

THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF EAST HAMPTON

the Village
Preservation
Society of East Hampton

FALL NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER 2016

VPS Annual Meeting of Members

Save
the Date!

September 17, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.
at the Tennis House on Maidstone Ln

Save
the Date!

Guest speaker: Kevin McDonald of The Nature Conservancy

MORE ABOUT OUR LOCAL STREETS AND ROADS

by Averill D. Geus, East Hampton Town Historian

East Hampton followed a slow and unsteady path through most of the 19th century before the outbreak of the Civil War. A move to bring the railroad into the East End in 1887 excited farmers and businessmen but was not accomplished until the late 1890s. The cost of extending the tracks from Bridgehampton dampened the enthusiasm of many local boosters. East Hampton residents had to pay to get railroad cars into the village as well as to build a station on Railroad Avenue. Summer visitors who wished to enjoy East Hampton's beaches and boarding houses could travel to Sag Harbor by train, or take a steamboat from Manhattan. Arriving at that port, they then travelled by 'the stage' or other horse drawn conveyance over poor roads to the isolated village. Enjoying the benefits of tourism, local residents made efforts to make East Hampton more presentable and attractive. Barns were moved from near the street to the back of farms, woodpiles were removed and placed out of sight. The geese, almost a fixture on the Main Street were banished and local farmers were discouraged from allowing their cattle to graze on the Village Green. Along with the 'fixing up' mania that swept the town, new roads were laid out by the Road Commissioners for the enjoyment of scenic vistas by the tourists. With the exception of only a few roads opened in the 1920s, all of the roads and lanes we know today were created at the turn of the 19th century.

Apauogue Road was once a sandy beach road leading to West End Road, the Georgic Life Saving Station and further to Wainscott.



"A Glimpse of Egypt Lane" by W. St. John Harper, graced the East Hampton Star's 1897 annual calendar. Courtesy of Averill D. Geus.

It was known as McGinity's Lane in the 19th century. Atlantic Avenue was/is a paper road. It was staked out along the oceanfront, from East Hampton to Amagansett, but never built. Until the 1860s,

continued on p. 2

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the Bridgehampton Road was just a path through the woods with cut outs here and there to allow a vehicle to pass. It was known as the worst road between Montauk and Brooklyn in 1894.

Once known as Katrina's Lane, Buell's Lane, originally led from Main Street where the Star office building is today, around a rise, to where an old windmill was located. In 1886, the road commissioners wished to eliminate the curves and provide a more convenient road to Sag Harbor. Congress Hall, the old David G. Mulford house stood in the way of this improvement and after a bitter lawsuit, the Mulfords moved the house to its present location, opposite the museum house known as Home Sweet Home. The change in the road became a controversial issue in East Hampton necessitating lengthy delays but the East Hampton Star was able to report on May 23, 1902 that Buell's Lane had been "graveled, rounded up and rolled." The road was named for Samuel Buell, third minister of the East Hampton Town Church, who lived on one corner of the Lane. His church, built in 1716, once stood across the street about where the entrance to Pondview Lane is today.

Once little more than a cow path, Cedar Street became one of the most beloved streets in town before it was widened and divided into lots. Lined with hedgerows of cedars, great varieties of wildflowers bloomed in adjoining meadows, which were a delight to summer visitors. One record states that 65 cedars were removed from the street when one hedgerow was taken down. Cooper Lane was cut through farmland in 1902, not long after the Cedar Lawn cemetery was incorporated. The lane was named for an early East Hampton settler named Thomas Cooper who built a house on the corner in 1651. This house was torn down in 1746 by Collum Parsons and replaced with a new house, which stood on the site until 1901 when it too was demolished. The new house built there by Lewis Jones utilized materials from the 1716 church, which had been salvaged many years before. The 1746 house was a landmark for visiting artists who lamented its loss.

David's Lane was cut through the Huntting Farm from Main Street in September 1915. Its original name was Maidstone Lane. Samuel Miller opened Dunemere Lane on April 17, 1886, which went through his farmlands. A petition was granted on October 30, 1896 to have Dunemere continued to Old Highway East of Hook Pond for a public highway. The bridge was built over Hook Pond in February 1894. J. Nevin Steele, an early summer visitor, built the first house on the lane and gave the street its name. Much of the property on either side of the eastern end of the lane became sections of the Maidstone Club golf course.

Egypt Lane was an Ancient highway, used by the first settlers in the 1600s and probably even before then, to access the ocean for economic purposes. Early residents gathered seaweed and fished there. Later, a tryworks to support the whaling industry was located on a small patch of land, still owned by the Town Trustees, just off what is now Highway Behind the Pond. It was named "down Egypt" because at night the lane was "black as Egypt". It was very dark because there were no houses built there to shed light on the road at night. (Or so I have been told.) Huntting Lane was cut from Main Street to Egypt Lane in November 1893 when the street was opened to provide property for residential development. The Hand family

lived in the old house on its northern corner, (now Village Hall) while the historic Huntting Inn occupied its southern corner. The concrete culvert at the end of the street was built in 1908, providing safe passage for carriages to Egypt and Hither Lanes. The eastern end of the street became the estates of the Lorenzo Woodhouse family, East Hampton's benefactors, who are remembered for their generosity to the Village. The Village is indebted to them for building the East Hampton Library, the restoration of Clinton Academy, Guild Hall and the purchase of the old Mulford houses, Home Sweet Home and its twin next door. Mrs. Woodhouse also bequeathed her Japanese Gardens at the end of Huntting Lane to the village.

SMALL LOT INITIATIVE

By Gene E. Cross, Jr.

The VPS "Small Lot Initiative" is an effort to ensure that the scale of new development and redevelopment is compatible with existing neighborhood character. Development impacts are more pronounced in older, established neighborhoods, which are often characterized by smaller homes and parcels. The Village Comprehensive Plan anticipated the potential impacts of new residential development and redevelopment on existing neighborhoods in Section 2.3 entitled "Village Neighborhoods". Together with the recommendations offered, the Comprehensive Plan provides a sound basis for legislation to ensure that new development is compatible.

The emergence of new trends and ongoing changes that affect a community justify revisiting the Comprehensive Plan every 10 to 15 years. The Village can also update a portion of the Plan or adopt a separate element to address a current issue and provide supporting amendments to the Code. Two examples are The Village Open Space Plan and a study analyzing the impacts of transfer of development rights, both adopted as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

Prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2002, zoning requirements for each district were the same for all lots within that district regardless of size. Typically, earlier developments consisted of small lots. As the minimum lot area requirements for these districts increased over time, parcel sizes increased along with the buildings on them. At that time, 85 % of all residential parcels were lawfully pre-existing and nonconforming with respect to minimum lot area. This disparity logically led to the implementation of zoning requirements by actual parcel size.

To a large extent, determining zoning requirements from the actual size of a property addresses the diversity of lot sizes and shapes within a particular district. However, the change in zoning requirements over time creates differences in potential build-out of lots. Recent building on one-acre lots will not be the same as building on one-acre lots developed 50 years ago as the requirements have changed.

As new trends and other changes affecting development/redevelopment arise, it is often necessary to amend existing zoning requirements. Because of this, the organization of the Code may suffer as related requirements are tacked on rather than woven into the context of various provisions. This approach can make provisions difficult to locate, making the Code more difficult to use, understand and amend.

Just as Comprehensive Plans should be brought up to date every 10-15 years, zoning codes should be re-codified every 10 – 15 years. Not changed, simply put back in order. Once reorganized, inconsistencies and necessary corrections become more readily apparent. As the Code becomes easier to use and understand, justification for non-compliance becomes more difficult. The last such maintenance of the Village Zoning Code occurred more than 25 years ago.

Development activity has changed dramatically over the years. As vacant land virtually no longer exists, the number of subdivisions has disappeared over the past several decades. The construction of new homes, primarily redevelopment of existing lots, has increased over the past 10-15 years. Concurrently, the number of variance applications, most for residential properties, has also increased. This indicates that a study and revision of the Zoning Code is warranted to ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the governing document ensuring the character of Village neighborhoods remains intact and is consistent with the desires of Village residents.

The Comprehensive Plan is readily accessible from the Village Web Site.

GROUNDWATER PROTECTION EFFORTS

By Kathleen Cunningham

This November voters will have the opportunity to extend the Community Preservation Fund until 2050, including allowing participating municipalities to access 20% of those monies for water quality improvement projects. Guest speaker, Kevin McDonald, policy analyst at The Nature Conservancy, will address this topic at the VPS Annual Meeting of Members on Saturday, September 17, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. at the Tennis House on Maidstone Ln.

Environmentalists have been working toward this goal for a long time and view this as an excellent opportunity to source funds to begin to address the long laundry list of challenges to our drinking water and surface water bodies.

The Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS), the agency which has jurisdiction over waste water treatment technologies, is moving forward with new, affordable nitrogen removal systems that should be available for residential use by year-end. Removing nitrogen from our wastewater is the most important component of wastewater treatment and the newer technologies also filter out pharmaceuticals and other volatile organic compounds. Communities island-wide have been waiting for these systems to be available, so that municipalities, businesses and individuals can begin to make possible meaningful mitigation of our wastewater.

Increased nitrogen levels from our wastewater and use of lawn fertilizers are responsible for the blue-green algae found in Georgica and Hook Ponds, among other pollutants all over the East End. High nitrogen levels feed these algal blooms, which choke out essential eelgrasses, the nursery of our shell and finfish industries.

Come to the Annual Meeting of Members on September 17th to learn more about how the CPF monies can help to remedy water quality challenges for East End communities.

POINT OF VIEW: QUALITY OF LIFE

By Curtis W. Schade

Within this issue of our Fall Newsletter, you will see we are including a Quality of Life survey. The VPS does these surveys periodically and your input is vital in helping us focus on issues of greatest concern to our community. The first Quality of Life survey we conducted in 1997 led to the formation of the East Hampton Healthcare Foundation. Areas of recent focus include water quality, aircraft noise, deer control and the density of real estate development in the village.

This type of advocacy is one of the principal ways the VPS serves the community. Please take the time to complete the survey and write in any other issues of importance to you or further comments you wish us to consider.

VILLAGE DEER STERILIZATION PROGRAM UPDATE

By Polly Bruckmann

The deer sterilization program, which began in the Village in 2015, appears to be stalled. The Village Board has apportioned \$50,000 in this year's budget for deer management purposes, but presently no plan for how those funds are to be used is known.

In 2014, the Village Preservation Society launched a "Spay-A-Doe" campaign raising \$100,000 to help the Village launch the first of what was expected to be a five-year plan to reduce the Village herd through sterilization. Both genders have been neutered and estimates are that approximately half of the Village herd has been sterilized to date. The first two phases of the program were completed in the same calendar year with good results. During Phase II, potential complications of spaying pregnant does was avoided by moving the program to the fall before the rut.

The Society views deer sterilization as the most humane way to deal with the lack of habitat that the current deer population, no matter its number, needs and cannot find. With diminishing habitat, deer are over-browsing the few remaining forests in East Hampton. As those lands become stripped of vegetation and can no longer support deer dietary needs, the animals are then forced into residential communities to feed on ornamental plantings, creating more opportunity for vehicular accidents as well. Populations of ground nesting birds and other species dependent upon the plants the deer eat cannot breed and their populations are diminishing significantly where they once flourished.

We see deer sterilization as a compromise between those who would support a cull and those who think the deer should be left alone.

As part of our community outreach and education, the VPS has revived its Quality of Life survey, found within this publication. On it are questions regarding the Village deer management program. Please take a moment to give us your feedback on that and other important issues for quality of life for Village residents.

Village Preservation Society of East Hampton 2016 Quality of Life Survey

1. The current Village deer sterilization program being conducted was intended as a compromise between those concerned about damage to our ecosystem, traffic hazards, tick borne disease and animal rights activists. Which option would you prefer?

- The Village does nothing and the deer population continues to grow.
- The Village continues the sterilization program conducted in 2015.
- The Village hires a team to perform a professional cull.

2. Recent water quality reports are disturbing and we know our drinking and surface water bodies are filled with pollutants primarily caused by unfiltered nitrogen from septic discharge and fertilizers. How important is it to you that water quality be remedied?

- Drinking water and surface water body purity is very important to me.
- Drinking water and surface water body purity is moderately important to me.
- Drinking water and surface water body purity is of little importance to me.

3. Aircraft noise disturbances from jets, helicopters and seaplanes continue to affect quality of life for Village residents. Are you disturbed by aircraft noise events?

- I am very disturbed by aircraft noise impacts.
- I am moderately disturbed by aircraft noise impacts.
- I hardly notice aircraft noise, but have sympathy for those who do.
- Aircraft noise does not affect my quality of life.

4. Do you feel safe or unsafe traveling Village streets and roads by:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Safe | Unsafe | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bike |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | As a pedestrian |

5. Do you feel Village beaches are clean and well maintained during the summer season?

- I find Village beaches are generally clean and well maintained.
- I sometimes find Village beaches are not as clean as expected.
- I often find Village beaches untidy and poorly maintained.
- I believe the Village should increase the frequency of trash collection at Village Beaches.

6. Do you feel there are enough public transportation options for Village residents?

- Yes, I find enough transportation options to suit my needs.
- I need more transportation options to allow me to safely and efficiently move about the Village and Town.
- We need local rail and bus service to support the travel needs of Village residents both within the Village and between hamlets.

7. Regarding local taxi service, please answer all questions below. Please check 'yes' or 'no'.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Yes | No | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel taxi pricing is fair and transparent? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel there are too many taxis on the streets? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel taxi operators generally drive safely and obey the law? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Should the Village regulate taxi pricing? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Should the Village permit ride sharing services to operate in the Village? |

8. Do you feel there is enough public parking for Village residents?

- The current parking restrictions work well and need no change.
- Parking hours along Newtown Ln should be expanded in the off-season to permit residents more time to access Village amenities.
- Parking restrictions should be eliminated altogether.
- The Village should only allow parking in public lots for Village residents by means of a resident permit, like those used for Village beaches.

Please use the space below to add any additional comments or offer other issues of concern not addressed by our Survey. Thank you for participating in our survey.

Please tear out page, fold, affix tape to close and mail back.

THE VILLAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

P.O. Box 2015
East Hampton, NY 11937

AIRCRAFT NOISE UPDATE

By Peter M. Wolf

Increased aircraft traffic at East Hampton Airport this summer continues to burden Village residents with damaging impacts of aircraft noise, destroying the peaceful enjoyment of home and property for residents across the East End. The Town's efforts to protect the public from noise by adopting reasonable access limits to aircraft accessing East Hampton Airport in 2015 have been delayed by legal challenges from aviation interests. Because of this, the new curfew has only intensified aircraft noise impacts by creating a window between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m., when aircraft meeting the Town's liberal definition of 'Noisy' aircraft are permitted to fly. An appeal of a preliminary injunction against the Town's critical 'once-per-week' rule was heard in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in June. A ruling is expected before year-end.

The former members of the Town's Airport Planning, Noise

Sub-Committee have reconvened, independent of the Town, to review next steps for reducing noise impacts at East Hampton Airport (HTO). Presently, the Town is taking no formal steps to anticipate the future regarding additional access limits to protect the public from noise. These could include: an expanded curfew and revision of the definition of 'Noisy' to include seaplanes, a loophole created when the Town abandoned the Noise Sub-Committee's recommendation to use three noise metrics instead of the one currently in place. This metric does not capture seaplanes, for which traffic has increased substantially since the Town's new rules have been put in place.

The Town is still dependent upon the noise affected public to report aircraft noise complaints, which can be logged online at: www.planenoise.com/khto/ or phoned in to: 1-800-367-4817.

WELCOME TO SUMMER PARTY

By Melissa Egbert Sheehan

On June 11th, we had our annual "Welcome to Summer" Cocktail party for our members at the Maidstone Tennis House. The weather was beautiful and the party is always a great way to celebrate the beginning of summer and let our members know what we have been working on as an organization. Our Chairman, John L. McGuirk, III,

welcomed the 150 guests attending. The hors d'oeuvres were delicious and made by each of our Trustees, which everybody always enjoys. We look forward to having another party next June!



Photo credit: Kathleen Cunningham

VPS Members and guests enjoy the lovely surroundings at the Tennis House during the annual Welcome to Summer Party.



Photo credit: Kathleen Cunningham

VPS Trustees (left to right), Joan Osborne, Mary Busch and Gene Cross at the VPS Welcome to Summer Party on June 11, 2016.