Montauk’s Coastal Resiliency and the Future of our Town

Montauk Library June 9th 2024
Panelists

Moderator: Andy Harris, CCOM Board Member

- **Dr Henry Bokuniewicz** - Stony Brook University School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences:
  - Montauk’s coastal morphology and dynamics

- **Samantha Klein** - EH Town Intergovernmental Relations:
  - Montauk’s coastal areas at risk and mitigation options including their associated costs

- **Leo Daunt** - President Montauk Chamber of Commerce:
  - The environment is our economy – how we combine economic and environmental sustainability

- **Cate Rogers** - Deputy Supervisor EH Town:
  - A more resilient Montauk, applying learning’s from CARP and the Hamlet plan in shaping our planning over the next 2 years

- **Ann Welker** - Suffolk County Legislator:
  - The role of Suffolk County in addressing coastal resiliency and sea level rise

- **Thad Pawlowski** - Columbia University Director Center for Resilient Cities and Landscapes:
  - Learning’s from other coastal communities adapting to climate change
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Coastal Risks

- Shoreline Erosion, Flooding, Rising Sea Levels
- Loss of natural resources
- Impacts to transportation (roadways and railways)
- Loss of property / economic damages
- Impacts to lifeline facilities (power, water, wastewater, communications)
- Impacts to essential services (police, fire, ems)
Topography

Shoreline Change

1% Annual Flood / 26% of occurring at least once in 30 Years

Depth to Groundwater
Town-wide CARP includes Focus Areas

- Downtown Montauk
- Ditch Plains
- Fort Pond/Industrial Road
- Montauk Harbor
- Culloden/Soundview Drive
Principles of Resilience

- Know your risks, avoid risk, reduce risk
- Let nature do the work
- Layered approach of multiple resilience measures
- Inclusive and transparent decisions
- Solutions with multiple benefits
- Share costs and benefits equitably
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East Hampton Hamlet Report

Montauk

Prepared by:
Dobson & Pfrimmer, Landscape Architects and Planners
Fine Arts & Sciences
RKG Associates Inc.
L.K. McLean Associates

Prepared For:
The Town of East Hampton, New York

January 23, 2020
Montauk Hamlet Study

On Climate Change and Coastal Resilience:

Sea Level Rise and other impacts of Climate Change were recognized as one of the most important issues for the future of the hamlet. Participants expressed an interest in finding consensus on sea-level rise assumptions, using good data and finding issues where all could agree. Support existed for a multi-faceted approach to resilience strategies, including managed retreat and relocation of commercial and residential density as well as nourishment and strategies to protect critical infrastructure from rising seas. Montauk Hamlet Plan (PG. 32)
Town of East Hampton
Coastal Assessment and Resiliency Plan (CARP)

Town of East Hampton, NY

Prepared By:
GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.
With: Dodson & Flinker and Coastal Ocean Analytics
Prepared for:
CARP Overview

The CARP includes:

- An analysis of the coastal hazards affecting East Hampton, including wind, precipitation, tides, storm surge and waves;
- A comprehensive assessment of the Town’s vulnerability to coastal hazards;
- Stakeholder outreach, including three public workshops;
- A review of the existing plans, policies and regulations that form the Town’s current capabilities to create coastal resiliency and adapt to sea level rise; and
- Recommendations for coastal resiliency and adaptation strategies and implementation actions that are consistent with the Town’s vision, vulnerabilities and capabilities.

The CARP’s coastal resilience strategies, measures and implementation actions are focused on:

- Planning and Regulations
- Emergency Planning
- Public Works
- Physical Projects
- Funding
- Communication and Consensus-Building
Examples from Montauk Hamlet Plan and CARP
Summary of Coastal Resiliency Measures

COASTAL RESILIENCE MEASURES COMPLETED TO-DATE

✓ 2015: The Town completed the Town of East Hampton Climate Action Plan (CAP). This plan identifies the needs for Climate Change Planning and Adaptation including vulnerability assessment and adaptation and resilience strategies.

✓ 2017: The Town formed the Coastal Assessment & Resiliency Planning Committee

✓ 2017-2019: The Town initiated two coastal resilience studies, including: 1) the Town of East Hampton Coastal Assessment and Resiliency Plan (CARP); and 2) a Shoreline Change evaluation study.

✓ 2016 -2021: New York State Climate Smart Community Certification

✓ 2018-ongoing: The Town is working with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) relative to federally funded beach nourishment within Kirk Park and South Edison beaches in Downtown Montauk.

✓ 2018-ongoing: The Town is evaluating establishment of a Town Erosion Control District to finance additional beach nourishment along the shorelines of Downtown Montauk and Ditch Plains.

✓ 2018-ongoing: The Town is working with the USACE on dredging of the Lake Montauk channel entrance and use of dredge materials for beach nourishment.

✓ 2018-2023: The Town is working with PSEG Long Island to decommission the highly vulnerable electricity substation on Industrial Road and construct a new, flood resilient substation onshore Road, including elevating portions of Shore Road.

✓ 2018: The Town completed and approved the Town of East Hampton Hamlet Reports, which present a vision for the Hamlets that includes and incorporates resilience and adaptation measures.
Summary of Coastal Resiliency Measures

- **Ongoing**: The Town has considered coastal resources, values and vulnerability in existing Town plans and regulations such as the Comprehensive Management Plan, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, the Town’s zoning codes, the Multi-Hazard Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Town’s recently completed Hamlet Plans and

- **Ongoing**: The Town completed a Townwide Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (2014) and a Downtown Montauk Wastewater Management Plan (2017). The Town has retained consultants to formulate a Downtown Montauk Wastewater District and Treatment facility.

- **Ongoing**: The Town is working with the Army Corps, DEC, NY State Parks, and hired engineering consultants to increase resiliency of the Montauk Point Lighthouse Revetment by lengthening its current distance from the ocean.

- **Ongoing**: Applying for and receiving the DOS grant $600,000.00 to create framework, draft model codes and scenario planning to protect the Downtown Montauk economy and natural resources. Sustainable Planning in Coastal Communities: Risk Reduction, Rehabilitation and Recovery

- **Ongoing**: Ditch Plains Dune Restoration and Beach Nourishment Project. Application made to the DEC, Sand nourishment RFP opened- closes June 12th. June 7, accepted proposal from Coastal Science and Engineering for design of FEMA compliant dune. Anticipated completing fall 2024.
G: Town Sustainability

1. To safeguard the Town’s ability to meet the needs of the current population and promote a vibrant local economy without jeopardizing the thriving of future generations.

2. To ensure local business owners can continue to operate and residents can and want to continue to live here.

3. To protect local ecological integrity and biodiversity and minimize human degradation of natural systems.

4. To manage all resources effectively and reduce waste.

5. To prioritize and promote preparedness for and recovery from all types of extraordinary natural and manmade events or emergencies.

6. To ensure that growth does not overwhelm the carrying capacity of human-made infrastructure or compromise the regenerative capacity of land, waters, and natural systems.

7. To sustain and strengthen the diversity, cohesion, resilience, and social well-being of the community
H: Coastal Resiliency

1. To address fully the town’s vulnerability to rising sea level and groundwater, flooding, and coastal and shoreline erosion and how to prepare for the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events.

2. To secure the Town’s ability to maintain essential functions and protect critical infrastructure during, and recover after, significant storm effects.

3. To optimize management and protections of undeveloped and developed shoreline and coastal areas and waterfront uses, to ensure the protection and expansion of important natural resources buffers, and to ensure public beach access for recreation and quiet enjoyment.

4. To promote proactive planning and implementation of adaptation and resilience strategies for areas with coastal vulnerabilities as well as vulnerable inland areas, to plan for migration of at-risk coastal assets, and to ensure, where and when necessary, a just transition for residents.

5. To ensure that the Town’s land use policy, regulations and decisions are forward looking and will advance preparedness, resilience, public safety, and economic viability by judiciously restraining development of at-risk area and assets and preventing or minimizing near- and long-term risks to property.
Implementation: a plan for the future

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ONE COMMERCE PLAZA
99 WASHINGTON AVENUE
ALBANY, NY 12231-0001
WWW.DOS.NY.GOV

December 6, 2023

Thank you for applying to the Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program through the 2023 Consolidated Funding Application. On behalf of Governor Hochul, I am pleased to inform you that funding has been tentatively awarded to the Town of East Hampton to undertake the following project(s):

- CFA #129195 - $600,000.00
  Sustainable Planning in Coastal Communities: Risk Reduction, Revitalization and Restoration
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The Role of Suffolk County in Addressing Coastal Resiliency and Sea Level Rise

Suffolk County Legislator Ann Welker, 2nd District

- Suffolk County Coastal Resiliency Task Force
- Suffolk County Water Quality Restoration Act (SCWQRA)
- The Continuing Role of Suffolk County
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Resources

CCOM
- https://www.preservemontauk.org/initiatives/coastal-resiliency/
- https://www.preservemontauk.org

EAST HAMPTON TOWN
- Coastal Assessment Resiliency Plan | East Hampton Town, NY (ehamptonny.gov)
HOW DO WE COMBINE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY?

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sustainability is the responsibility to conserve natural resources and protect global ecosystems to support health & wellbeing.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Economic sustainability is when an activity or practice, financial or not, helps to support long-term financial growth whilst keeping the environment, community, and social factors in mind.

Leo Daunt, President Montauk Chamber of Commerce
Montauk Chamber of Commerce, The Nature Conservancy, town of EH, and CCOM work together to hire JLPD and engage business community to re-start a conversation around coastal resilience downtown.

Leo Daunt, President Montauk Chamber of Commerce
Approach

Engaged with a diversity of stakeholders

- 11 business leaders
- 1 community organizer
- 2 local government officials
- 1 non profit organization

Regular working sessions with the Advisory Committee

- 5 business leaders
- 1 community organizer
- 2 local government officials
- 2 residents

Uncover agreement on outcomes while deferring future decisions on actions and tactics.
A: Points of Concern

Economic Resiliency

- Winter 2024 significantly slower, with businesses struggling to provide services
- Demographic changes are accelerating and rapidly limiting customer base and workforce
  - Loss of middle-income households
  - Workers getting pushed out of year-round rental market
  - Increase in socio-economic disparities
- Need help with cost of doing business - staffing/visas, worker housing, infrastructure (e.g., water management)

“There is consensus not so much around the map but around values, community identity, and economic infrastructure. Many people would like to see a more year-round balance. There is a desire to see the economic infrastructure of Downtown Montauk preserved.”
A: Points of Concern

Economic Resiliency

Affordability Driving Workforce Shortage:
- Stakeholders report labor shortages in emergency services, public services, and hospitality.
- Lack of affordable housing rental options for service / seasonal workers

Remote Work:
- In early 2022, U.S. workers who say their jobs can mainly be done from home (59%) are working from home all or most of the time. Workers say they are doing this by choice rather than necessity (Pew Research Center)
B: Points of Consensus
Smart Growth Planning

- Shared visions for a vibrant, year-round Downtown area that thrives in all seasons: a desire for mixed use, quality affordable housing / workforce housing, and increased walkability
- Shared understanding of Montauk’s vulnerability to recent climate events
- A recognition that resilience planning + smart growth planning can be (should be) addressed together

**Smart growth**: an overall approach of development and conservation strategies that can help protect public health and the natural environment and make communities more attractive, economically stronger, socially diverse, and resilient to climate change.
B: Points of Consensus
Year-Round Business and Residents

- Recognition that business community (brick + mortar plus home-based/remote) and residents are interconnected, not at odds
  - Healthy year-round businesses provide more diverse and quality services

"Data that points to the value of hotel rooms and the contribution to Montauk’s economy is missing. It’s important to have a better understanding of the interconnectedness of the tourism economy to Montauk’s greater economy. How do property values intersect with the local downtown economy?"
Recommendations for Future Resilience Planning

- Combine comprehensive smart growth planning into resilience planning
  - Facilitate businesses investment in resilient design and placemaking while simultaneously leveraging and aligning public funding sources: enhanced density, mixed-use, affordability, and walkability
    - Identify specific code and zoning changes that would advance rebuilding
    - Focus also on: wastewater, zoning, and density
    - Create strategies for year-round business growth
    - Explore partnerships between TOEH and business community to embrace year-round events
    - Make sure to address immediate Downtown business challenges
    - Embrace emergency planning
    - Assess economically viable investments
Recommendations for Future Resilience Planning

- Perform a municipal economic analysis that explores how residents and Montauk businesses, especially the hospitality industry, are interconnected and interdependent
  - Demonstrate the economic contribution of Montauk to the overall economy of TOEH
  - Study categories of tax revenues with their resulting economic effect
  - Understand the recent change of customer and population attraction in Montauk compared to other parts of TOEH
  - Unpack what is driving and hampering Montauk businesses’ growth
  - Understand how homeowners and residents have changed the frequency, duration and purpose of their visits to Montauk over the years
  - Explore a shared vision for Montauk during the off-season
CLIMATE JUSTICE IN EVERYONE’S BACKYARD

Thaddeus Pawlowski Managing Director

COLUMBIA Center for Resilient Cities and Landscapes
CORAL BLEACHING
Coral bleaching mapping

Data Source. NASA Earth Observatory
“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision is merely passing time. But vision with action can change the world.” - BARBADOS PRIME MINISTER MIA MOTLEY
Our local partner, the Alligator Head Foundation is leading response to immediate impacts of climate change: managing fisheries, working with the tourism industry, and restoring coral reefs.
We hosted a community workshop to hear community voices and priorities:
East Portland, Jamaica
Towards a Generative Ridge to Reef Economy

CELEBRATE CULTURAL HERITAGE:
The Windward Maroons of the Blue Mountains

PROPAGATE REGENATIVE FARMING:
Agroforestry and Small Hold Farmers of Sherwood and Windsor Forests

RESPECT EVERY JAMAICAN’S RIGHT TO WATER:
The Coves, Rivers and Springs of the East Portland Coastline

PROMOTE NON-EXTRACTIVE TOURISM:
The Rafters and Business Owners of the Rio Grande

ADAPT TO A CHANGING CLIMATE AND COASTLINE TOGETHER:
The Fisher Folk of Prospect Beach and Coral Farmers of Alligator Head Foundation
WATER FOR ALL: From Privilege to Right
Advocating for coastal access

Angel Langumas, Chealsie Nalvarte, Gokul Naïr, Sara Susan Paul
WATER FOR ALL
100% COASTAL ACCESS
Cards from East Portland, Jamaica 2100
We are helping the Ministry of Tourism develop a regenerative vision and framework for Veron-Punta Cana, long identified with successful tourism, particularly beach-front, all-inclusive resorts.

Shaney Peña Gomez, Ministry of Tourism

Gustavo Valdez, UD consultant to hotel association
Mangrove at beach

Ojos Indígenas Reserve

Mangrove poisoned by a hotel

Illegal dumping
Bridging the Blues
Uniendo el blues
Revaluing and Integrating the Waterscapes of Punta Cana
Mrunmayi Mandan, Priyal Shah, Yi-Chi Wang, Heejung Kim
2. Connection

3. Activation

2030 Vision
visión 2030
BRIDGING THE BLUES

1. Densification