

December 10, 2007 Meeting Summary

Members present: Co-Chair Steve Abramson, Gloria Rabinowitz, Tom Shea, Marlene Haresign, Tom Haresign, Charlie Corwith, Joe Krajewski, Paul Griffin and Rachel Verno
Non-members present: Councilman Chris Nuzzi, Fire Commissioner Mark Press, Harold Steudte, Bill Berkoski, Jenice Delano (Bridgehampton CAC), Liam O'Braoin, Sylvia Lehrer, Fred Lehrer

FIRE DEPARTMENT ISSUES:

Harold Steudte gave update on the community service project whereby, as part of fulfilling their community service, individuals have been doing clean up work and odd jobs in the Water Mill.

Mark Press gave an update regarding possible public water projects for 3 proposed subdivisions in Water Mill that are currently before the Planning Board. The Fire Commissioners would eventually like to get public water lines installed all throughout Water Mill. CAC has requested any relevant maps.

Water lines were installed on Mill Pond before the road was paved.

LIPA:

The DEIS was reviewed. The consensus was that the report is incomplete and does not address all of the issues outlined in the scoping process.

LIPA dismisses concerns about the massive poles and thick cables imperiling a hurricane escape route, and also dismisses the visual impact from the project, and continues to move forward with a March start date.

LIPA was officially granted lead agency status in the SEQRA process and Councilman Nuzzi stated that the Town is preparing a response to that decision. The Town is putting together some form of appeal and there is discussion about passing some form of legislation that would limit the size of new transmission poles within the Town of Southampton. The Town is also exploring what other legal options they have outside the SEQRA process.

Mayor Epley has suggested a creative solution. In 15-20 years an additional LIPA transmission line will be needed, and given the size of the anticipated transmission cables (138 kV then vs. 69 kV now), these cables are mandated to be buried underground. Mayor Epley has suggested the installation of the 138 kV cable now (underground), thereby obviating the need for the aboveground 69 kV cable, now, and thereby protecting the hurricane escape route.

Questions were asked such as has the Town hired experts to challenge LIPA's proposal? Councilman Nuzzi stated that the Town was reviewing the DEIS and there was a consensus that the only option was 100% burial. Any legal action that needs to be taken will be.

Discussion followed re: the existing power line route on the moraine seems most logical route option, and LIPA's refusal to discuss what easements exist seems evasive, the Bridgehampton substation and probable expansion to Easthampton, RR option and how overhead lines not really viable, but Councilman Nuzzi feels that an underground solution should at least be explored by LIPA.

Re VSR (visual surcharge rate), a practice whereby utilities charge ratepayers a fee to offset the cost of projects that impact a community visually. Is LIPA charging that fee and if so, how is it being used?

Discussion about LIPA putting a surcharge on customers to cover burial, and a *Newsday* article revealing LIPA overcharged customers \$197 million this past year in fuel surcharges. Where is that money, can the East End's share be used for this project and how accurate are LIPA's accounting practices in regards to this project? LIPA still has not delivered accurate numbers for this project.

On behalf of Committee for a Green South Fork, Steve introduced the online petition that calls for the Town to create a special tax assessment district in order to cover a \$5 million bond over the course of 30 years. This would cover approximately half the cost of LIPA's estimate for 100% burial at \$20 dollars per \$1 million of assessed value. This petition is on hold pending the result of the meeting of elected officials with Kevin Law to resolve the issue.

Councilman Nuzzi stated that the Town's position at this point is that LIPA must foot 100% of this bill. The Town does not want to set a precedent so that every time a public utility has a project, they expect the taxpayers to foot the bill.

CAC agreed to submit written comment in regards to the DEIS.

UPDATE ON CAC MEMBERS AND OFFICERS:

- Marcella Free passed away around Thanksgiving.
- Paul Griffin is a new CAC member.
- Charlie Corwith stepping down as CAC member.
- Tom Martinez stepping down as Co-chair, Rachel Verno replacing.

OTHER NEWS:

- Demolition expected on Water Mill Ateliers building. Owner waiting for final stamp from Suffolk County Health Department.