COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on Wednesday, February 16, 2005.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Theresa Elkowitz, Chairperson Larry Swanson, Vice-Chairperson Thomas Cramer Michael Kaufman Adrienne Esposito Lance Mallamo Nancy Manfredonia Legislator Jay H. Schneiderman, Second District

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

James Bagg, Chief Environmental Analyst/Department of Planning Penny Kohler, Department of Planning Richard Martin, Historic Services Charles Bender, Aide to PO's Office Ron Warren, Assistant Director, DPW Nick Gibbons, Suffolk County Parks Kevin LaValle, Aide to Leg. Losquadro Joy Squires, CAC Huntington

MINUTES TAKEN AND TRANSCRIBED BY:

Diana Kraus - Court Stenographer

(THE MEETING CONVENED AT 9:35 AM)

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Good morning. I'm going to call the meeting of February 16th, 2005 CEQ to order. We don't have minutes. I don't have correspondence except that which relates to projects that we're reviewing.

Ratification of staff recommendations for legislative resolutions laid on the table January 25th and February 15th. Jim, is there anything you'd like to call to the Council's attention?

MR. BAGG:

Yes, there's one resolution in the packet -- it's in the second packet. It's resolution number 1126 of '05. And it deals with appropriating funds in connection with storm remediation improvements in the Town of Southampton involving construction. It's \$462,500. And probably is an unlisted action or a Type I that needs an EAF.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay. Anything else?

MR. BAGG:

That's all.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Any questions from the Council?

MR. CRAMER:

Motion to accept staff recommendations?

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a motion. Do I have a second?

MR. KAUFMAN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Second by Mr. Kaufman. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Carried.

Next item. Proposed Suffolk County Sewer District Laboratory, Capital Project 8166, Suffolk County. Is there anybody here to speak on this? I have a letter from Mr. Wright.

"The referenced Capital Project is to purchase laboratory equipment for the Sanitation Division Laboratory located at Bergen Point. This memo is to request your concurrence that the request for equipment funds is a Type II action in accordance with 6NYCRR Part 617. As with previous requests, we have assumed that the activities for which we will be initiating are defined under 7.5 (c) (25) which is the purchase of equipment other than those listed in Part 617, i.e., radioactive material, hazardous materials, etc.

Jim, did you check this citation? Let me just check the citation. The citation is correct.

Anybody have any questions? I'll entertain a motion for Type II.

MR. CRAMER:

Motion.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a motion by Mr. Cramer, second by Mr. Kaufman. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Carried.

Next. Proposed Police Additional Data Storage, CP 3236, Suffolk County. Is there anybody here to speak on this? Okay.

"Per the 2005 adopted capital budget, the Police Depart met is currently preparing the appropriating resolutions for the following capital projects. CP 3236. This project will provide 128 gigabyte of additional capacity to accommodate projected growth as well as migrating other applications to our current computer storage architecture. This is being accomplished through the use of EMC Symmetrix disk systems. This equipment is the same as that used by the County's Information Service group in Hauppuage."

So, this is another purchase of equipment. So, it'll be the same citation as the prior 6NYCRR 617 (c) (25). And it would be a Type II Action. Do I have a motion?

MR. CRAMER:

Motion.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a motion by Mr. Cramer, second Mr. Kaufman. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Carried.

The next one's on the same memorandum. Capital Program 3505, laser measuring equipment. "This project will replace the existing laser measuring equipment used by crime scene section personnel to document crime scenes and prepare diagrams." I believe the same citation 6NYCRR 617.5 (c) (25).

MR. CRAMER:

Motion.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a motion by Mr. Cramer, second by Mr. Kaufman. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Carried.

Proposed improvements to Sewer District 10, Capital Program 8175, Stony Brook, Town of Brookhaven. Is there anyone here to speak on this? Please come forward to the microphone. State your name. Please come and just give a brief presentation as to what you're trying to do.

MR. WARREN:

I'm Ron Warren. I'm the Assistant Director of Operation Maintenance for the Sanitation Division. I'm here for any questions or --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Could you just -- you're calling it -- the project is called proposed improvements Sewer District

10. But it seems to be affecting three pump stations within Sewer District 10. Is that what it is?

MR. WARREN:

Yes. The stations are in excess of forty years old. Deterioration of metal and concrete. It may be necessary to install additional wells and such. But it's all on existing property. There is no, you know -- it's all going to be done within the existing pump station boundaries.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right. You're not doing it to expand the capacity of the system --

MR. WARREN:

No.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

-- or expand the capacity of pump stations? All you're doing is to upgrade and to maintain --

MR. WARREN:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

-- the pump station?

MR. WARREN:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

And you're replacing equipment? Just give me a little description of what you're doing at the pump station. Because I'm not sure this isn't a Type II Action. Go ahead; keep going.

MR. WARREN:

We have -- at each -- typically there's two wells. One is made of steel -- a steel shell. And that takes the equipment. The other is a concrete well. That's where the sewage flows into -- so the one pumps from that well to another one. We're upgrading the concrete well so we can install pumps into it and not have another two wells. We'll just have one. So, it's just really an improvement, a modernization. This is the -- you know, this is how they're typically done these days.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

So, you're going to be consolidating two pump station wells into one? Is that what you're doing?

MR. WARREN:

Right. Right.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay.

MR. WARREN:

And we're putting -- we're putting the pumps -- they're submersible. Pumps. Right now they are not submersible so we're going to put them inside the wet well.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay.

MR. WARREN:

With the sewage. So, it's a modernization, really. And we're going to put the controls above

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grade. You know, we're buying controls, generators and pumps. And then we're going to install them inside the well.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Does anybody have questions. I'll entertain a motion.

MR. CRAMER:

Unlisted neg dec.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a motion.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Carried. Okay. Thanks.

Next. Proposed limiting non-essential use of toxic chemical pesticides in Suffolk County. Is there anybody here to speak on this? Do we have any idea -- here we are. Hello, Mr. Schneiderman. We're up to you in your pesticide bill. Your timing is impeccable. Good morning. How are you? You've been busy.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I've been spending a lot of time in this room. Too much time.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

We actually are up to your agenda item. It think it actually may be a Type I Action.

MR. BAGG:

I didn't list the type of action. I just filled out the EAF for it.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I believe it's a Type I Action.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Do you want me to explain what it is?

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Yes, I think so.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

The bill puts limits on non-essential uses of pesticides containing known or suspected carcinogens and several other acute human toxins; neuro-toxins, endocrine disrupters, reproductive toxins. And it basically -- there's actually a newer version of this, which prohibits the sale of -- the version that you have prohibits the use. A newer version prohibits both the use and the sale only because it was hard to enforce the use because you have to go to somebody's house to test the lawn. Enforcing it at the point of sale makes it much easier. It would limit the use of these more toxic chemicals only to licensed applicators. And it would put -- and even licensed applicators could not use these chemicals for basically aesthetic purposes if the primary goal is an aesthetic one. There are exemptions for infestation if there's going to be substantial loss or damage to the value of the tree or shrub. But -- and there are also -- you know, it's really tailored toward lawns and gardens. It's doesn't affect things like swimming pools, you know, if somebody's putting a fungicide into a swimming pool, it wouldn't affect it.

Not that that chemical's a good chemical; this is really specific to lawn pesticides. And I can't see it having a negative environmental impact. The whole reason behind this bill is to protect the environment, and to protect public health, to keep chemicals from coming into contact through inhalation, through skin contract, through drinking water. Chemicals that the EPA classifies as known or suspected acute human toxins. And we all know that Suffolk County faces -- well, it depends upon a sole source aquifer for our clean drinking water. We know that he have elevated breast cancers rates. We have several unexplained yet documented cancer clusters. And basically it's a precautionary measure to limit the amount of toxins in our environment by eliminating uses that are not justifiable.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I just looked at the Type I. I actually don't think it meets any of the criteria for Type I Action. I can go over them with anybody if you want me to and we can decide collectively. But Type I Action, the adoption of a municipality's land use plan, the adoption by any agency of a comprehensive resource management plan or the initial adoption of a municipality's comprehensive zoning regulation. The second is the adoption of changes in the allowable uses within any zoning district. Not that. The granting of zoning change. It's none of that. The next one has to do with acquisition, sale, lease and annexation of transfer of a thousand units -- I'm sorry. A 100 or more acres of land. Next one deals with residential units.

Next one deals with activities. This is an activity. "Other than the construction of residential facilities that meet or exceed any of the following thresholds or the expansion of existing non-residential facilities by more than fifty percent of the any of the following thresholds. First threshold. A project or action that involves the physical alteration of ten acres. Project or action that would use ground or surface water in excess of two million gallons per day. Parking for a thousand vehicles. In a city, town or village having a population of 150,000 persons or less. Should be fewer. A facility with more than 150,000 square feet of gross floor area. The last one is in a city, town or village having a population of more than 150,000 persons, a facility with more than 240,000 square feet.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So, it's not that.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay. Any structure exceeding -- it's not a structure. Any unlisted action that includes a non-agricultural use occurring wholly or partially within an agricultural district. This isn't a use. Any unlisted action occurring wholly or partially within or substantially contiguous to any historic building, structure or facility site or district or pre-historic site that's listed on the National Register, et cetera, et cetera. Any unlisted action that exceeds 25% of any threshold in this section -- this doesn't meet anything in this action -- occurring wholly or partially within a substantially contiguous to any publically owned or operated parkland, et cetera. Any unlisted action that exceeds a Type I threshold established by an involved agency.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Not that one.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

No. So, I think it's an unlisted action.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN: Right.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Does anybody have any questions or any discussion?

MR. SWANSON:

I like the intent of the bill, but I'm concerned that the wording is not sufficiently careful; that it's eventually going to be degraded to the point that it's meaningless with exemptions and things like that. Also, I think some of the definitions should probably be looked at a little more carefully. For example, the use of the word contaminants, instead of pollutant. Contaminants typically don't have the raised background. They don't have environmental impact. Pollutant does. And I think careful review by a scientist or two could strengthen the bill so that it doesn't go through, for example, what we went through with the exemptions with the plastic law.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I appreciate those comments. The newer copy, I have redone several of the definitions, if I could clarify things. Some of the exemptions for infestations are more clearly defined. Different thresholds established for trees and shrubs and for lawns. So, the newer version, I think, is better. But, you know, I will continue to look at it. And I appreciate that. And hopefully the bill that does pass, if it does pass, will be the best -- better than the bill in front of you. I think it will -- I've been meeting with various cancer prevention groups and environmental groups and landscaping groups. As I do, I think the bill improves. So --

MR. SWANSON:

I think my concern is that this bill being as innovative as it is, is going to draw the industry here to tear it apart.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Absolutely.

MR. SWANSON:

And we have to be prepared -- you have to be prepared for that. And the more that you can clean it up, make it crisp, the better likelihood it will be meaningful by the time it gets passed.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. And I want a position the bill could survive any potential legal challenges as well.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a question, though; a SEQRA question. Obviously the bill is not in its final form. And the SEQRA recommendation is supposed to be on the bill that the Legislature is going to act upon. So --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

We can hold off, then, on making a SEQRA determination.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Until you have a bill in final form?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Based on the fact the bill is being changed. You might want to consult Counsel, though to -- you know, to get a determination of that because substantively the goal is the same of the bill. There may be some changes in the enforcement of the bill, but it still is prohibiting the same group of chemicals.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right. But it's still -- even if this was a subdivision, forget about it being a bill -- let's assume we were a planning board and this were a subdivision, you're not supposed to make a SEQRA recommendation while people are still -- even though we're going to have ten lots, you can't be tweaking the size of the lots to the configuration of the road. You have to be making the SEQRA recommendation -- SEQRA determination on the subdivision in its final form. So, it does matter. This is the only statute in the State of New York that requires literal compliance.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'm okay if you want to hold off until after --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I mean I'm assuming that --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- the final version of the bill.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

-- nobody has any SEQRA issues with this. And that -- yes? You want to say something?

MR. BAGG:

Terry, the Council makes a recommendation to the Legislature. And SEQRA isn't finalized until such time as the final bill comes out.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

But I don't want to speak for the other people around of me. There may be a change that might change somebody's opinion. And I have a sneaking suspicion that this may be challenged legally.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

And if it's going to be challenged legally, I'd rather make sure that I don't have to give an affidavit that says, no, I didn't see the bill in its final form but I had the Council make a recommendation on it. I'd rather say the bill was in its final form, and we all reviewed it and, you know, deliberated on it.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I think that makes sense.

MR. MALLAMO:

Motion to table.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a motion to table.

MR. CRAMER:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I have a second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Carried.

If you could give us -- I don't know if it's possible for your staff when you ultimately bring it just to do a redline copy between this and that? That way it will go real quick. Everybody can just quickly look at what the changes are, determine, I would hope, that they're not significant and the just move on? And then we'll do it real quickly because I don't want to hold up your vote.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I don't have the final form yet.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right, I know.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'm waiting for comments. Maybe even from some people on this board.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay. I'm sure Larry might have something to say, too.

Okay.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Legally he can't tell me.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Sure, he can.

Historic Services.

MR. MARTIN:

Okay. There's a report on our Historic Trust Committee meeting. We met out at Manorville with the Manorville Historic Society on February 8th. And we learned more of the history of the _Stemler_ property which is a complex of three buildings and a barn and within the Robert Cushman Murphy County Park. And also the history of the Davis property, which consists of four buildings just south of Swan Pond within Robert Murphy County Park. And the Davis property relates to the Davis bog business that was there, which was the last operating Cranberry bog in Suffolk County before it closed. And then the County actually bought the property from the golf course development corporation, the Swan Pond Golf Course Company.

So, after we learned more of the history, the Committee went out and toured the two sites. And what we're doing now is taking a look at the buildings that were under the jurisdiction of the Friends for Long Island Heritage under their housing program. Check the conditions of the buildings at this point and also to take a detailed review of the buildings for possible historic trust designation. So, that's why we're setting up these tours. The tour took place there. And the next meeting is scheduled for April 8th in Southaven County Park. And we'll be looking at two buildings within that park. And also three buildings south of Montauk Highway in Southaven, which were originally part of the Robinson duck farm property. And it'll be going through the whole year, review all these sites. We're still gathering historic information in our office to provide the Committee members. And then we'll sit down at the end of this time period and decide which ones we think should be -- go to a highest status. I don't know if Lance from that tour would like to make some comments about the meeting.

MR. MALLAMO:

Well, this was a very productive -- we're calling it our listening tour. We're listening to the buildings. And I think the Committee is very much engaged and involved in this process. We're meeting much more frequently. But there are very real concerns. When we had met with the Park Commissioner, I guess, back in October 7, Rich, was that? We heard, you know, his concept for how the County was going to assume more responsibility with these buildings. And everyone wants to see that succeed. But there are concerns that the priorities are being met and that the needs are being met. I know I was surprised last week when one of the buildings that I new had had damage before now has really horrendous damage with huge holes in the roof of the building. And it doesn't look like there's any action taking place to correct that. So, what I was asked to bring to the Council a request that the Council request a letter to be sent to the Park Commissioner outlining the concerns of the Committee. And if we can have a plan of action that can be achieved by this coming fall, by October on how we're going to address this problem, which seems to grow with each meeting that we go to and each tour that we take. So, I have not yet drafted one up for Terry's review but I will be doing that shortly.

As long as that's the Council's will, I'm happy to do it. Does anybody have any commentary on this?

MS. MANFREDONIA:

Well, I just want to second what Lance said. In fact, I would be a little stronger that -- the Committee is extremely concerned about the future of our historic properties under the system that's been developed now. I believe -- Rich, which -- was it the Elwood School House disaster?

MR. MARTIN:

Yes.

MS. MANFREDONIA:

You might want to mention that.

MR. MARTIN:

Okay. The Elwood School House, we're not sure how, but the boiler was shut down. And we did have a freeze in January where the pipes burst and extensive damage to the building, especially the floor. The original wood floors buckled and have to be replaced. And so that just rose a red flag of the concern of these vacant buildings that are in the Parks Department.

MS. MANFREDONIA:

And I think from what we could see, we just don't think that there's a proper communication system going on. And we're still very concerned about the fact that the money from the rents will be going to the General Fund. And already the amount of money that we thought would be needed to take care of the properties is not going to be forthcoming, you know. It's already been cut. So, I think that's a bad sign for the future. And I'm extremely concerned since we are responsible for the historic properties of the County that we do something quickly before this non-system gets entrenched. That's my opinion.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Although, I've been here, I guess, for 14 years now. Is this the problem that occurred that caused us to get an outside contractor to address, which we are now experiencing because we no longer have that outside contractor managing this building? Is history repeating itself is basically my questions?

MS. MANFREDONIA:

Yes.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, I would agree there. I know that there has been talk of developing another private partnership. And we hope that something like that succeeds because this is a massive undertaking.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

We have a lot of buildings.

MR. MALLAMO:

We have many more buildings than we had fifteen years ago. And let's put aside for a moment just the restoration and maintenance needs. Let's take about the security needs. As we understood if, the Elwood problem came to light when the water finally came out of the building, out onto the grounds. And neighbors noticed it. And knowing that site, there really aren't any

meet neighbors. So, I'm wondering what must have it taken to attract attention to this. I think we want to be assured that there's a system in place that buildings, particularly vacant buildings, are being monitored and just not responded to when a crisis happens.

MR. KAUFMAN:

It's not just necessarily a question -- I'm not sure if this thing's on -- but it's not just necessarily some of the vacant buildings. I've been hearing rumblings that some of the occupied buildings, for example, maintenance schedules have been deferred very heavily. I mean we've got to do something as the Historic Trust to try and make sure that these buildings don't collapse. We have put in -- the County has put in more than enough money over the years get these buildings up and going. And it would be a crime or a crying shame, whatever you want to say, to suddenly take that money away and suddenly watch the buildings start crumbling again. I mean, historic buildings need to have an assured stream of income one way or the other just about every year. I mean they're not like regular houses. They have a tendency to need more maintenance each and every year. We can't put it off.

MS. SQUIRES:

Thank you. Two questions. One regarding funding stream. And the other is I wonder if you could address the Coindrie Hall Boathouse and what's happening with that.

In regard to the funding, I thought that the funding that came in from the facilities, I thought that it went into a dedicated fund to be reused? Because I thought we had --

MR. MARTIN:

Joy, under the Friends' Program, it did work that way. Now, all the funds generally go to the Suffolk County General Fund.

MS. SQUIRES:

I understand, because we structure in Huntington. We structured -- we've re-structured everything. So, it's going into a dedicated fund. In fact, everything goes specifically to the place -- you know, any funds generated go directly to that. And we kind of follow that from Lance's direction. You know, we looked at what he said are the problems. And we restructured. So, that's not true now in the County?

MR. MARTIN:

Right.

MS. SQUIRES:

I understand. And then could you talk about the Coindre Hall Boathouse and what's happening with that.

MR. MARTIN:

Sure. Just to respond to Mike's comment, just so that everybody knows, there are five additional maintenance staff that the Parks Department is looking to hire to compensate in a sense for the loss of the Friends' program. Those people have not been hired yet. So that paper work --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

One would have thought that prudent management would have dictated that you would have gotten your staff in place before you would have gotten rid of who's been managing these building for all these years as opposed to leaving buildings unattended and having floods that are affecting neighbors.

MR. MARTIN:

Yes.

Okay.

MS. ESPOSITO:

Thank you, Terry,

MR. MARTIN:

Joy, with Coindre Hall, what happened up there, the town had appropriated \$600 thousand to build a new boathouse on the adjoining beach property that the town owns. The residents were upset at the location of that building and the design of that building. So, they approached the County to possibly -- it's just early discussion phase -- have that money be channeled towards the restoration of the existing Coindre Hall Boathouse on the County property. And that -- of course we would need additional monies, probably at least another 600 thousand from the County to go ahead with that restoration project. But that's the idea that's being floated out there right now. But there's nothing in writing; no agreement at this point.

MS. SQUIRES:

Would that begin to be enough money?

MR. MARTIN:

Yes, to start.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Do the Parks Trustees have any influence over what's going on with this?

MR. MARTIN:

They can bring up their concerns, of course. That's part of their role.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right. That is part of their role just like it's part of the Historic Trust role?

MR. MARTIN:

Sure. Sure. And I do address the trustees from time to time when concerns like this come up and I have questions.

MS. MANFREDONIA:

I'm extremely concerned about this. And I would appreciate it if everyone agrees that Lance should write a letter to the Commissioner. But I don't want this to go on much longer because obviously this could be a real disaster. And -- I mean other things that I've heard, too. I don't know what's happened with the whole rent situation, but the tenant at the Blydenburg Weld House received a letter asking him for back utilities from last year. There was never any indication that he was supposed to pay utilities. So -- and this is -- it just seems like it's going to be more and more chaos. And before we go any further, I think we really need to make our voices heard. This is not working so far.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Jay, do you have any information on this at all?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Have you heard these horror stories?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No. You want --

You are.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'm hearing them now.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

But this thing at the Elwood School House, I mean that's kind of -- did you hear that? Do you want to just relate that because I think Jim was out of the room.

MR. MALLAMO:

Well, to give the Parks Department its due, accidents do happen. But what -- well, Rich you can describe exactly what happened to that building.

MR. MARTIN:

Yeah. We're not sure how, but the boiler was shut down in the building. This the Elwood School House. It's in Elwood off of Jericho Turnpike on Cuba Hill Road. And it's a two-story frame school house from about 1910.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

The County owns the building?

MR. MARTIN:

Yes. It's a two acre site. In a sense a pocket park that the County purchased. And the school had been rented out for a longtime to the Huntington Art League. They vacated the building about a year or two ago. They constructed a new building for themselves. And we've been looking for a new tenant. And within this time the Friends' program was canceled. And now the County will be looking for a tenant for the building. But in January the pipes burst in the building causing extensive damage including the buckling of the floors, which will need to be replaced.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Because the boiler was off.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

The boiler was off.

MS. SQUIRES:

And the way they found out is the water was pouring out of the building.

MR. MALLAMO:

Not just out of the boiler; out of the building.

MR. KAUFMAN:

The point is there was no one watching the maintenance that was going one.

MR. BAGG:

Yeah. I think the Committee said, also, that -- I mean if you have vacated buildings, it is prudent in terms of maintenance to turn the water off.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Well, absolutely.

MR. BAGG:

You know. And it doesn't really take that much effort to send somebody over to do that.

But this goes to a systemic problem, I mean. And that was my question. And, you know me, I've very bottom line. And the answer was yes. Are we seeing the same problems we saw before the County decided to get the Friends? And the answer was yes. So, now I'm hearing about larger holes in roofs. What building was that?

MR. MALLAMO:

That's the house at Swan Pond. What's the name of that?

MR. MARTIN:

We've nicknamed it the Benjamin House.

MR. MALLAMO:

It looks like the Benjamin House in Old Bethpage Village.

MR. MARTIN:

Oh, is that why?

MR. MALLAMO:

I think it was Seven Oaks Farm.

MR. MARTIN:

Seven Oaks Farm, I know, was the Davis property. There's been a problem. The Friends were trying to restore it. We did put a roof on half of the building. It needs a lot more work to it. And they were not able to go ahead with the restoration. And so now that it's back in the County's hands, we need to go ahead.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I'm going to ask you the obvious question just because I want it on the record. Do you have enough staff to maintain, manage, inspect and supervise all these buildings?

MR. MARTIN:

No.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay. I mean, that's the point.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So, it becomes both a managerial question and a budgetary question.

MR. MALLAMO:

Right.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And this came up for me with Third House out in Montauk, which to me is a really important building. It's, you know, one of the oldest houses on Long Island. The County owns it. It was raining inside and being destroyed. And now it's -- the Park Manager used to live in the building. Nobody can live there now. And I've been working very hard to get the funding in place to fix this building. But obviously if the County's going to take on these types of responsibilities, it has a responsibility to maintain those buildings. And the question is has the County taken on more than it can handle? Do we need to, you know, evaluate the management structure within the Parks Department to make sure we have adequate people? This really is something that belongs in the Parks Committee, not in CEQ. I think it's important to bring to light here, but I think it has to be in front of the Parks Committee. The Parks Commissioner needs to be able to respond to this. And the Legislature needs -- if it turns out that it's not a management issue but a resource issue, then, it has to be addressed in the budget cycle.

I think it's two things, actually, Jay. The first thing is, and you may not know this, we actually in addition to being the CEQ, we are the County's Historic Trust. So, we are responsible for these buildings. The second issue is -- and on the record -- I have absolutely no relationship with the Friends for Long Island Heritage. I couldn't tell you if they do good job, a bad job, if their books were proper or not proper. The only thing that I am bringing to light, and I think I'm speaking for everybody on the Council, is that -- and this pre-dated me, so it was longer than 14 years ago, there was a problem as the County started acquiring historic buildings. They couldn't maintain them. So, they brought on a third party. The third party maintains them. For whatever reason Friends' fault, County fault -- I don't care whose fault -- there was a very big problem.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

This is Friends of Long Island Heritage?

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Yes. They were dismissed. And maybe they were dismissed appropriately. I have no opinion on it. All I know is that now we have a very serious problem with maintenance of the buildings that we didn't have when we had a third party. And part of the reason is, when we had the third party, the money kept going back into the buildings. Now the money's going into the General Fund. So, we have two problems. I think it's personnel. And I also think it's the way the money is now being allocated into the General Fund as opposed to perpetuate these buildings.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. Yeah, I don't think the County can manage these buildings. I think we do need to go back to a model where we outsource that. We took over the St. James General Store, you know, where the County is ordering licorice. I mean this is not a function that the County should be in.

MR. MALLAMO:

Well, this is what that third party was doing. They managed the store.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I realize that. I mean we have other things that we ought to be doing on than inventorying the general store.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right. But I think the problem that Nancy's bringing up is that there's an urgency to this because these buildings are old.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No. And I appreciate you bringing this to my attention. I think you should write a strong letter to the Park Commissioner. CC one to me as the head of the Parks Committee. And I will bring Mr. Foley -- he really should be here. I'm sorry I forgot that other function of CEQ. I'm kind of new. So, we should ask the Commissioner to be here at our next meeting to answer these questions.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

That is a very good idea because we -- what we were trying to do was to not take a position on whether it was a good or bad thing with the Friends, because quite honestly I don't know what went on. I know what a read in the paper. I know what I heard anecdotally. But I don't know what the truth is.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It's not our position to advocate for a particular agency.

Absolutely. And we talked about having the Parks Commissioner here, but we wanted to give everybody a few months to see if maybe he really did have it under control and things were going to be okay. But I think that now is the appropriate time to have him come. And --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. The cracks are beginning to show literally.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

And I think that if the letter could be done prior, I would appreciate it.

MS. ESPOSITO:

And I think the other thing to notice is that cracks are beginning to show and Friends was just dismissed, I mean, relatively speaking not that long ago. So, all of this has happened in a short period of time. So, we really don't want to continue to wait.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

And we have so many more buildings.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I had actually asked the Commissioner at one point if they had a maintenance schedule list for all the historic buildings. And apparently none exists. So, they really do need to do a full -- you know, bring in an outside consultant and do a structural analysis of all the important County historical buildings.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

How many buildings do we have?

MR. MARTIN:

Which -- just so you know -- that has been requested in the county budget \$200,000 to do that type of study.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Oh, good. It needs to be done. It seems the County tends to finally or very late address these issues when it costs far more now to fix the problem than if they would have done some basic preventive, like patching the roof in Third House. Now that the water's inside it, it's far more extensive damage.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I mean, look, this is Monday morning quarterback clearly, but it would have made sense to me if you had a management structure before you dismissed Friends. Because then we wouldn't leave these buildings open to all of this.

MR. MALLAMO:

And if we remember the past, the issue at Luckduck Lodge in Flanders where in one weekend we had \$300,000 worth of vandalism occur. And no one even new it occurred because it was at an interior location. So, I'm wondering if this is what we know about what's happening that we're not -- we don't know about.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Well, it would be nice to start out with a list of all the historic buildings and maybe some priorities in terms of which are the most important historically.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Maybe you could share this with the Parks Commissioner. And Lance will write the letter inviting the Parks Commissioner to discuss this at the next meeting and you'll be copies on the

letter as well.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Joy.

MS. SQUIRES:

I'm dealing with one town with much of the same issues and some of the same problems. To me, to think of the whole County is just over -- to me overwhelming. We keep making mistakes and keep getting into trouble. And it's just one town. But how are five people going to be enough? What I'm -- I'm sitting and thinking that I know that you're asking for five, but maybe you should ask for considerably more.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Yes, but, Joy, to be honest with you I think -- and this is only personal experience --

MS. SQUIRES:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I think that you get many more private people for the same money that you get five County people.

MS. SQUIRES:

Got it. Okay, I understand what you're saying.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

That's true.

MR. MALLAMO:

And it's my understanding that the five people that have been requested are already in the budget.

MR. MARTIN:

Yes, they're actually filling existing vacancies.

MR. MALLAMO:

So, those vacancies were there before this program was ever eliminated.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right.

MR. MALLAMO:

And those employees when they're hired, will not report to Historic Services Division, is that --

MR. MARTIN:

No. They'll report to the General Maintenance Division.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

And the other issue is the money going into the General Fund because the money going into the General Fund is clearly not going to be allocated to these buildings.

MS. ESPOSITO:

And try getting it back from the General Fund once it goes in.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right. Jim, you had something to say?

MR. BAGG:

I was just going to point out that the proposed people for hiring are not going to be exclusively used for maintenance in the Historic Trust buildings. They're going to be used in the entire Parks system.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

And, you know, the other thing, and this is only my personal opinion, is I read -- if what I read was true, I read that there was criticism about the low rates of rent that we were charging people that were living in these County buildings. But these people that were living in these County buildings were monitoring that the boiler went -- was on. And that the pipe weren't freezing. So, these people were providing a valuable service --

MS. ESPOSITO:

Doing a job.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

In exchange for this. So, if what I read was true, this kind of rhetoric is really, you know, not useful and it's not accurate.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Terry? Just to amplify on that particular point, the market rent situation was such that the leases that the occupants of the historic buildings were getting were actually not real leases. They were licenses cancellable upon thirty day notices -- upon thirty day notice rather.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

But whatever it is, I think somebody has to get to the -- you see, Mike, I have a problem with -you're speaking from a vantage point. And I think that everybody here has to know it and it has to be on the record because you were on the board of The Friends. And I understand --

MR. KAUFMAN:

I know. At the request of the County Parks Commissioner.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I understand that. But that brings a vantage point with the rest of us don't have and that I actually don't want in the discussion.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay? And the reason why I don't want it, is I don't want it to be The Friends' perspective. I want it to be the Historic Trust perspective.

MR. KAUFMAN:

And that's actually where I was trying to come from.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I understand. But the problem is, it's just like if I were to be sitting here talking about a developer's perspective, even though I may be absolutely right, I'm not going to have the same credibility as Larry would have or Lance would have. So, I'd like to keep it off of the person who sat on the board. Larry.

MR. SWANSON:

Perhaps to get people's attention, there should be a proposal to have a moratorium on purchases of new property until they have an adequate management structure in place.

MS. SQUIRES:

Larry, you can't do that because then you lose -- if you don't -- if you don't buy when you can, you lose it for all time.

MR. SWANSON:

You're losing now.

MS. SQUIRES:

But there's hope. There's got to be hope. I would recommend that Mr. Schneiderman introduce some kind of legislation to have the funding source go directly into the buildings or into the Historic Trust buildings rather than into the General Fund. There's got to be some way to do that legislatively.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I think there has to be a two prong thing. Because to just have the money there and not have anybody know how to spend it, where to spend it, why to spend it doesn't do it. I think that we have to figure out how to manage -- inventory these buildings, manage these buildings and fund the buildings as I think we thought we did 15 or 18 or however many years ago it was.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Terry, I would like to say one thing to -- in response to what you just said a second ago. And I want this very, very clearly understood. I joined the board of The Friends of Long Island Heritage in March of 2003 at the specific request of Judy Gordon, who was then the County Parks Commissioner.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Okay? It was specifically asked of me as a member of this board, okay. And I want that fully understood. I have since resigned after the Suffolk County -- after Suffolk County ended the contract with The Friends. Within, I think, it was two weeks I resigned from that particular board because my responsibilities lay here as opposed to with The Friends.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right. I understand that. It's just that for the purposes of this, I don't want anybody reading these minutes to get the impression that this is your point of view that's coming across. It's the point of view of the people here that are interested in these historic buildings --

MR. KAUFMAN:

I understand that.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

-- without any affiliation past prior with The Friends.

MR. KAUFMAN:

I understand that.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

That's really my point.

MR. KAUFMAN:

I understand that. As a matter of fact, though, regarding my previous statement, I was actually talking about non-Friends' properties and things like that; stuff that was managed --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right. But you have information about -- you have information at least from the Friends' perspective about rent and terms.

MR. KAUFMAN:

What I'm saying, though, that particular point was not The Friends that I was talking about. This was actually County stuff outside of the Friends program. That's all.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

You had something you wanted to say?

MR. MARTIN:

Terry, if I could clarify that. The point is that County parks properties, you cannot provide a lease. You can only --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I understand.

MR. MARTIN:

So, it's just a 30 day --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

They're all license agreements.

MR. MARTIN:

Yes. Okay. That's both -- all programs.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Right.

MS. ESPOSITO:

Well, it seems that we agree that the proper way to proceed is to write the letter, CC it to Legislator Schneiderman; and then we'll invite the Parks Commissioner to the next meeting.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

We should do that in that letter, I think.

MS. ESPOSITO:

Absolutely.

MR. MALLAMO:

Do you want me to prepare the letter for you, Terry?

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

We can both sign it, if you'd like.

MR. MALLAMO:

That would be fine.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay. Anything else from Historic Services?

MR. MARTIN:

No.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Quickly, Rich, what's the status at Sagtikos Manor? That's the most recently bought. Large property. And I know that there's been talk for a couple of years now about putting heat in to the building. And I know that there were allocations and that there were designs made for it. What's the status at this point?

MR. MARTIN:

Well, the designs are in the process. Actually what's happening is Public Works is just measuring out the building. We have no plans for the building. So, plans need to be done. And then they will come up with recommendations. And I don't know if we're going to be able to do this inhouse or need to hire a consultant to design the system for us. And we do have \$150,000 in capital funds for that project now. I don't know if it'll be enough, but that is in the budget for that site right now.

Otherwise what we've been working on there is to secure the buildings. The main house did --Mr. Gardner did put a roof on it a few years ago. So, that's tight. And we're putting a roof on the garden house and the carriage house right now. So, the buildings will be, you know, tied to the weather. And then we're also putting in a sewer line and upgrading the facility at this point.

MR. KAUFMAN:

The alarm system was put in, I take it?

MR. MARTIN:

Oh, that was done the day we closed.

MR. KAUFMAN:

But, basically now how long has it been since we've been talking about putting heat in there?

MR. MARTIN:

Well, since the beginning. But you need enough funds. And, as Terry mentioned, the staff to do the work and to design this. The funds, I say the 150 were only -- there was 50,000 the first year, a hundred the next year. And we might -- once I get the estimates of the system, we might need more money.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Larry.

MR. SWANSON:

Unrelated to these discussions, there's a tree at Deepwells that's right on the road that is apparently quite old. I don't know. Somebody said several hundred years old. But it's creating a blind spot for people coming up Moriches Road.

MR. MARTIN:

The one opposite the St. James store?

MR. SWANSON:

Yeah. And I just mention it to you in warning that if there's something you can do to make the visibility -- I don't know -- change the entrance to the road or something to preserve the tree, you might consider it because otherwise it may come down.

MR. MARTIN:

I've noticed that since the County purchased the property actually. And I do see it as a problem. And I think -- I don't see how we can work around it except to take that tree down. And I think that's what people have not wanted to do. It's right smack in your sight line.

MS. MANFREDONIA:

There's no way to reconfigure the road?

MR. MARTIN:

The only way to reconfigure it would be to move it over where the tree is. You can't move the road any further. On the other side into the parking area, the entrance to the St. James Store. Because you're also at a drop-off. That road -- Three Sisters Road drops off so you can't really move a road in that area.

MR. MALLAMO:

I know exactly the problem. I agree with Richard, but what I had asked the Town of Smithtown to look at years ago, and maybe now's the time to revisit that, is to perhaps put a stop sign at that location with advance signage further down the road on either side that be prepared to stop ahead. Because that would eliminate the pedestrian hazard from people crossing the street. It would slow traffic down so that you elminate that. And I think it would just make very good logistical sense. We have a public crosswalk there. So, they told me at the time the traffic didn't justify it, but God knows the traffic certainly increased in ten years.

MR. KAUFMAN:

Basically they should go to Commissioner Lynch to put in a warning over there.

MR. MARTIN:

I think there is real concern here.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

What gets you authorized to ask the Town of Smithtown? What does it take to get you authorized to officially ask the Town --

MR. MARTIN:

I'm not sure. I don't see why -- you know, if Lance asked --

MR. MALLAMO:

I think there's a public safety hazard there. And I think if we contacted the town indicated --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Who's we?

MR. MALLAMO:

Well --

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I'm serious. Because something simple like this, Richard can't go to his office and call Commissioner Lynch. Who has the authority to do it?

MR. MALLAMO:

We didn't bring this up in committee but, I think, in our role as the Historic Trust, the preservation of the historic tree and the visitors to Deepwells Farm Historic Park and the General Store is within our realm of interest.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Could somebody draft a letter and I'll sign it as Chairman, if that's the board's --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I was going to suggest the Legislator from Smithtown.

Can you do that?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is it Lynne's district?

MR. MALLAMO:

Right.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So we can convey this. We can write a little note from us to Lynne.

MR. MALLAMO:

Sure, I'd be happy to do that.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Somebody just draft me the letter and --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Let Lynne make the request.

MR. SWANSON:

It may actually all be in Head of the Harbor.

MR. KAUFMAN:

In which case, Larry, you are a trustee of The Head of the Harbor Village. So, ask yourself.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Do we know whose district it is?

MR. SWANSON:

I was told the tree is in the right-of-way of The Head of the Harbor.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yeah, but the store is in Smithtown.

MR. MARTIN:

And the property's County. Where the tree is.

MS. ESPOSITO:

And Lynne Nowick is still the County Legislator of the Head of the Harbor.

MR. KAUFMAN:

I think we need the federal government to intervene on this particular situation.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Let's ask Lynne to look into it.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Yes, I think that's probably the easiest.

MS. MANFREDONIA:

I just have one other quick thing. Rich, the Blydenburg Weldhouse, if somebody doesn't do something, it's going to collapse on the north wall, is it an emergency thing? Can we get something done with that foundation? Work was done there and they just made holes through the foundation and -- forget it.

MR. MARTIN:

I think I need to bring the urgency of this to the Commissioner's office to get this scheduled. I've been trying to get this done for three years. I can just push more and maybe this is something that can be brought up.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

It can be one of the examples in Lance's letter.

MR. MALLAMO:

Right.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ: How's that?

MR. MALLAMO: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Anything else?

MS. MANFREDONIA:

Thank you.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

How about the Scully property? Is that something you're looking at as well?

MR. MARTIN:

Yes. And this just shows you the number of projects that we're working on. The County has identified that as the environmental center for Suffolk County. And it has been given the \$2 million that were appropriated under that bill that was passed in 1998. So, we are working with Public Works to come up with a plan and with the group Seatuck Organization that is proposed to go into the building to come up with a plan to restore the building, provide access to the public, and also to do exhibits at that sight. These funds need to be expended by the end of next year; the end of 2006. So, we're under the gun to get a plan in place and to get this out to bid and get the work done by the end of next year.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is the Scully building a historic building?

MR. MARTIN:

Definitely would qualify. The next -- I need to get the Historic Trust over there just to review it and bring it forward; and also the state representative to declare it eligible to the National Register, which I'm sure it would be. And there's no heat in the building. So, I think after the next meeting, we'll have a late spring/early summer meeting at the Scully estate.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

All right. Anything else?

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes. Can I just ask a question as one who served on the sight committee for that visitors' center. And I don't ever remember going to Islip. How was that decision made to select that

building?

MR. MARTIN:

Suffolk County Legislature.

MR. MALLAMO:

Oh, they did? Okay. Because I thought it was the Pine Barrens Center.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Pretty compelling pitch.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Okay. Any other Historic Trust business? Any CAC concerns?

MS. ESPOSITO:

Just a quick -- will the \$2 million for infrastructure, will that be adequate for that?

MR. MARTIN:

I'm not sure. Public Works is working out a plan. We are looking to have Seatuck hire the architect. And he will be meeting with Public Works to come up with a plan. And then we'll know. And the structure's not in bad shape. You know, so it's just to upgrade it for public access, things we need to do, you know, get new heat and things like that.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

And I didn't mishear you when you said this started in 1998; right?

MR. MARTIN:

Lance, am I correct with that date?

MR. MALLAMO:

Yes, it's got to be.

MR. MARTIN:

It's at least. Right.

MR. MALLAMO:

It may even be '97.

MS. ESPOSITO:

The reason I'm asking about the funding is that it seems like \$2 million should be -- what do I know frankly? But it may be more than adequate to get that building up. And if so, then, what would happen to the balance?

MR. MARTIN:

No.

MS. ESPOSITO:

Could it be used for other buildings.

MR. MARTIN:

No. That money is just to be used for the interpretive center. But it's also to put the exhibits in place.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I don't think \$2 million will be anywhere near enough.

MR. MARTIN:

Right. It's not just for the building. It's to actually create the interpretive center.

MS. ESPOSITO:

Okay.

MR. MALLAMO:

Yeah. There's supposed to be theatre, a gift shop, a classroom.

MR. MARTIN:

Right.

MS. ESPOSITO: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

Forget about the extra.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

MR. CRAMER:

Motion.

MS. MANFREDONIA: Second.

CHAIRPERSON ELKOWITZ:

All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Carried.

(THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 10:26 AM) _DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY_