

Letters to the Editor for November 26, 2020

Supervisor

Town of East Hampton
Water Quality
Montauk

November 23, 2020

Dear Editor,

Last week the East Hampton Town Board unanimously stood in support of protecting and restoring Montauk's water quality.

Ongoing scientific analysis performed by our organization, Concerned Citizens of Montauk, has highlighted the issues and potential solutions and we are encouraged that the town has listened and is responding.

1. New pumpout boat for Lake Montauk. In 2018, C.C.O.M., in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey, undertook a two-year analysis looking at the various sources of bacteria pollution in Lake Montauk, a problem initially identified by C.C.O.M.'s weekly bacteria sampling of the lake. Preliminary results from that study have identified a major source of bacteria pollution as humans, likely attributed to vessel waste. A new pumpout boat with increased servicing of the boating community in Lake Montauk can help address this problem.
2. Stormwater remediation projects at West and South Lake. These two problem spots have been identified by C.C.O.M.'s weekly bacteria sampling of Lake Montauk. We have years of data to show elevated and harmful bacteria levels at these locations. The town has listened and through their community preservation fund, the water quality technical advisory committee is funding the design of stormwater remediation projects — permeable pavements and vegetated swales — to capture and treat runoff before it enters the lake.
3. Wastewater Treatment for Downtown Montauk. Numerous properties in the downtown area have antiquated low-to-nonfunctioning septic systems that pollute groundwater and surface waters, like Fort Pond. And C.C.O.M.'s partnership with the Gobler lab to monitor the harmful algal blooms in Fort Pond show that these blooms are exacerbated by the nutrient-rich runoff entering the pond. Dogs sickened after swimming and canceled swimming competitions should not be the norm in Montauk. A map and technology plan will put us back on track.

The town is to be commended. Science is driving change.

LAURA TOOMAN
President
Concerned Citizens of Montauk