

Eastham Forum Annual Meeting - 2008
7 pm, October 22, 2008
Earle Mountain Room, Town Hall, Eastham, MA

The Annual Meeting of the Eastham Forum was held at 7pm, October 22, 2008 in the Earle Mountain Room in Town Hall.

President Jerry Gibson paid special tribute to **Christopher Lovelock**, who passed away this past year, noting his character, efforts and expertise that he provided our community and the Cape for the many years that he resided in Eastham. His insight and wisdom will be sorely missed by all.

And this year the Island **Committee** outdid themselves, again, in creating and maintaining beautiful displays for the Town's Traffic Islands. With all the positive feedback, these islands are becoming the centerpieces of the Town during the summer months.

This year's annual meeting focused on the critical concerns for the deteriorating conditions of our **Bay Beaches**.

Special thanks were provided to **Loretta Nielson**, who, with **Joan Sullivan** have been very active participants on the Bay Beaches Committee of the Town's Critical Needs Committee.

Loretta has worked hard in garnishing assistance in providing education and information to the public on understanding the prognosis of the beaches as well as the adverse impacts that the diminishing and deteriorating beaches have on our Town.

Loretta obtained technical assistance from **Woods Hole Group Senior Coastal Engineer, Peter Markunas**, a long time Eastham resident who has been directly involved in the Bay Beaches, here in Eastham, for over twenty years. Mr. Markunas worked with Loretta to assist in the preparation of display and presentation material for Eastham's Windmill Weekend, which was held on the weekend of September 10th.

Thru Loretta's diligent determination and her pleasant and successful solicitation skills, Loretta was able to obtain a commitment from the Woods Hole Group, a Coastal and Ocean Science and Engineering company headquartered in East Falmouth, to develop and provide a presentation at the Annual Meeting focusing on the conditions of our Bay Beaches, along with the impacts that the beaches have on our community and what can be done about them.

The presentation was provided by **Mr. Robert Hamilton, Senior Coastal Engineer and Vice President of WHG** and **Dr. Lee Weishar, Senior Coastal Scientist/Engineer**, also in attendance was Peter Markunas who provided additional Lower Cape insight during the question and answer session that followed.

The topic was of such widespread interest that the Hearing Room was to full capacity, this in spite of the posting error in the Cape Cod Times. Following the presentation there was an excellent question and answer session. The attendees asked very insightful and thoughtful questions that were well answered thus providing a thorough supplement to the program.

Through the assistance of **Amy Eckman** and **Jim Ludwig** the presentation was televised for future viewing on the Cable Access Channel. If you were unable to attend this meeting, we would highly recommend that you view the presentation as it is periodically televised. We will attempt to obtain the schedules for the showings and provide them on this website.

We urge all who have not had the opportunity to be in attendance to view the presentation on the local cable access, as our synopsis below hardly covers the valuable topics and follow-up discussion that was provided.

The meeting had to close with still many attendees interested in asking additional questions. A questionnaire was made available for additional questions, and the attendees and public were encouraged to either fill out the questionnaires, or email questions to Peter Markunas at pmarkunas@whgrp.com. All questions will be addressed, and this website will post the subject matter of the questions, with their responses.

A brief outline of the Woods Hole Group and the Staff presenting the information follows:

As described by Mr. Hamilton, Woods Hole Group, Inc., is a commercial offshoot from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. The company's expertise is in the field of science and engineering implementation of the scientific knowledge base developed by such world renowned institutions like the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. Woods Hole Group provides their scientific expertise along with their expertise on environmental impacts to individual property owners, municipalities, State and Federal Government Agencies, as well as associations, such as land owners associations, and Corporate entities such as Shell Oil for off-shore analysis for Oil fields, and in an international capacity, for ocean, coastal and environmental services for the nations such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and others through their Mid-East Office located in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

More information about the firm is available at their website <http://www.woodsholegroup.com/>

Robert Hamilton, Jr., MCE, Vice President Senior Civil/Coastal Engineer

Mr. Hamilton is a Civil/Coastal Engineer and Vice President for Business Development at the Woods Hole Group. He's been with the Woods Hole Group since 1994, and has previously served as Coastal Engineer, Business Unit Director, and V.P. for Scientific Operations. He earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Lehigh University, and a M.S. from the University of Delaware Center for Applied Coastal Research. He is focused on development of business relationships and multi-disciplinary project and client management. His extensive market and contracting experience includes government agencies, architectural/engineering partners, offshore oil and gas producers, private owners/developers, power utilities, and manufacturing industries. He has strong technical, analytical, and problem-solving skills combined with an effective leadership, communication, negotiation, and personnel management approach.



His technical expertise is on solving problems related to shoreline erosion, coastal structures, water quality, environmental permitting, and the transport and dilution of thermal discharges and contaminants released into the marine environment. He also has multi-jurisdictional regulatory experience, including preparing EIS documents under NEPA, and has served as an expert witness. Mr. Hamilton's technical skills include numerical modeling and analyses of nearshore wave refraction, diffraction and breaking, sediment transport and shoreline change, and two- and three-dimensional hydrodynamic processes, including plume dispersion and mixing zones. His field skills include site assessments, wave and tide data collection, bathymetry data collection, beach profile surveying, and scientific SCUBA diving. Recent types of coastal projects in which Mr. Hamilton has participated are related to beach nourishment, salt marsh restoration, dredging and dredged material disposal, and environmental resource impact assessment and management planning.

Dr. Lee Weishar, Senior Scientist, Coastal Engineer

Dr. Weishar has more than 25 years experience in the fields of oceanography, coastal engineering, sediment transport, and nearshore processes. For the past 10 years he has specialized in coastal engineering and wetland/marsh restoration. Dr. Weishar specializes in the integration of biological, ecological, and hydraulic data to develop wetland restoration designs and to ensure that the design will meet the restoration objectives. Additionally, Dr. Weishar specializes in evaluating the potential impacts of proposed restoration projects on existing wetlands and adjacent transitional, buffer, and upland areas.

Dr. Weishar's current work involves the restoration of both large and small scale salt marshes. He has been involved at the design, permitting and construction phases of the project for more than a decade. During the



preliminary design phases of large scale projects, Dr. Weishar spearheads the preliminary hydraulic design and hydrodynamic analyses that proves to the client that a large scale restoration was feasible. Dr. Weishar has worked to perform critical examinations of the marsh restoration performance through frequent onsite visits and analytical analyses. Dr. Weishar helped pioneer the applications of Ecological Engineering and Adaptive Management in the field of marsh restoration.

Dr. Weishar provided the initial preliminary diagnostic hydraulic modeling and resource area evaluations to determine the feasibility of the large scale (10,000 acre) restoration program in the Delaware Bay. These investigations examined the potential effects of the restoration project on ground water, septic systems, and private drinking wells. During this project Dr. Weishar presented the restoration design to the public during frequent meetings with the stakeholders. He also worked closely with local boards to answer their concerns about the large scale wetlands restoration project. The successful implementation of this project required close interaction with the New Jersey state environmental agencies, New Jersey Attorneys Generals Office, National Fish and Wildlife, US Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries, and concerned citizens. He also has recently supported wetland restoration projects in Scarborough, ME, South Cape Beach, MA, Nonquit, MA, and others. He is an active publisher of conference papers and proceedings, as well as peer reviewed journals.

Peter J. Markunas, B.S. Senior Coastal Engineer

Mr. Markunas has over 35 years of professional experience in engineering, government, research and development, project and program management. Mr. Markunas has over 20 years experience exclusively involving the fields of coastal engineering, shore protection, dredging, sediment transport, nearshore processes and resource and habitat restoration.

Mr. Markunas served as Project Management in projects requiring extensive and/or complex designs and permitting approvals. Specialties are with marine and coastal projects, including strong experience in various multi-disciplined projects.

Examples of marine and coastal projects that Mr. Markunas has managed include channel and harbor dredging, private and municipal marina layout, mooring fields, shorefront stabilization by both hard solutions (e.g., bulkheads, revetments, etc.) and soft solutions (e.g., beach nourishment, fiber rolls, vegetation, slope adjustment, etc.). Mr. Markunas has implemented beneficial use of dredge material for the re-establishment of nesting areas in several projects including the Town of Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard, the Towns of Truro, Harwich, and Chatham.

Additional expertise in the development of municipal harbor management plans, including working with local boards and committees, assessing present and future requirements, evaluating current conditions and facilities to accommodate the requirements, and finally developing intermediate and long term plans for planning and funding purposes.

Mr. Markunas has set a standard regarding full project involvement from planning, design and permitting through construction. The local, state and federal permitting agencies, as well as the clients and contractors have embraced this level of involvement. As such, he has developed close relationships with Federal, State and Local Regulatory Agencies and Commissions, and is well versed in construction methods and means available for project implementation.



BAY BEACHES PRESENTATION SUMMARY

The focus of the presentation was to provide insight and understanding of the critical importance of our beaches as they serve such a major role in our Town's Enjoyment value, Environmental quality and very importantly the well being of our Town's Economy. The presentation itself was highlighted with excellent graphical, photographic as well as movie clips showing historic aerial changes along the Eastham shoreline.

Statistics and information was provided as to showing the importance of the tourist industry and how it drives our economy, and ,how the information shows, it relates to statistics developed on the National and Cape Cod level.

The beaches are economically critical to the motels, hotels, seasonal rentals, restaurants, retail outlets, and maintain a healthy value for real estate which affects each taxpayer and serves as an offset to real estate taxes affecting the majority of the year round residents who do not live along the water's edge.

In order to commence serious action to improve the state of our beaches, "ownership" of the project must be established the Selectmen must be made aware of the citizen interest in the matter. We have no doubt that the citizens will insist on such improvements once they are made aware of the issue and are adequately informed and educated on the matter, options, economic impacts, strategies, planning required, preliminary studies that must be performed, etc. In summary the "ownership" of this project should be the residents of the Town of Eastham, and the Town cannot wait to see just how bad our beaches can become, or how much revenue loss and economic decline occurs in the Town before action is commenced.

The imminent crisis is on the horizon and implementation of effective corrective action would require several years of careful evaluation and studies, both scientific and economic, followed by complex permitting. This is vitally important to the future of the community and action should commence now.

Conclusion

As stated, the Annual Meeting was adjourned with many attendees having additional question. If you have any additional questions, or would like additional information, Peter Markunas made it clear that he would be happy to assist in providing additional information, and he can be reached at his email pmarkunas@whgrp.com. The Woods Hole Group were given a hearty round of applause from all present for their excellent presentation. The Eastham Forum would like to extend our deepest appreciation for addressing our group and taking the time and effort to prepare such a specific and direct presentation for our community.

Additional Information

Our Webmaster is arranging to post clips and information from the presentation on our website in the near future, along with links and informational postings as they are made available.