fishery needs to be considered in this program  
-Concerned that this lease program will displace people  
-How big will leases be?  
-Encourages small leases  
-Overall, against privatization of public land  
-Individuals should not be given exclusive access to public land to harvest wild stocks  
-Wants to participate

• Bob Link:  
-Will bonding be required for shellfish leases?  
-Is timeline going to be long enough to accomplish described tasks? ie: DGEIS to FGEIS  
-Is there going to be product liability?  
-Is Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) required?  
-If on/off bottom culture is conducted, will the Coast Guard need to be involved?

• Andrew Myslburski:  
-Pound net fisherman  
-Questions spawning potential of shellfish culture  
-How much will permits and leases cost?
-Will the lease program result in a case where “the rich get richer”?

- **Bob Wemyss**: Secretary of North Shore Baymen’s Association
- Provided written statement:
  - County abandoned management responsibilities of overseeing activities on the original grants, allowing big companies, like Aquaculture Technologies, to come in and take over many of the grants
  - Must be concerned about hydraulic dredging due to turbidity, suspended sediments and sedimentation
  - Identiﬁes potential impacts of non indigenous species and genetic concerns
  - TMAUAs have always been regarded as “temporary” and should not be grandfathered into program.
  - Shellfish cultivation zones should be vetted before they are set in stone.
  - Does not want big business to monopolize this project
  - Natural sets of hard clams in Gardiner’s Bay can be harvested via hand rakes despite being in 15-35 feet of water
  - Hydraulic dredging should not be allowed because it resuspends sediments

- **Kim Tetrault**: CCE
- Believes aquaculture offers a new industry
- Believes that in the beginning of this lease program, lease areas should be small
- Aquaculture lets people get back into the water and not about making a lot of money. Aquaculture is about a lifestyle.
- Thinks that people with good track records should be able to expand their leased area over time

- **Mike Osinsky**: Small oyster farmer
- Oyster growing is a labor of love.
- From a historic perspective, canneries and shore-side processing areas were very important and would have to be accepted by towns, villages and local population.

- **Charles Murphy**: North Shore Baymen’s Association
- Not opposed to aquaculture but stresses necessity to survey areas for productivity of shellfish
- Also stated that harvesting can occur manually in 30 feet of water - Offers boat and service to survey areas
• Joe Gergela III:  
  - Long Island Farm Bureau  
  - Shellfish leasing program is an “opportunity for a new day.”  
  - Legislative criteria need special attention as Bob Wemyss and Charlie Murphy stated  
  - States that there is enough room for all interested parties to coexist

• Gary Joyce:  
  - Purchase and transfer of the development rights (PDR/TDR) program has been a success and now is the time to use the program to some benefit beyond open space, vistas and sane development  
  - The aquaculture lease program is a great idea but non-recreational uses of waterfront on Long Island are necessary for it to succeed.  
  - Funds derived from land purchases (2% transfer tax) should be used to purchase the next marina to create a true, environmentally correct but commercial-only port.  
  - This purchase would create jobs, bring money to the area, would take the aquaculture project out of the hands of dabblers and put it into the hands of people who make- or want to make- a living from the sea, provide an outlet for any level of schooling to practice and would be the first of his knowledge in the country.

Meeting was adjourned by Thomas Isles.
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- Task Descriptions and Methodologies
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- Underwater Lands Title Search Status-Planning Department
Permitted Use of Underwater Lands for Shellfish Culture—Planning Department
Future Opportunities for Public Input—Planning Department

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The following synopsis is a staff interpretation of the public portion/comment section where 10 individuals provided oral comments and 4 written statements were submitted. An additional written statement was received following the two meeting but is available on the project website for review.

**Public Portion/ Comment:**

- **Bob Rheault:** Submitted a written statement representing the East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, read to the committee and public by Tom Isles:
  - Shellfish aquaculture improves water quality
  - Cultured shellfish and gear used to protect them from predators provide a wonderful habitat
  - Shellfish aquaculture will provide jobs and economic development
  - Shellfish aquaculture should be an integral part of every coastal zone management program because of the benefits to the environment and local economy.

- **Mario Carrera:** TMAUA holder/pro-aquaculture
  - Concerned about leasing too much land to commercial entities
  - Allowing mechanical dredging would be a bad decision by the County because it could lead to degradation of water quality such as hypoxic conditions.
  - Brought up issue of lease demarcation:
    - How will it be monitored
    - Will staking interfere with navigation
    - How do you verify where markers are located due to shifts from natural movements, i.e. ice or vandalism
  - Does not want to see pots excluded from lease areas
  - Wants to see more focus on the cultivation of bay scallops as well the issue of selling cultivated scallops out of season (According to the NYSDEC, bay scallops may be taken only from the first Monday in November through March 31. Scallops need to be 2-1/4 inch length from mid hinge to mid bill and an annual growth ring in order to be harvested)
  - Believes that putting too much land in one person’s hands would be problematic
**Bob Wemyss:**  
-Secretary of North Shore Baymen’s Association  
-Addressed shellfish criteria in the law, “significant quantity and quality”  
-Concerned about leases over grants that are productive and wants the County to check proposed leased aquaculture zones for viability so that what happened with Aquaculture Technologies (dredging natural sets) does not occur this time around  
-Stated that County did not take back certain underwater lands on tax lien and that some grant parcels are illegal because they are larger than they are supposed to be  
-Believes leases should be about 4-5 acres  
-Hydraulic dredging should not be allowed on grants

**Jeff Kraus:**  
-Commercial fisherman; traps, pots, gill nets, trawler and Aquaculturist  
-Provided a written statement on behalf of East End Marine Farmers Association  
-Feels that aquaculture is a progressive issue because it provides more opportunities than would be available without aquaculture; gives people access to bottomlands  
-Encourages small, individual operations

**Larry Penny:**  
-East Hampton Natural Resource Department  
-How will “unproductive” bottoms be identified?  
-How will aquaculture impact the marine food chain?  
-Supports baymen in general and does not want to see baymen be written off  
-Would like to see more baymen on the water  
-Wants to be involved in the assessment of East Hampton underwater lands as far the level of productivity is concerned

**Floyd Carrington:**  
-Licensed land surveyor  
-Worked with the Peconic Baykeeper to determine the size and location of their parcels and to prepare a survey map  
-New York State Law (Article 145; Section 7203) states that only a licensed land surveyor can determine the parcel boundaries  
-Under New York State Law it is illegal for a GIS technician to determine the boundaries of the lease parcels and therefore how will stakes be located?  
-Willing to assist with surveys
- Bob McAlvey: - PEP and Citizens Advisory Committee
  - Submitted documentation about pesticide use (specifically methoprene), marsh activity and the potential impact on shellfish seed
  - Questions use of Cashin Associates P.C. as consultant on this project because Cashin was the lead consultant that prepared the Suffolk County Vector Control Plan

- Bill Pell:
  - Oyster grower
  - Oyster grant holder in Southold and TMAUA site in Southampton
  - Makes reference to comment from January 31, 2007 meeting in Southold Town Hall about culture conflicts:
    - Believes that all fishermen should be able to work together because there is plenty of room for everybody to work successfully. For example, fish are attracted to the growth on oyster cages and conch are oyster predators so the set up of conch pots around oyster cages would also be beneficial to both groups
  - Interested in the culture of bay scallops and also changing the current law pertaining to their sales
  - States that “aquaculture puts back”
  - Willing to assist and donate time

- Ian Burliuk:
  - President of Southampton Town Baymen’s Association
  - Wants to be able to harvest local stock but realizes that natural products are decreasing and therefore supports aquaculture
  - Believes that aquaculture keeps people on the water
  - Lease boundaries need to be accurate and GPS is a good way of doing this
  - Believes cage culture will benefit future sets of shellfish
  - Concern lies with the leasing of Gardiners Bay due to considerable finfish and conch harvest and reasonably productive hard clam population

- Lynn Mendelman:
  - East Hampton Trustee, Boater, PEP, scientist
  - Who will determine plot size?
  - Suggests setting up a rotation schedule as land farmers have for their crops so that new sets can have time to grow
  - Questions how shellfish program will impact biodiversity, disease and parasites
  - How will this program be enforced?
    - Thinks that County should consider setting up their own enforcement unit
-Brings up user conflicts with recreational boaters in high traffic areas in shallow depths
-Suggests setting up spawner sanctuaries that would be off limits and surrounded by a buffer to help ensure that this area is not disturbed
-Who is going to pay for this program?
-How much will it cost and to whom will any profit go?

- Norman Edwards Jr.: Submitted written statement following meeting
  -Commercial fisherman, dragger, who fishes 9 months out of the year in Gardiners Bay and Cherry Harbor
  -Believes public bottomlands in these bodies of water are very productive
  -Believes that unproductive bottomlands can be utilized for small (5-6 acres), private aquaculture practices but encourages County to be concerned about leasing productive public lands for private use
  -Supports small, private operations because it could bring new life to the shellfish market and baymen back to local waters
  -ALPAC and County need to consider the current commercial fishing interest and focus on the utilization of truly unproductive bottomlands

Meeting was adjourned by Thomas Isles.

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