

Two Historically Significant Flanders Buildings Saved Via CPF Program

A year-end flurry of resolutions passed by the Southampton Town Board on December 21 included several that directed Community Preservation Fund revenues to various ambitious projects and restoration efforts in Flanders, Bridgehampton and elsewhere in the town.

First up was a water quality improvement project associated with the Lobster Inn Marina in Shinnecock Hills, which saw the board direct \$805,650 from the CPF, which can spend up to 20 percent of its reserves on water quality initiatives. Earlier in December, the CPF Water Quality Improvement Advisory Committee had offered support to the tune of \$245,650 to pay for a permeable grass paver parking lot, permeable concrete paver walkways, and a rain garden/bioswale with native plantings.

The Town Board, however, determined that the funding reward for this project was “administrative” and that “the overall project shall be required to fully comply” with State Environmental Quality Review Act requirements. It authorized the comptroller’s office to allocate funding to the Parks and Recreation Department “as a new WQIP contract” and authorized a transfer of \$850,650 from CPF water-quality appropriations “to a newly established water quality capital project.”

The board also voted to sign a grant agreement with the Hampton Bays Beautification Association that will transfer \$32,500 to the association after budgeting that amount to the Hampton Bays Parking District in its 2024 budget. Expenses in that project include “CPF-funded properties to include flagpole area flowers and welcome sign flowers,” according to the resolution authorizing the transfer.

To the north — the Village of North Haven — the board also approved a plan

by the village to “develop a multi-phase passive park system,” that will include three properties purchased by the town via the CPF mechanism going back to 2003. In 2021, the town purchased the former Lovelady Powell property at 19 Sunset Beach Road for \$2.7 million following purchases from 2003-2004 of two Ferry Road properties for \$2.66 million. The board voted to approve a memorandum of understanding with North Haven to develop the park on those three properties.

The board would go on to vote to approve \$300,000 to restore the historic Blue Barn in Flanders, a 19th century carriage barn that is eligible for CPF funds as a historic property restoration. That resolution, sponsored by Councilman Tommy John Schiavoni and outgoing Town Supervisor Jay Schneiderman was met with an enthusiastic response by the rest of the board, all of whom jumped on as co-sponsors before the vote. The barn was previously purchased via the CPF and is located just west of the Big Duck.

The five board members had already co-sponsored another Flanders-based CPF initiative that will direct \$100,000 in CPF property-stewardship program funding to building repairs at Methodist Point, which the town had previously purchased with CPF funds for \$2.4 million. The additional funds will be used to “fully restore select historic structures for use and occupancy by a local steward,” which may wind up being the Flanders Historical Society, which is currently without a home.

And the board voted unanimously — and with four members joining Schneiderman as cosponsors — to deploy \$2.8 million to reconstruct the historic Pyrrhus Concer House in the Village of Southampton. That building received historical landmark status in 2021 and the project will “reconstruct the existing historic structure” while providing an educational and community-based museum for the property.

Board members also voted to direct \$340,000 to restore the Raynor Fish House located on Beaver Dam Creek after purchasing in 2020. That property will fall under the stewardship of the Moriches Bay Project, which will use the

historic former fish house as its permanent home-base for providing educational programs and “continue its mission to improve the quality of the water in local waters in addition to their existing efforts and operations in Moriches Bay and turn it back to its natural state of health.”

Moving from surf to turf, as it were, the December 21 meeting also authorized a big-ticket item, to the tune of \$30 million, to purchase development rights to farmland now owned by the Peconic Land Trust at 181 and 305 Halsey Lane in Bridgehampton. That 27.3-acre property is designated in the agricultural land target area of the Community Preservation Project Plan and is considered “an appropriate site for farmland preservation.”