

**APPENDIX I**

**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**



## TOWN OF SOUTHDOLD

# STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS FOR THE ECONOMIC CHAPTER OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

August 30, 2010

Individual interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including representatives from local businesses and organizations, as well as realtors and major employers within the Town. Such interviews allowed for an understanding of the housing market, the local business climate, organization/business-specific roles in the Town's economy, as well as specific opportunities, needs, issues and obstacles facing residents and businesses in Town. The main points from each of the stakeholder interviews have been summarized in this section. The series of stakeholder interviews has proven to be an invaluable resource during the preparation of the goals, objectives, recommendations and implementation strategies for the Economic Chapter of the Town of Southold's Comprehensive Plan.



## **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: KARLA DENNEHY, BRANCH MANAGER AT PRUDENTIAL DOUGLAS ELLIMAN REAL ESTATE**

MAY 26, 2010

- 1) Tell me a bit about the seasonal housing market in Town – i.e. the market for second homeowners who reside in Town on weekends, during the summers, vacant homes for seasonal use, etc.
- 2) What is your estimate in terms of the percentage of second homes in the townwide housing market?
- 3) How has this changed over the past few years? Are there any noticeable trends – hamlet-specific? Townwide?
  - Everything is softer than it was during the peak a few years ago.
  - Pricing is softer than it had been.
  - People are still buying homes on the North Fork; many bay homes have recently been sold.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: THOMAS MCCARTHY, THOMAS J. MCCARTHY REAL ESTATE, INC.

MAY 26, 2010

- 1) Tell me a bit about the seasonal housing market in Town – i.e. the market for second homeowners who reside in Town on weekends, during the summers, vacant homes for seasonal use, etc.
  - There are some indications that the market seems to have rebounded over the past six months.
  - Doesn't see it coming back to what it was before, during the feverish times of 2005-06.
  - But there is still a very strong and desirable market on the North Fork in the long-term, second homeowners bring money.
- 2) What is your estimate in terms of the percentage of second homes in the townwide housing market?
  - At least 1/3 of all units are second homeowners within the Town.
- 3) How has this changed over the past few years? Are there any noticeable trends – hamlet-specific? Townwide?
  - Construction is way down, suggests looking at permit count.
  - Many second homeowners are building vacant land and buying new homes in Town.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: JOHN NICKLES, LEWIS & NICKLES REAL ESTATE

MAY 26, 2010

- 1) Tell me a bit about the seasonal housing market in Town – i.e. the market for second homeowners who reside in Town on weekends, during the summers, vacant homes for seasonal use, etc.
  - The market hasn't changed much in the 46 years that he's been doing business in Town.
  - There are still an abundance of people looking for second homes, people retiring, etc.
  - The second home market is the primary real estate market in Town.
  
- 2) What is your estimate in terms of the percentage of second homes in the townwide housing market?
  - Would estimate that approximately 60% of homes are for second homeowners, though varies by hamlet.
  - Estimates that 50% of second homeowners are retirees.
  
- 3) How has this changed over the past few years? Are there any noticeable trends – hamlet-specific? Townwide?
  - Some people are leaving Town because of the lack of jobs, affordability.
  - Contradictory positions in Town – the more land that is preserved, the higher the land costs are, the higher the prices of homes are. This is why there is such a need for affordable housing in Town.
  - Still a good market, buyers are out but they're looking for value. They aren't going to settle on the first home and/or the first price they see. They're looking at more properties to maximize their value.
  - There is still the appeal on the North Fork, there is value here.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: PAUL CONNOR III, CEO AND PRESIDENT OF EASTERN LONG ISLAND HOSPITAL

MAY 27, 2010

- 1) Approximately how many persons does the hospital employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past few years?
  - Over 300 employees, approximately 285 FTE who work 37.5 hrs per week.
  - 1199 Bargaining Union, only about 50-55 employees that aren't part of this union.
  - Part-time/per diem employees allow flexibility. Because of this, less per diem folks, cover unanticipated absences.
  - Changed slightly since economic downturn.
  - There are disadvantages of being a "rural" hospital, but in a tough spot, because they don't receive the advantages of being a true rural hospital.
  
- 2) How long has the hospital been located here? Since its inception, has it expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?
  - Since 1905.
  - Last major expansion was to the front of the building in the 1970s.
  - Gave up obstetrics/pediatrics due to community's demography.
  - Hospital focuses on providing destination services – psychiatry is big. It's really the only hospital east of Mather/Brookhaven hospitals.
  - Hospital has 90 beds, approximately 35-40 of them are inpatient, and the rest are part of the detoxification and behavioral programs.
  - Hospital is typically very full, behavioral services typically 85-90% occupied, medical/surgery around 40% occupied at any given time.
  - Just went through two bed expansions, likely not another for a while.
  - In two years or so, the Hospital plans a service expansion for ambulatory surgery, and an update/renovation/contemporization of operating rooms.
  
- 3) Did you ever consider relocating to a nearby community?
  - There was talk of moving the Hospital inland in the 1970s, but it's unlikely at this point.



4) What are the types of issues that the hospital might be facing? What types of obstacles have been or will contribute to its continued strong presence in the local economy?

- Financial stability – 2/3 of hospitals run operating deficits.
- Much money is raised by the community, but the hospital must make sure that they're strong enough economically.
- Workforce recruitment is a challenge.
- Healthcare legislation: must make sure that they can contend with challenges it will bring.

5) Do most of your employees live and work on the North Fork? Do you find it difficult to find skilled workforce in Town? What might the Town be able to do to help? What support does the hospital need?

- The Hospital has a highly skilled workforce, but it's challenging to find Physician manpower – typically private doctors along North Fork.
- Medical economy is difficult to support.
  - Developing a physician-hospital organization.
- Hard to attract and retain medical experts.
  - Most only pay 75-80% of Medicare, and the only way to make up for this is through volume.
- Around 80% live within a 20-mile radius of the Hospital.
- There is an aging workforce within the nursing department, will likely pose challenges in the future, as more nurses retire.
- Hospital has partnership with Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) Nursing Program, helps to recruit skilled workforce.
  - Provides scholarship/tuition.
  - SCCC has a track toward hospitals.
- Partnership with Town – geriatric center of excellence, and also involved in grant partnership.
- Public-private relationship with Town possible? In-kind services exchanged?
  - Swap-out services – provide health care services for land transfer tax? For some sort of Hospital tax?
  - There is potential to work together.
- Town and Hospital do much education/awareness, but can always do more. Maybe Town could provide some sort of training?

6) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?

- There are many small businesses – agrarian, wineries, etc – have some of the same problems.
  - Big problem is workforce.
- Everyone on the Hospital's maintenance staff has two jobs – helps with affordability



in Town.

- There is a small group of professionals to support.

7) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities/challenges for doing business in Southold?

- Opportunity exists in trying to align health care providers on North Fork. There is a “fee for service” mentality. However, there is a challenge to get to this alignment.

8) How do you envision the Town’s economic future?

- Half of the battle is won: people want to live here.
- Need to bring the things to Town that are needed here – i.e. Mattituck needs a beverage store. People don’t want to travel X number of miles to get what they need.
- Perhaps indoor tennis center/courts would do well here?
- Suggests that Town conducts a “needs analysis” to see what Town needs and doesn’t (note: NP&V mentioned that this was one of the tasks of the Economic Chapter, called a “Leakage Analysis”).
- There are service gaps, no more physical therapists, but the Town does need more mental health.
- Town should follow niches.
  - Need services to support the niches.

Other:

- Hospital has affiliation with Stony Brook Hospital
- Eastern Long Island Hospital is part of the East End Health Alliance, along with Peconic Bay Medical Center and Southampton Hospital.
  - Created through “HEAL” grants, received two of them.
  - Strongest competitors are each other.
- Hospitals and Long Island Association – evaluate economic impact of a business.
- ELIH is a \$38-\$39 million organization, provides approximately \$69 million in revenue to the community, along with the well-being that a hospital in the community provides.
- One complaint: politicians “ignore” hospitals unless they need them for emergency preparedness, etc.
- Often economic development is feared, especially here.
- Interesting similarities between tourist destinations – here and Nantucket, Martha’s Vineyard, etc.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: STEVEN BATE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LONG ISLAND WINE COUNCIL

MAY 27, 2010

1) When was LIWC established?

- 1989, though wineries in the region date back to 1973.

2) How many wineries does LIWC represent? How has this changed over the years? How many persons do the wineries employ? Do they typically reside in the North Fork? What is their typical experience?

- There are 56 licensed producers.
- 48 members in LIWC + 2 non-members (Lenz and Paumanok Vineyards).
- There were 36 in 2000, continued increase in number of wineries here in only 10 years.
- There are around 2,000 “premium wineries” – people buying space to make their own wine, etc.
- Has heard the number of direct and indirect employees in the industry here reaches 4,000. Unsure as to how many area persons directly employed by the wineries.
- Migrant labor and skilled labor – decent percentage of “home grown” employment.
  - Migrant labor: some year-round, but many only for the harvest period.

3) Are there any new wineries looking to locate/relocate to the North Fork?

- Suru and Bellavita new to market.
- McCall is new in production.
- Palmer is on the market.

4) Tell me about LIWC’s role in the local economy.

- Marketing and promotion for the region, some advocacy for retail and reputation to raise price points.
- Basic infrastructure – i.e. touring guide, signage, etc.
  - Noted that they plan on adding better “wine region-type” signage to the LIE.



5) Do you find that it's difficult to attract a skilled workforce?

- Yes – but this varies by the type of job. Some positions have a large labor-pool available. Other skilled positions have harder time finding the skill-sets they need.

6) What are the types of opportunities available in Southold for the wineries? What are the issues/obstacles currently facing the wineries?

- Location and position has helped during the tough economy.
  - North Fork experienced an increase in tourism.
- Reputation has been steadily increasing.
- Wineries have done extremely well over the years.
- Region has been recognized for producing premium wines.
- Biggest challenge: work through pressures, don't want to get over-regulated.
- There has been international excitement in the region, along with Napa, Bordeaux, Sonoma, etc.

7) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?

- Economic problems have skewed benefits – the wineries are doing well, those associated with them have also done well, but those that aren't associated haven't done so well.
- Divergence in benefits.
- In long-term, the industry will likely continue to grow.
- Traffic is a concern – perhaps a shuttle should be investigated? Or maybe a tourist van between Riverhead and Greenport?
- May continue to be a victim of such success of region – secret is getting out, people are able to see what is here.
  - I.e. Many restaurants don't necessarily want additional events held here; people don't want hotels here, etc.

8) What are the businesses/industries needed to support farming/vineyards?

- Tourism infrastructure – transportation.
  - Public investment needed.
- Food and Wine Magazine were interested in holding an annual event in Town, but didn't occur because the region can't handle that amount of traffic, lodging, etc.
  - It didn't matter that nearby Riverhead has enough hotel rooms.
- More economy of scale businesses – agri-tourism, food tourism, quality restaurants, i.e. Sang Lee Farms, Catapano cheese.
- Perhaps production of barrels, labels, bottles – there may be a role for this type of industry here. Probably not corks.
- Co-operative warehousing/distribution?



- All wineries here are considered “boutique” by international standards.
- 9) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?
- To businesses:
    - Have a sense of who their customers are – have efficient marketing tactics, a business plan is key.
    - The wine-industry is ridiculously competitive.
    - Long Island is an expensive place to make wine – value-added.
  - To Town:
    - Don’t want to kill the “golden goose”.
      - Don’t want to over-regulate, but need to have an understanding.
      - There are transportation, parking and traffic pressures. Perhaps it would be a good idea to start a pilot project to see how different transportation methods would work.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: TOM CULLEN, VICE PRESIDENT AND JAMES JOHNSTON, DIRECTOR OF REAL ESTATE, KING KULLEN

MAY 28, 2010

- 1) What first attracted the store to locate in Cutchogue?
  - There was a need for a grocery store in the area, King Kullen was fortunate enough to get the store from Key Food.
- 2) How long has the store been located here? Since its inception, has it ever expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?
  - The lease began in 1971, almost 30 years ago.
  - The store expanded 15-20 years ago.
  - There are opportunities for expanding in the future.
- 3) What communities does the store service?
  - The entire North Fork, from Riverhead east all the way to Orient.
- 4) Approximately how many persons does King Kullen employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past few years? Do most of your employees live and work within Southold Town?
  - King Kullen employs 75 people, of whom 44% (33 employees) are full-time, the remaining 56% (42 employees) are part-time.
  - Store employs many local people, 57% of employees (43 employees) reside within the Town.
  - Employment really hasn't changed that much, but as sales increase, the store's employment has responded with additional need for workers.
- 5) Do you find it difficult to find skilled workforce in Town? What might the Town be able to do to help? What support might the store need?
  - With the way that the economy is, it's not difficult to find employees to fill many of the positions. This shifts, but it's not typically difficult to find expertise.
- 6) What are the types of issues that the store might be facing? What types of obstacles have or will contribute to its continued strong presence in the local economy?
  - Store would need help from the Town with expansion, pertaining to approvals. Town should realize that the store is only trying to serve customers better.



7) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?

- The North Fork is expanding, with retirement communities, wineries, etc.
- People are finding their way here based on the beauty of the location.

8) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities/challenges for doing business in Southold?

- Some commercial business.
- Affordability is a major challenge in the area.
- Taxes are high, challenge – businesses have to pay them also. It's important for businesses to be able to keep up with taxes.
- LIRR is an opportunity.
- Affordability – absolutely an issue for employees in Town.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: JOE GERGELA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LONG ISLAND FARM BUREAU

JUNE 7, 2010

- 1) Tell me about Long Island Farm Bureau's (LIFB) role in the local economy.
  - LIFB is a not for profit, advocates for agriculture industry in public policy.
  - LIFB also has member services programs – 5,000 members in LI, of which 500 – 1,000 are from Southold.
    - Members include businesses, current and former farmers, interested residents, fishermen, advocates, landscapers, etc.
  - Sister agency is Cornell Cooperative Extension
- 2) When was LIFB established?
  - In Long Island – in the early 1900s it was Nassau County/Suffolk County Farm Bureau, the two merged and reorganized in 1955.
- 3) How many persons does LIFB directly employ?
  - Four employees – includes himself, Office Manager, Promotions Coordinator and Secretary
- 4) How many agricultural businesses does LIFB represent?
  - 650-700 commercial farms in Suffolk County, maybe more when include smaller businesses.
- 5) How many farms are located in Southold? How has this changed over the years? How many persons do these businesses currently employ?
  - Approximately 150 are employed in Southold, which includes nurseries, small organics, etc.
  - Employment has decreased (of course) since the 1970s/1980s.
  - Over the past few years, however, employment may have actually increased due to changing demographics – people want to do something different, interested in growing own food, wineries, etc.
  - 7,000 employed in the industry in Suffolk County, at least 1,000 in Southold – includes greenhouses, field workers, tasting rooms, etc.
  - Approximately 60-70% of field workers are day laborers.



- 6) Do local farmers find it difficult to attract a skilled workforce? What are the skills that they are looking for?
- Traditional farming not too sophisticated, lots of manual labor.
  - Some jobs are more sophisticated – tractor work, equipment, machinery/CDLs, etc.
  - Real division in skill level.
  - It is fairly difficult to find key workforce, training, etc.
  - Skilled workforce mostly found through word of mouth.
- 7) What are the types of opportunities available to farmers in Southold? What are the issues/obstacles that they are currently facing?
- Carrying on business through heirs, don't always want to do so.
  - Very important to have a business plan.
  - Other issues: access to capital, weather, business climate, labor housing, skilled labor.
  - Public resents having multiple families in low-end housing.
  - Biggest obstacles are affordable housing, NIMBYism zoning, want to keep things “as-of-right”.
- 8) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?
- Southold is a unique Town – large elderly population doesn't want things to change.
  - Most people want to hold on to quality of life, which makes it tough for business expansion and growth.
  - Caterers, restaurants, weddings, etc – don't necessarily want “agri-tourism” economy.
  - Without the ability to make profit, businesses will fail.
  - Very few winery lands have been preserved – LIFB would like to see long-term commitment.
  - Large events may not be suitable for region – balance smaller events at existing wineries.
- 9) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities/challenges for doing business in Southold?
- Opportunities – work with what we have, but should streamline the process and make it easier to run a business through process of government.
  - Reduce cost of doing business in NYS.
- 10) What are the businesses/industries needed in Town to support local farmers?
- Farmers are the best of the best – “survivors”.
  - A matter of not impeding running business.
  - Issue – zoning. It has negative impact on the land values for farmers – threatens equity.



- PDRs or outright acquisition, TDR, land use tools that don't impact property values.
- Value-added – take agricultural commodity and finish it, complementary uses should be encouraged.
- There is a huge “buy local” interest – currently more demand than product available.
  - Most farms are at full capacity – how can we increase supply? Need land, equipment, know-how, etc.
  - The demand for locally grown products has changed things, but many farmers are no longer around to fulfill the demand.
- Biggest variable is weather.
- Many farmers have changed the way they market, i.e. Krupski – pick your own pumpkins, allows for a year-round economy, not as useful for traditional farms.
- Largest issue – long-term economic sustainability, ability to make a profit, cost to do business.
- Wind energy is another option to look into – Town has been a little slow with this.
  - Beneficial to both sides – 1) farmers own property and get credit for generating energy, and 2) receiving payments from developers for having turbines on land.

#### 11) How do you envision the Town's economic future?

- Southold has done a very good job in hanging on to its uniqueness.
- When economy picks up, hopes that landowners will sell development rights, greater opportunities to preserve open space.
- Positive: keep Town as it is.
- Agriculture and tourism economy should be viable, at least in the short-term.
- How agriculture can be inter-related into other sectors is tricky.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: HEATHER BURNHAM, OWNER OF BEACH PLUM (FISHERS ISLAND)

JUNE 9, 2010

1) How long has the store been located here?

- Has been on Island for 22 years, she has owned for 11 years.
- Used to be located where Pickett Fence is currently located, but has been at current location for a while.
- Decided to purchase from previous owners 11 years ago, since it was always her summer job through high school and she enjoyed it.

2) How many persons does the store employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past few years?

- During the two months in the summer, the store employs six part-time employees.
- The rest of the year (open Easter through Christmas, store is closed for a few months in the winter after Christmas), there are two employees (including herself).
- Employment has been consistent since there are a limited number of summer jobs on Fishers Island.

3) How many of your employees live and work on Fishers Island?

- Both year-round employees reside on Island.
- Most of the other summer employees also reside on Island since their families are seasonal residents.

4) What are the stores business hours? Year-round?

- During the spring and fall: 10am-1pm, 3pm-5pm, approximately 4-5 days per week.
- Late June through September: 10am-5pm on Monday through Saturday, 10am-1pm on Sunday

5) Since its inception, has the store expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?

- No plans on expanding, though a website for the store is in the works.



6) How do you view the local economy to be? Fishers Island's business climate?

- It's a pretty good place to run a business, but very few types of businesses are viable here year-round.
- Not enough year-round residents to support many on Island businesses.
- For example – grocery store closes in the winter and operates at a loss. They make up for it during the rest of the year though. “Small store” owned by same owner as “big store” (grocery store), and sends some supplies over if needed.
- Have to make a reason for year-round residents and seasonal residents to shop here.
- Store hosts a “Black Friday” Fishers Island style, where everything in the store is 50% off – just before Christmas. Helps to get rid of annual inventory, so that inventory isn't repeated every year.
- Some suggested year-round businesses:
  - Restaurant
  - Another bar?
  - A café-type gathering place
  - Storage
  - Service-based, but not necessarily retail businesses
  - Perhaps somewhere to get fresh baked goods – not sure if this would work?
- Pequot Inn did some advertising at some of the local marinas, Island residents were very upset about that. Advertising is not encouraged.
- There is a reason why people locate to Fishers Island – there are tradeoffs. The system in place works, and “status quo” – although better for now.
- Besides “downtown” (where store is located), the other “center” of business is near the ferry and the community center.
- When community center opened, some businesses had to move, since it was used for storage, warehousing, etc.
- Tenants are paying year-round, despite the seasonal occupancy.

7) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities for doing business on Fishers Island? The greatest challenges?

- Opportunities: Fishers Island is a great community; the community cares about sustaining businesses – finite scale, but wouldn't trade how the island is structured just to make business more profitable.
- Challenges: the cost of year-round business, utilities are expensive.
- Weekdays comprised of workers, weekends comprised of seasonal residents, and then there are the “tweeners” – spring and fall folks.

8) Do you foresee your business to remain in Fishers Island in the short-term? Long-term?

- Yes, anticipate staying here long-term.



9) If given the chance, would you still locate here? Or would you consider going elsewhere? Explain.

- Yes, and she'd do everything the same.

10) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Fishers Island? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business in Fishers Island?

- It's a great place, a supportive community.
- The costs of doing business are high, which makes it hard.
- Might not be much more that the Island can sustain until the year-round population increases.
- Some space "downtown" may be underutilized – i.e. it's a shame to lose commercial spaces downtown to residential uses.

11) How do you envision Fishers Island's economic future?

- Would be thrilled to have 10-15 more families locate here.
- Older generation is spending more time on Island.
- There has been much conversion of year-round residences to seasonal units – i.e. older generation leave homes to children, children only use seasonally.



**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: MEREDITH DOYEN,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTER  
AND KEN EDWARDS, SOUTHOLD TOWN PLANNING BOARD**

JUNE 9, 2010

- 1) Tell me about what the community center – what types of events does it hold? What is the participation like?
  - 18-month fundraising effort, most funds came from summer residents three years ago.
  - Has state of the art gym, café, bowling alley, community room for lectures, movies, talks, etc.
  - Bowling leagues – both men’s league and women’s league – one night a week.
  - Dinners available four nights a week, but only one night a week in the winter.
  - Breakfast is available one day a week, on Sunday.
- 2) How long has the community center been in operation?
  - Three years, has expanded to include a gym and a bowling alley since it first opened.
- 3) How many persons does the community center employ? FT/PT? Do all of the employees live and work on Fishers Island?
  - Community Center employs six persons – one full-time (Mere), and five part-time persons responsible for cleaning and the café. All employees reside on Island.

Other:

- Fishers Island is so far away from local government.
  - Transportation through CT makes even further removed from NY.
- Lack of housing, especially affordable housing.
  - People must move because they can’t find anywhere to live on Island.
- The economy is summer-driven.
- Not likely that the development of affordable apartments will be developed.
- Walsh Park:
  - 12 single-family homes on 24 acres
  - 4 single-family homes
  - 1 building with 3 apartments
  - 1 building with 4 apartments
  - Total of 23 units
- Island is very small, everyone knows everyone.
- Island Peoples Project – run a day camp on Island.



Other notes taken during tour of Fishers Island:

- Apartment building – Walsh Park owns 4 of the 6 units. Some are larger units, up to four bedrooms, cater to families.
- School District: approximately 65 students, of which 30 are from Fishers Island. Other 35 come from CT, since the school district is a magnet school.
  - Teacher housing provided on Island.
- Other apartment building – five units.
  - Owner owns contracting company.
  - Recently sold to Club.
  - Now, one guy who works for FIDCO, others are housing for Club workers, seasonal, part-time.
- NIMBYism is huge on Fishers Island, i.e. eight-unit duplex on school-owned property has been repeatedly squashed.
- 20 of the 236 homes on the “coast” were year-round residents, as evidenced by Census surveying.
- 8-10 college kids out of approximately 240 residents, as evidenced by Census surveying.
- Community Bulletin Board outside of Post Office, great resource for employment opportunities, community events, news postings, etc.
- Island has one year-round doctor’s office with one doctor.
  - Island Health project runs doctors office.
  - Doctor’s office is so expensive that insurance companies don’t want to work with them.
    - Health insurance is example of difficulty associated with doing business on Island.
- Village Market, also known as “big store”, is the grocery store. It’s seasonal and only open year-round part of the year.
- Pea Pod has contacted her, wondering if there’d be demand for their grocery delivery services. They’ve been here for 4 years, pretty good demand for this product, but relatively expensive.
- Other year-round residents go to the “little store” (deli/small grocer), since it’s owned by the same people as the “big store”, and they stock shelves with a few of each product as necessary to cut costs.
- The cleaning/housekeeping industry is huge on Island. However, money is untraceable since it’s often paid in cash – good money though, \$25/hour.
- Ambulance boat owned by Fishers Island Fire Department, called “Sea Stretcher” – floating ambulance of sort.
- Contractors – ZNS – owns the commuter boats, provide two runs a day with 16 passengers on each run.
- Other businesses/organizations:
  - Fishers Island Yacht Club.
  - Fishers Island Union Chapel.
  - Tidal Wave Salon.



- Pequot Inn – four rooms and a restaurant, seasonal.
- 13 EMTs.
- American Legion (also has bar).
- Fishers Island Telephone Company.
- Two gas stations.
- Pirates Cove Marina – some dock shop rental, more service-oriented.
- Walsh Park – 22 units and subdivision
  - Units cost around \$700 per month for a 4-BR unit – very affordable when compared to a privately-rented 2-BR unit at a minimum of \$1200 per month.
- BD Remodeling and Restoration – owns commuter boat, all but two employees are CT residents.
- TruValue Island Hardware – 1 of 3 workers are Islanders, open year-round.
- Utility Company – around 18 employees
- Eastern CT Chamber – Fishers Island is one of several “nodes”, less than 3 years in existence.
- All businesses on Island are automatically included in Chamber, become members.
  - Fishers Island Community Board pays the annual island-wide Chamber dues.
  - Businesses pay nothing, but receive all of the benefits.
    - Benefits include member-to-member discounts, workshops, access to health care, etc.
- No bank on Island, need to go to New London to make a deposit.
- On East End:
  - Bike Path – relatively new, took 16 years to construct.
    - Southold Town residents can ride on it for free. However, it costs more money to bring a bike onto the ferry than it does to bring a car. This is very discouraging to any Town residents who wish to do so.
  - Fishers Island Country Club.
    - “Links” golf course, every hole is a water hole.
    - Always highly ranked due to its exclusivity and design.
    - Tennis courts made out of grass.
  - Hay Harbor Club is other golf course.
  - Approximately three of the 150-200 housing units are year-round residents.



**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: PIERCE RAFFERTY,  
DIRECTOR OF HENRY L. FERGUSON MUSEUM (FISHERS ISLAND)**

JUNE 9, 2010

- Oyster Farm is only working farm still on Island.
- Land trust owns approximately 15% of land.
- Building boom – 1876 – 1926ish.
- Historic proposals include a sanitarium and a prison.
- Probably about 2-4 weddings on Island per year.
- Possible developments he thinks could work here include spa, hotel, sailing school, artist community? Marine biology/research?



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: JANIO SPINOLA, OWNER OF ISLAND LIQUOR STORE (FISHERS ISLAND)

JUNE 9, 2010

- Has owned liquor store for 3 years.
- Tough business market on Island.
- There are huge costs associated with transporting liquor to the Island. This results in need to pass along costs to customers. As a way to offset some of the costs, he must buy in bulk, which makes it cheaper, and allows him to pass along savings to customers.
- Most people buy in CT since wine and liquor are cheaper there.
- Store has one employee in the winter and three in the summer.
- The only way that he can make it as a business owner is because he has the other job.
  - In addition to owning liquor store, he is also the caretaker for the Hanley House, also known as the “Castle”.
- He would love to make a living year-round through owning the liquor store, but he just can't.
  - Last year, he made only \$6,000 in profit.
- He can't compete with CT, and plans on giving it a few more years before he explores other options.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: BOB SYRON, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF PECONIC LANDING

JUNE 10, 2010

- 1) How long has the community been located here? Since its inception, has it expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?
  - Peconic Landing was constructed in 2000, and opened in 2002.
  - No expansions yet, but looking to add new apartments and a memory care unit under the assisted living in Greenport.
  - Peconic Landing will probably expand in Riverhead or Port Jefferson, in negotiation for a piece of property now.
  
- 2) Did you ever consider locating to a nearby community? What was the determining factor to settle on the site in Greenport?
  - The development was originally slated to be constructed on the south fork, but it didn't work out. Needed a large piece of property for development, and the one in Greenport was perfect.
  
- 3) How many units/homes are on site? How many residents? Where do they come from?
  - 111 cottages
  - 139 apartments
  - Total of 250 units, 1-BR, 2-BR, 2-BR + den, etc.
  - 400 residents, originally coming from south fork, as far west as Huntington. Now they are coming from the north fork, and the rest of Long Island.
  - Primary market area = 70 miles for this type of housing in Greenport. Some residents come from beyond that because Peconic Landing is an "equity model", very attractive.
  - Peconic Landing is known as a "destination retirement" community.



- 4) Approximately how many persons does Peconic Landing employ? FT/PT? How has this changed since its inception?
- Approximately 200 employees, of whom approximately 150 are full-time, approximately 50 are part-time.
  - When community first opened, it initially struggled for nurses and aides. Now they're lined up out the door.
  - Since 2002, there has been a waiting list for employment – people want to work here very badly.
  - Employment hasn't really changed since its inception, but turnover used to be very high.
    - In 2004, there was 113% turnover.
    - Restructuring programs, benefits, etc. has resulted in a 4% turnover now.
  - Peconic Landing offers great benefits, 100% health coverage, no co-pays or deductibles.
  - Two years ago, Peconic Landing was voted #12 of the “Best Businesses in New York State”. Now, it's rated #23.
  - Employees have access to many programs and activities.
  - Peconic Landing is on a constant journey to improve, they invest in the training and teaching to better their employees, which in turn betters their residents.
- 5) What are the types of economic issues that the community might be facing? What types of obstacles have been or will contribute to its continued strong presence in the local economy?
- Peconic Landing would like to expand, but affordability is tough in Town.
  - Wants to reserve land for affordable senior housing, but probably won't happen because density and size.
  - It's really tough to get density in Southold.
  - Peconic Landing is largest taxpayer on the North Fork.
  - There is a huge unmet need for senior housing, but the senior residents will go to Riverhead because of the density.
- 6) Do most of your employees live and work in Southold Town? Do you find it difficult to find skilled workforce in Town?
- Approximately 85% of employees live on North Fork.
  - When community was first opened, they weren't able to find skilled workforce in town, they had to import employees from Brooklyn and Queens, since they couldn't get nurses/aide.
  - But now the community trains them, have tuition reimbursement programs, etc. People are now lined out the door.
  - All Peconic Landing board members live in Town.



7) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?

- It's tough to do business in Town.
- "Everyone wants Long Island to stay the same as where they found it".
- The Town will always have tourism, and properties on the water, but what can you do to keep the Town pristine and the tax revenue strong?
- Believes the future is in seniors, and the Town should recognize that.

8) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities/challenges for doing business in Southold?

- It's not easy to do business in Southold Town.
- It's a great place to live and raise a family.
- Governance is good.
- Peconic Landing tries to spend money locally – i.e. Southold flooring.

9) How do you envision the Town's economic future?

- Planned green change – developments that don't impact their neighbors.
- Smart development, developments that add good jobs and tax base.
- Smart, green planning.
- Looking to put wind, solar panels on community, alternative energy is essential.
- Town must ensure that proper planning takes place, don't let everyone in at once.

10) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?

- Get to know the local folks, who you need to know.
- Realize that most businesses will be seasonal, and must be able to ride out slow seasons.
- Need to be extremely honorable in doing business in a small Town.
- The Town should realize that they can't please everyone.
- The Town should look more to do business with mission-based organizations.
- There is a vested interest to see successful community.
- The Town can't keep the remainder of the land as entirely open space or the tax base will dwindle.
- The Town should look to do business with those who have a proven track record, with those who will stay within the community in the long run. Cultivate relationships with those that "do the right thing".
- If a piece of property comes up for re-zoning, the Town should consider change if it has a dramatic positive impact on the rest of the community.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: JOE CORSO, OWNER OF PECONIC RETREAT AND PRESIDENT OF NORTH FORK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JUNE 11, 2010

- 1) How long has the assisted living community been located here? Since its inception, has it expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?
  - Has been in existence for over 50 years, he has had for 15 years.
  - Expanded in 1994, increased number of units, changes to physical structure.
  - He dreams of expansion, but doesn't have the energy to deal with the Town's regulatory process.
- 2) Did you ever consider relocating to a nearby community?
  - No.
- 3) How many units are at Peconic Retreat?
  - Peconic Retreat is licensed for 10 units, would love to double that.
- 4) Approximately how many persons does Peconic Retreat employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past 50 years?
  - Three full-time employees, three part-time employees. This has slightly fluctuated but only by a few employees.
- 5) Do most of your employees live and work in Southold Town? Do you find it difficult to find skilled workforce in Town?
  - Yes – all work and live in Town.
  - No difficulties associated with finding employees, he has always been able to find skill-level needed. No major level of skill necessary for elderly care.



- 6) What are the types of economic issues that the assisted living community might be facing? What types of obstacles have been or will contribute to its continued role in the local economy?
- Trying to keep costs low enough to provide “affordable” senior living.
  - Peconic Retreat’s rates are low - \$2,000 - \$2,500/month.
    - Many people can’t afford higher rates than that.
  - Concern over what will happen to large number of seniors in Town?
  - Increased regulations from Department of Health, if needed to have nurse on staff, would put place out of business.
    - Not a nursing home, shouldn’t be mandated to have such responsibilities.
- 7) How many persons does the Chamber directly employ? Do they reside within Southold Town?
- Only one employee, all others are volunteers.
  - All board members and employee reside within Southold Town.
- 8) How many member organizations does the Chamber represent?
- 160, a few in Riverhead but most are in Southold.
- 9) What are some of the benefits associated with Chamber membership?
- Most beneficial: Chamber provides businesses with an advertising network.
  - Automatically part of the North Fork Promotion Council with Chamber membership.
  - Chamber brings in speakers that are relevant to businesses.
  - Monthly dinner meetings.
  - Networking.
  - Community events – i.e. St. Pat’s parade (around 1,000 participants), golf outing, family BBQ (first year this year, around 60 people), scholarships, art shows, street fair in Southold Hamlet, etc.
  - Member dues are \$99 per year.
- 10) How do you view the local economy? The Town’s business climate?
- Cautious – local economy is totally dependent on tourism.
  - People want to spend more, but not what they used to.
  - Weather has a huge impact on tourism – January through April are slower months
  - Second homeowners need to access plumbers, electricians, attorneys, etc. These types of services are needed in Town.



11) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities/challenges for doing business in Southold?

- Transportation system in place – opportunity. However, it has limitations, which are major challenge.
- Limited transportation system around North Fork, limited rail service, Hampton Jitney.
- Very limited in getting around Town.
- Need an affordable transportation model.
- Need to balance the development with rural character.
- Need for affordable housing to keep workforce here. Not just ownership options, but perhaps apartments above storefronts? These are the people who will also be shopping here.

12) How do you envision the Town's economic future?

- A positive future, overall.
- Businesses struggle with taxes.
  - Can't keep sustaining programs and benefits that much of the public sector is not getting, where rest of us can't afford to pay.

13) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?

- To Town:
  - Make it as easy as you can to come here.
  - Fast track approval process, remove some of the red tape.
  - How do we keep young people here?
    - Many people are retiring over the next 20 years, we need to be able to train young people and keep them in Town.
- To businesses:
  - Price goods and services accordingly. Southold is not NYC, nor is it the Hamptons – don't overprice and keep local population in mind.
  - Get involved in the local community right away, many residents were born and raised here, don't want to insult anyone.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: NEB BRASCHICH, PRESIDENT AND ANDREA PARKS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NORTH FORK PROMOTION COUNCIL

JUNE 24, 2010

- 1) Did I see that the NFPC is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year? How has the role of NFPC changed since its inception?
  - Yes, celebrating 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.
  - Used to be (25 years ago) three separate Chambers of Commerce – Mattituck, New Suffolk-Cutchogue, and Southold-Greenport (Southold-Greenport and New Suffolk-Cutchogue have since merged to become North Fork Chamber). Recognized that they needed an opening to the outside world in promoting. This couldn't be done through the chambers, since they didn't have the money/resources to promote the area, so they formed Southold Promotion Committee.
  - In 1990s, there was a small increase in town support.
  - In 1998, NFPC changed from a Committee to a Council.
  
- 2) How many persons does NFPC employ? How many volunteers are involved? What are their roles?
  - Only one full-time employee – Andrea is the Executive Director.
  - There are four part-time employees who serve as Ambassadors – they man the booths and are paid by the Town.
  - Everything else is done through volunteers.
    - Executive Committee governs the NFPC, they're all volunteers.
      - Made up of 7 associations that have one vote, and the 2 Chambers who have three votes each.
  
- 3) I've noticed that NFPC has a few booths set up in Town. Tell me about them. Any estimates on the number of visitors per day? Per week? How does this vary throughout the year? How has this changed over time? What types of recommendations are visitors looking for? Are the booths staffed with volunteers, or just brochures? Do you find there is demand for additional booths, kiosks to be located elsewhere throughout Town?
  - The Town owns two booths – Laurel and Greenport.
  - Approximately 4,000 – 5,000 visitors to the booths each year, between late May and early October.



- Booths typically open from beginning of May through end of October. However, this year, funding constraints resulted in having to open at the end of May. Booths are open Fridays through Sundays until July, and then reassessed in July. Tends to open every day in Greenport starting in July. However, this all depends on traffic and funding.
  - Also has telephone system, distribution of guides at ferries and Islip airport (approximately 50,000 – 60,000 per year), and Internet (160,000 – 180,000 people visit each year and spend 10-15 minutes on site).
  - Total visitors in 2009: approximately 200,000.
  - It's estimated that NFPC has brought \$10.6 million to town in 2009.
  - Given the size and limited funding, it would be difficult to sustain another information center. It'd be a better use of resources to improve the existing centers, with computers, etc.
  - A third center on Route 48 in Riverhead was previously suggested to capture interest from those who may not pass by the existing centers on Route 25.
  - People typically ask: “where can I stay?”, “do you have a map?”, “what is happening?”
- 4) What are the types of economic issues that you've witnessed local businesses facing within the community?
- Many businesses have been forced to close.
  - Some help has been given to publicize starting up businesses, referrals.
  - When businesses come into town, they need to find their niche in order to compete, especially seasonal operations.
    - Local population is not significant enough to support most businesses during the rest of the year.
  - North Fork is a seasonal venue, trying to encourage businesses to think bigger, as a destination for all seasons.
- 5) How many member organizations does the NFPC represent? How many specific to Southold Town?
- Represents 9 business organizations with a combined membership of over 350 businesses.
- 6) What are some of the benefits associated with NFPC membership?
- NFPC promotes East End as a destination, joined forces with Hamptons Visitor Center.
  - Attends NY Times and Boston Globe events each year.
  - Have partnered with Edible East End, LI Farm Bureau, East End Tourism Alliance, trying to maximize benefits occurring to the business community.



7) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?

- To Town:
  - Is there a way to provide a tax break for new businesses over the next X number of years?
  - Make it as seamless as possible in terms of permitting.
  - Make professional advice available, possibly through a mentorship program? Town should exploit these opportunities – guidance is necessary for start-up businesses.
  - Town should have available list of locations where businesses can locate – both vacant buildings, open land, etc.
  - Town should hire consultant to review businesses and do a niche study, formulate a policy to attract business and people alike.
- To Business:
  - Ensure that you're a part of one of the Chambers, since there are many opportunities available to Chamber members.

Other:

- Neb has been involved since 1994, has been President for the past 12 years.
- Town's prominent industries: agriculture (used to be potato, cauliflower), fishing, farming (farming turf).
- First vineyard opened in 1971.
- NFPC funding comes from dues, town fund, state/federal grants, assistance.
  - Approximately \$10,000/year from LI Visitor and Convention Bureau.
  - Majority of funds come from ad sales, \$92,000 is the record in 2010.
    - Shows business community understands the value of promotion.
- NFPC has two websites, and is in the process of upgrading them through an RFP
  - Gonorthfork.org (maintains advertising) and northfork.org
- There are approximately 400 hotel rooms on the North Fork.
- The Town should re-instate the funding; NFPC is an important economic engine.
  - Funding was cut back from \$40,000 to \$30,000 during these hard economic times.
  - During hard economic times, thinks more money should be spent on advertising.
- Target day-trippers and weekend stays/overnight guests.
- Maybe a small "country" hotel, 50 rooms or so, would do well.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: JOHN ROMANELLI, OWNER OF BURT'S RELIABLE

JUNE 25, 2010

- 1) When was Burt's Reliable established?
  - It's been around for 50 years, but he purchased 22 years ago, in 1988.
- 2) What communities does the company service?
  - Riverhead, Southold, parts of Brookhaven and Southampton.
- 3) Since its inception, has it ever expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?
  - Yes, a number of times through acquisition of smaller companies.
- 4) How many persons does Burt's Reliable employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past few years? Approximately how many of your employees also live within Southold Town?
  - 25 full-time employees.
  - Were at 30-32 a few years ago, but has since shrunk due to new construction dying down, not as busy.
  - 12-15 of employees reside in Southold; all employees reside on North Fork.
- 5) Tell me about your Natural Heating Oil, Biofuel and Biodiesel initiatives. How has the demand for these products changed over the past few years?
  - It's the only renewable liquid out there.
  - Customers are very receptive – go green!
  - Bio-heat, getting word out there, demand starting to increase.
  - Each year, they increase the portion of the blend, now at 20%. Will likely increase to 25-30% over the next few years.
- 6) Do you find it difficult to find skilled workforce in Town? What might the Town be able to do to help?
  - Most of the long-term employees have started as helpers and drivers, and have been trained.
  - There aren't many veterans out there.



- Seven mechanics have been trained, and others have been at the company for 10+ years and are experienced.
- 7) What types of obstacles have or will contribute to the company's continued strong presence in the Town's economy?
- Growth on the existing property – if company wanted to expand on existing location, it'd be very difficult to get through the site plan review process.
  - This process gets more and more difficult each year.
- 8) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?
- As a business owner, the climate is OK, he's loyal to it.
  - Second homeowners and strong NYC economy is vital to the economy. These persons have driven the business climate.
  - As a resident, it's a great place to live.
- 9) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities for doing business in Southold Town? The greatest challenges?
- Opportunities: NYC has a strong economy; seasonal residents bring that to Town. Money being spent fosters growth.
  - Challenges: It's tough to keep enough work to keep the locals busy. Also, site plan review is a challenge.
- 10) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?
- To businesses:
    - Get in writing what you can do on the land before purchasing it.
    - The biggest obstacle is the lack of consistency.
  - To Town:
    - Throw out existing site plan review process and start from scratch.
    - There is no customer-service feeling from any of the Town's departments – i.e. Planning, Town Hall, Zoning Board, etc.
- 11) How do you envision the Town's economic future?
- Preservation of farm land.
  - Keep marinas.
  - The area is beautiful.
  - Keep what we have; we're on the right path.
  - Big draw from NJ, NYC, Boston, CT, etc.



**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: KEVIN SANTACROCE,  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF  
BRIDGEHAMPTON NATIONAL BANK**

JUNE 28, 2010

- 1) How many branch locations does Bridgehampton National Bank (BNB) have in Southold Town?
  - There are five: Mattituck, Cutchogue, Southold, Greenport, and a satellite branch at Peconic Landing.
  - Cutchogue is the latest branch, opened 3 ½ years ago.
- 2) When did the first branch open in Southold Town?
  - 15-20 years ago, and in 1986 they started expanding from the initial branch.
- 3) Since their inception, have any of the banks in Town ever expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?
  - BNB has done tremendously well on the North Fork.
  - Approximately 10 years ago, an employee from the North Fork came to BNB, and business on the North Fork took off after he came on board.
  - People are very loyal; they trust those that they know, familiar faces, etc.
  - BNB is always trying to improve their facilities; they have the market fairly well-covered with hours, services, drive-through's, etc. So probably not trying to expand on the physical side, but always looking to expand relationships.
  - Have seen tremendous growth at BNB after Capital One took over North Fork Bank.
- 4) Approximately how many persons does each of the branch locations in Town employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past few years? Do most of your employees live and work within Southold Town?
  - Approximately six FTE employees at each of the four branches (Peconic Landing shares employment with Greenport).
  - Estimate of 20-25 FTEs plus a few part-time tellers.
  - The bank's staff has grown over the last few years as demand has increased.
  - Hired a new regional vice president a few years ago.
  - Approximately 80% live and work in Town.



- 5) Do you find it difficult to find skilled workforce in Town? What might the Town be able to do to help? What support might the bank need?
- Not that difficult to find skilled workforce for the bank.
  - Very happy with labor pool for managerial positions, the economy has helped in terms of more candidates to look at.
  - Always seem to find qualified teller and platform positions in Town
  - More second homeowners are choosing to stay as year-round residents. These persons tend to be more educated, and have the ability to fill higher-level positions.
  - More people are settling on North Fork since 2001, post-9/11. Makes for more in the talent-pool.
- 6) What types of obstacles have or will contribute to the bank's continued strong presence in the Town's economy?
- It's hard as a business person, since there really isn't industry here.
  - There should be business zones identified within each hamlet, which would act as an area to centralize activities of commercial zoning (note: NP&V mentioned that there were indeed the HALO zones).
  - The lack of planning is a problem; development should be encouraged in certain areas, with higher density, infrastructure, etc.
  - Land preservation, some element of agriculture.
  - Balance is a challenge.
  - Tourism/attraction-based economy is not necessarily service-based.
- 7) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?
- Generally favorable based on the above-mentioned constraints.
  - BNB is able to provide services without many challenges.
  - The building permit process is very challenging.
  - "Anti-development" mind-set is very hard to overcome.
  - People recognize that there need to be certain level of services.
- 8) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities/challenges for doing business in Southold?
- Opportunities clearly lie in the tourism-aspect. The region is promoted through the LI Wine Council.
  - It's very important to maintain attracting people to visit.
  - Start to see other services to the new demographics coming in – businesses need to realize this, and figure out a way to cater to this group of people more – i.e. North Fork Table and Inn is a high-quality restaurant.
  - Town of Riverhead experienced most growth in Suffolk County, is Southold next?



9) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?

- To businesses:
  - Have a lot of capital.
  - It's going to be a long winter, have to be able to survive that.
  - It's not easy.
- To Town:
  - Southold Town is pretty good, though they could be more aggressive on securing stimulus funding.
  - Town of Brookhaven: 12-14 months shovel ready, did homework, called lenders, got information on what businesses would need, etc. Does Southold do this?
  - Town could be more pro-active, bring people together to bring awareness to economic development.

10) How do you envision the Town's economic future?

- Economic future is very viable.
- Increased population moving here.
- Businesses with a good plan and well-capitalized will be able to take advantage of this economic viability.

#### Other

- He was able to come back to Town, resides there, and has been able to raise a family there because of the head start he received from "affordable" housing in Southold in the 1990s. He wouldn't have been able to otherwise. Now, he is able to give back much to the community, he's "indebted" for the opportunities made available for him to come back to Town years ago.
- The loan to deposit ratio on the North Fork is close to 100% over the past 3-4 years. This means that with every dollar deposited, it's lent back to local businesses on the North Fork almost 100% dollar for dollar. The total among all of BNB branches is closer to 50-60%.
- Bank is very supportive of community events on the North Fork.
- Bank approached by Peconic Land Trust and New Suffolk Homeowners group, wants to preserve – allow access, park-like atmosphere on lot near water. Maybe smaller businesses to occupy as well.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: JEFF STRONG, PRESIDENT AND OWNER OF STRONG'S MARINE

JULY 28, 2010

- 1) Tell me about the history of Strong's Marine, I noticed it's been around since 1945. How have things changed over time?
  - He bought the company out of bankruptcy in 1992; it was he and one other employee.
  - Since then, the company itself has changed, but more noticeable changes have occurred on the client-side of the relationship. People's expectations of sales and boat yards have increased dramatically over the past 20 years, on a gradual basis.
  - Customers want it all; expect it to be like "Disney World".
  
- 2) Since you've owned it, has it ever expanded? Are there any current plans to expand in the near future?
  - There have been a few expansions, in terms of employees as well as acquisitions.
  - Twenty years ago, it was just himself and one other employee, when purchased the company. Now 38 full-time employees and 10 part-time employees spread throughout multiple locations.
  - Though headquartered in Mattituck, other locations include Flanders, Southampton and Port Washington.
  - Volume of business has grown significantly as well.
  - Part of strategy is to sell throughout all of Long Island and New York City, provides a much broader presence.
  - No plans on expanding in terms of location.
  - Just took on Regal Boats, a dealer in the center of Long Island that sells 19' – 52' boats, as of July 1.
  - There has been significant growth in mobile service (service boats in other marinas, docks, etc.), mostly based out of Mattituck.
    - Currently has three mobile vehicles, and expect this to grow significantly over the next five years.
  - Noticing increased pressure to provide indoor storage.
  
- 3) How many persons do Strong's Marine employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past few years? Approximately how many of your employees also live within Southold Town?
  - In total, 38 full-time and 28 part-time employees at all locations.
  - Most of employees are out of Mattituck since it is the company's headquarters.
    - Approximately 25 full-time and 6 part-time employees in Mattituck.



- Estimates approximately 80% of Mattituck employees also live in Town.
- 4) Tell me about the boating and maritime-related industry in Town. What types of events and festivals are going on? Do you know of a blueways trail that might exist?
- Noticing a wider-spread of people who have money vs. people who don't. Much of upper-middle class has dropped back to middle-class and can't afford boating.
  - This narrower pool requires a higher level of services – wants it all.
  - Boating has become much more sophisticated in terms of its components, parts.
  - Some events and festivals, but nothing of a blueways trail.
    - He really likes the idea of having a blueways trail (after NPV explained).
- 5) How has the demand for the services you offer changed over the past few years?
- Last two years have been a “disaster” – just starting to “poke their heads out of the sand”, after 18 months of being in survival mode.
  - Over the next few years, he thinks that the industry will continue to see an increase in request for more services, i.e. swimming pool, restaurant, etc.
    - “One-stop-shopping” type, the total package, “completeness” factor.
    - It was noted that his property isn't zoned to allow for a restaurant, which is a big road block to expanding company in future.
  - Expects growth in rental and possibly leasing of boats.
  - Expects growth in mobile services.
- 6) Do you find it difficult to find skilled workforce in Town? What might the Town be able to do to help?
- With increased sophistication of industry and technology, it requires better trained and skilled mechanics/technicians.
  - Mechanics receive a minimum of two weeks training every year – at factories and online training.
  - Average technician makes approximately \$70,000 per year, does very well.
  - Looking to add two more employees over the next six months.
  - Company has been lucky in that it hasn't had to lay anyone off, but has been able to hire several skilled persons who have been laid off elsewhere over the past two years.
    - He realizes this is a temporary fix, and that it's less about skills and more about finding intellectual persons to train, that can afford to live in Town.
  - Affordable/workforce housing is an issue.
    - One of his employees was able to purchase a home at the Cottages – need more workforce housing like this.
    - He thinks project was executed perfectly, creates a huge positive impact to the Town, beyond just providing housing to people to be able to live and work in Town.



7) What types of obstacles have or will contribute to the company's continued strong presence in the Town's economy?

- Southold Town has done a good job at acquiring properties, though must seem to be devoted to doing nothing with. Maybe a better idea would be to acquire property and provide public recreation areas on waterfront.
- Don't want Coney Island, but would be nice to have uses along waterfront.
- Good example: New Suffolk.
- Strong's Marine is part of the "20 Group", which consists of 20 different successful groups of boating companies. They meet regularly around the U.S. and Canada, and get to know what other successful companies have accomplished, what happens in other towns, etc. He's noticed that other places have a similar-type "farmland protection" program on waterfront properties.
- People want inexpensive restaurants; many people can afford having a small boat, they enjoy the environment/boating, but don't want to pay \$150-\$200 for a meal on the water.
- Basic inexpensive restaurants can't make it work on waterfront property.
- Perhaps the Town can assist these types of companies, by acquiring lease, structuring an agreement on a fair lease based on what they can afford – this would greatly increase foot traffic from boaters in the area, therefore stimulating industry.
- Major need for Town and County support with these types of programs. Has seen successes elsewhere in country.
- Boating becomes less desirable in Town because of the lack of access points – especially low-key and inexpensive restaurants near water.
- Good example – Mitchell Park Marina in Greenport.
- Taxes are high, which poses an obstacle.
- He thinks that taxes can be cut, and suggests several options:
  - Thinks that Town Police Department are earning a lot of money, more than NYPD officers – this might be the back that needs to be broken, since taxpayers support these earnings.
  - 100% against farmers/wineries getting tax breaks when part of their land is used as a business. For example, there is a 30-acre property, of which 5 acres are used for a business. The other 25 acres are actual agricultural lands. The five acres should be taxed as a business, while the 25 acres can be taxed as agricultural property. They should have to pay the same taxes that all other businesses pay.
- Another obstacle is the permitting process, difficulties associated with this.
- DEC relationship is tough; the Town/DEC relationship could be strengthened. The Town often gives one answer and DEC another for the same issue at hand.
  - One solution could be that the five Town Supervisors meet with the head of the Long Island chapter of the DEC to form a stronger voice.
- Dredging is an issue – DEC has narrowed the dredging window so much that the Town and County can't do what they need to in the narrow time frame.



8) How do you view the local economy? The Town's business climate?

- Overall, the business climate is good, desire and intent to do good, overall a pretty good balance.
- Believes there should be a little more consideration given to the protection of birds vs. the protection of residents' use of the water.
- The permitting process is a hard problem to fix.
- Would love for the Town to knock on his door and ask, "What can we do to grow your business?"

9) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?

- To businesses:
  - Understand the culture of the Town.
  - If you can live here, do it.
  - Get involved in the local Chambers of Commerce, other opportunities in the community – show that you're giving back and not just taking.
  - Be honest.
  - Save money for the winter when business is slower.
- To Town:
  - At Strong's Marine, they have a philosophy that 75% of time is devoted to their existing clients, and 25% is devoted to attracting new clients. Thinks that the Town should focus on the same principle – focus more on existing businesses, and the existing problems, the core fundamentals. In turn, this will lead to increased business at these places, etc, and will encourage others to locate here, knowing that a positive business climate exists.

Other:

- There is a need for more condominiums in the Town – hears middle-aged population say all the time, that they want to downsize and live maintenance-free, but they want to stay in Town.
- Fishing in the bays has not been as productive as it once was. Many areas around country have installed artificial reefs to attract fish. This allows smaller boats to be able to enter into areas that they otherwise wouldn't be able to, allowing them to catch more.
  - DEC is a big advocate if they're done correctly, the fish population will grow exponentially. Overall, a net win for the environment.
  - DEC has an artificial reef program.
  - Long Island Fisherman Magazine is a proponent of the program also.



## **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: NATHAN ANDRUSKI, PRESIDENT OF SOUTHOLD TOWN BAYMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

AUGUST 17, 2010

- 1) Tell me about the history of the Baymen's Association. When was it established? What was the intent? How have things changed over time? Are there regularly scheduled meetings?
  - The Association has been around for 50 years or so, established in 1960s.
  - The Association was very strong through the 1980s, even through 1990s. Membership has shrunk every year due to fewer people making a living on the water – fisheries have collapsed due to the many restrictions.
  - In 2000-01, the Association started to disband, and in 2002 there was no real Association any more.
  - Nathan revamped a year and a half ago, since he was sick of talking and not doing.
  - Intent is to discuss and address anything that goes on in industry, anything that will affect the fishermen.
  - Meetings are held once a month between September and May. Typically, meetings are not held in June, July or August since that is the busiest season for all members.
  
- 2) How long have you been involved with the Association? What is your role as President?
  - Nathan has been involved since high school, since the mid 1990s.
  - As President, he must attend meetings, lobby for the group, get in touch with the right players, and speak to whomever necessary to further their cause.
  - A fundraising function is held in October (last year was first year it was held) to raise money.
    - Last year, \$4,000 was spent to give back to the public, bought sea clams with money raised.
  - Nathan is also on the State Shellfish Advisory
  
- 3) How many members are there? What are their occupations – are they all commercial fishermen, or are they recreational fishermen? Do they all live within Southold Town?
  - Approximately 40 members from throughout Southold Town.
  - Nathan is the youngest person in Association, and there is nobody younger than him that seems to have even a remote interest in the industry.
  - Membership is open to everyone, but nearly all members are commercial fishermen. These are the only ones who are able to cast a vote. There are also some members that own charter boats and some interested individuals are also involved.



- 4) Tell me about the fishing industry in Town. How have things changed over the years?
- In a word – grim.
  - There are fewer people making a living on the water – not many commercial fishermen left.
  - Fisheries have collapsed due to the many restrictions.
  - Some local issues regarding shellfishing, but mostly at State-level.
  - Association seemingly fights an uphill battle with State regulations regarding fisheries.
- 5) What types of obstacles have or will contribute to the industry’s continued strong presence in the Town’s economy? What might the Town be able to do to help?
- There are a few tough persons to work with in Town, but overall it’s pretty good. Most of the obstacles come from dealing with State agencies, where everyone is tough to work with.
    - Why don’t they listen to us? Nobody knows better than those who make a living doing this.
    - Baymen are very conscious of the environment, they encourage sustainability – they want to keep doing this.
  - Battles with environmentalists, Audubon society, lobbyists.
  - Some examples of obstacles include horseshoe crabs during the late winter/early spring every year. Horseshoe crabbing shut down so that birds can stop and eat the eggs on their way to/from Maryland and Nova Scotia. In turn, this has a ripple effect on the conch industry, since horseshoe crabs are known to be the best bait for conch.
  - Seems like they’re always fighting restrictions – restrictions on bay scallops, clams.
  - There exists a huge shellfishing loss in the winter, due to areas that were lost to conditional shellfish program.
    - This year will be the third winter without a conditional shellfish program that allows two areas to open according to rainfall.
    - Oysters are big in that area.
    - The State doesn’t have a Biologist, so they can’t do the sampling and paperwork.
      - The State supposedly now has the Biologist, but they’re still not getting the work done.
    - The loss of the conditional shellfish program has resulted in an approximate \$1 million loss within the Town during the last two years.
  - There has been talk about a complete shutdown of lobster industry in waters of Long Island Sound, including Connecticut, Block Island, and Montauk.
    - Again, the ripple effect that would put others out of business – bait for lobsters, salters for bait, freezers for bait, boats for fishing, marinas for boats, diesel gas for boats, etc.
      - Would put thousands of people out of business.



- Constant battle between environmentalists and fishing industry.
- Need to import fish from other countries as a result of local restrictions.
- One of the latest issues: an area in a creek is open between December 1<sup>st</sup> and April. The Association is requesting that it opens December 15<sup>th</sup> instead. The first few weeks in December are the worst time of year to sell clams. As a result, they'll have to sell at extremely low prices, and won't be able to get rid of the product. This product doesn't sell, and the market can't handle the volume at this time of year. It's completely wasteful. If access begins on December 15<sup>th</sup>, the product can be held over until Christmas, which is the best time of year for this product – two straight weeks of strong demand. This will yield a better profit and won't be wasted.
- Issues with razor clams – razor clams are an unbelievable resource, which peaks in January. This is completely wasted because it's illegal to harvest mechanically. Can hand dig them, but it's very hard to do so with tides.
  - Has been working with State to adopt new restrictions, new limits so that they can still harvest, but will ensure that they won't overharvest.
  - It's been a very slow process – started talking about this in January, and there has been little to no progress.

6) What advice would you give the Town looking to expand the fishing industry?

- The Town isn't able to do too much, since most issues deal with the State. However, they could listen more, and try to understand the issues that Baymen are facing.

7) What are your thoughts on artificial reefs?

- Thinks it's a great idea, loves it.
- Nathan is all for it, as long as they'd be able to access them.
- The State had some sort of plan to use the old railroad cars, which would have made for a great reef.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: TERRY MCSHANE, PRESIDENT OF MATTITUCK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

AUGUST 18, 2010

- 1) How many persons does the Chamber directly employ? Do they all reside within Mattituck? Or within Southold Town?
  - No employees, all volunteers from community.
  - Many dedicated business people who want to see the Town prosper.
  
- 2) How many businesses does the Chamber represent? How many are outside of Mattituck?
  - Approximately 180 member businesses.
  - Roughly 40 members are from outside of Mattituck, open forum – Chamber encourages outside businesses also, member businesses come from throughout North Fork, Riverhead.
  - Around 160 of the 180 members are businesses on North Fork, mostly from Mattituck. Other 20 or so are interested persons at large. Terry is one of them – no longer a business-owner.
    - Terry used to have an ice cream shop, 2005 until end of 2008. The bad economy, high gasoline prices, high rent knocked him out.
    - Ice cream shops used to be recession-proof, when cones were \$1 each. No longer the case, at \$3 a cone, people don't buy as much when the economy is bad.
    - Terry held onto the business until December 2008.
  
- 3) What are some of the benefits associated with Chamber membership? What are the annual dues?
  - Chamber's goal: do as much as they can to promote businesses.
  - Networking is the major benefit – trying to get people to get together, build connections, build bridges, cross-promote their businesses.
  - Listing on Chamber website.
  - Being a member alone still has some weight to it.
  - Annual dues are \$100.
  - Despite these benefits and relatively low dues, it's tough to maintain memberships during a tough economy – some members may not be able to pay dues at beginning of year, and so Chamber needs to be flexible in when they're paid, etc.
  - Chamber meets once a month, except for during February and summer, approximately 10 months of year.



- 4) Are any of these member benefits different from those that the North Fork Chamber offers?
- Benefits are pretty similar.
  - Many members are members of both Chambers.
- 5) Has consideration ever been given to combine the two chambers?
- Mattituck Chamber of Commerce is a strong Chamber, it has a lengthy heritage, has been doing this for roughly 40 years.
  - Former Chambers merged to become the North Fork Chamber, and Mattituck was offered this also. However, they've been doing fine on their own, how they are, so there's no real need to change that – “why rock the boat, if they're doing OK on their own?”
  - Mattituck and North Fork Chamber talk all the time, and they have many joint meetings, which include Riverhead also. This gives people a place to speak, a forum, there's even an open-mic type of segment. Town Supervisor attends sometimes, encourages direct conversation which benefits all.
  - Two Chambers have other joint events, i.e. Christmas parties, etc.
  - Despite this, it's just easier to keep separate for now.
- 6) How does the Chamber (and member businesses) view the local economy? The Town's business climate?
- Chambers are very frustrated with the economy.
  - The Town is losing many of the “mom and pop” businesses, and there is nothing to protect them from leaving.
  - There are extremely high rents in many parts of Town – huge problem with out-of-town property owners.
  - It'd be great if landlords had realistic expectations on what can be charged for rent, but many of them don't, and don't care.
  - Example of landlord who is taking full advantage of people who don't understand the system, by making them lock into a 20-year contract, which is up \$1,300 a month from what was charged by the previous tenant, less than two years ago.
  - The Feed Bag moved because the rent was unreasonable, has since downsized in Cutchogue, and the former location has been empty for around six months because of the high rents being asked.
  - Chamber is concerned – there seems to be a lot that's happening very quickly.
  - Chamber is pro-business, but more specifically – pro-small business.
    - i.e. 7-11: Chamber is not really allowed to take a stand on it. They can't really come out publically and say that it will hurt other small businesses.
    - Does Mattituck really need five banks?
      - Just broke ground on Chase Bank.
      - Bridgehampton interested in building across from Handy Pantry.



7) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities/challenges for doing business in Southold? What have you heard from member businesses?

- Opportunity: Southold has become a three-season business area; fall is just as busy as summer, which is great.
  - Good example: Harbes – has revolutionized entertainment. They have hay rides, pumpkin picking, wine, orchards, petting zoo, used to be just a potato farm.
  - Opportunity: how can businesses get a piece of this? How can they capture people who are coming out for this activity?
- Opportunity: internet business.
  - For example, Love Lane Sweet Shop does a lot of Godiva business online.
  - Internet is huge – many businesses are joining facebook, promoting themselves and being more creative with the dollar.
    - Chamber needs to update their own website, and make more interactive – that’s what people are looking for.
- Opportunity: Jim Gorman recreated the Love Lane sign a few years ago. He has since made smaller signs, magnets, etc. that sell at Love Lane Sweet Shop – they sell great!
- Challenge: Small businesses can’t keep up.

8) How do you envision the Town’s economic future?

- Concerned about the design, architecture, aesthetics, etc. The idea of the Corridor Study is great, Terry is glad that the Town is doing this.
- As long as the mom and pop businesses can hang on, we’ll be OK.
- Terry wishes that there would be more incentives to keep the mom and pop businesses.
  - Health insurance is a killer among small businesses.

9) What advice would you give to new business looking to come into Town? What advice would you give the Town looking to attract new business?

- To business: find a good spot or do what you can to make it a good spot.
- To Town: Town could be friendlier to businesses.
- Terry doesn’t want Mattituck or Southold Town on the whole to turn into the next Riverhead.
- Would like to see Town with a better plan, Comprehensive Plan is so important.
- Many of the chain businesses in Mattituck are corporate (with the exception of Subway, which is a franchise), which loses the small-town feel.
- No major complaints to Town – they are doing everything that they can to help people and businesses.



- (Talking about McDonald’s coming in, which opens the door to Burger King, and Wendy’s, etc.) – At what point is the gate open too far?
- “Mattituck is the gateway to the North Fork”
- Mattituck has a very diverse economic situation – Laurel Links has \$1 million homes, but right down the street there are the third to a quarter-acre lots for \$300,000. Mattituck is home to a range of people – lawyers, plumbers, etc.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW: TOM DOHERTY, MANAGER OF FISHERS ISLAND FERRY DISTRICT

AUGUST 19, 2010

- 1) Tell me a bit about the Fishers Island Ferry District. How long has the Ferry District been in operation? What is the history? Are there any plans for expansion? What are your thoughts on expanding ferry service to other locations beyond New London?
  - It was started by a New York State Law, and chartered in 1947 as a way of carrying people from the mainland to the Island.
  - It's a taxing district to Island residents only.
  - The Town oversees the Ferry District, and assumes fiscal responsibility, doing payroll records, etc.
  - Ferry District also oversees movie theatre, airport, and several rental buildings, which are Ferry District properties.
    - All owned by Town of Southold, but run by Ferry District.
    - Rental buildings – mostly commercial, some residential.
  - No plans for expansion, and probably won't expand in the future. New London works well; it's close to the train station, close to the bus station, plenty of parking.
  - There were talks of creating a passenger boat to Mystic, but there's no parking there, wouldn't work.
  
- 2) How many persons does the Ferry District employ? FT/PT? How has this changed over the past few years?
  - 17 FT, of which four are year-round island residents. The remaining employees are CT residents.
    - This has remained steady for the past 5-6 years.
  - 40 PT, which are mostly comprised of high school and college kids during the summer. Of these, eight are year-round island residents. The remaining employees are CT residents.
  - Manager and Assistant Manager are based in Fishers Island office.
  - Operating Manager based in New London.
  - While the number of employees has remained relatively constant over the past few years, ridership was down last year due to the economy. As a result, a few boats were subtracted. Things seem to have picked up again this year, and they've added a few more boats back to accommodate this increase in ridership.
  
- 3) Do all of the employees live and work on Fishers Island year-round?
  - See question #2, above.



4) Do you have ridership statistics? Broken down by persons, automobiles, other forms? Residents vs. non-residents? Broken down by month to see seasonal change?

- Yes, the Ferry District compiles these, broken down by type of rider – passenger, automobile, etc. And also resident-non-resident.
- Tom will send 2009 annual statistics, and also statistics through July 2010 to NPV.

Number of Round Trips	2008 (Annual)	2009 (Annual)	2010 (Through July)
Auto	11,970	10,953	6,050
Passenger	52,811	41,669	24,563
Senior/Child	10,000	9,651	4,930
YR* Auto	6,426	6,226	3,604
YR* Passenger	13,061	12,314	7,692
YR* Senior/Child	3,613	3,470	2,099
Truck/Trailer	3,262	2,513	1,762
Bike/Motorcycle	69	87	23
No Driver	386	428	267
Total Ticketing	\$1,580,346.75	\$1,430,249.49	\$1,334,349.49

\* Note: YR stands for year-round residents. According to the Fishers Island Ferry District, year-round residents have lower rates than seasonal residents and other visitors.

5) I noticed on the website that motorcycles and bicycles are charged about the same as automobiles during the peak season, yet much more than automobiles during off-peak season. Seems surprising – especially for bicycles. Why do you think that is?

- Don't encourage motorcycles and bicycles on Island – roads are bad, and a third of the island is private anyway, so riders would need a sticker to access that part of the Island – only Island and Town residents can purchase the sticker.
- Regardless of the high costs, some people still do come over for the day with their bicycles.
- Town residents can purchase a sticker, allowing them onto private part of Island, and access to bike paths.

6) Tell me about the commercial use of the ferries. How has this changed over the years?

- Commercial use basically used for contractors and landscapers on Island – for large projects, i.e. housing, pre-fabricated housing, when the roads are re-done, etc.
- Last year, there was very little commercial ridership for this use. However, it's picked up more so this year.



- Peapod comes over every Thursday between June and September with their truck full of groceries. The rest of the year, they just send over the groceries in boxes without the truck.
    - Many people take advantage; it's amazing how many people use this service.
  - The Schwan's truck (frozen food items) comes every Wednesday also, and parks outside of the post office for residents to purchase items.
- 7) What is the general perception among those utilizing the ferry?
- It's like any other transportation service – there are people who love it and people who hate it.
  - When the ferries are running on schedule, it's usually pretty good.
  - Ferry District is a pretty well-run operation.
- 8) Tell me about the role of the Fishers Island Ferry District Board of Commissioners.
- There is a Board with 5 members with 5 year-terms. One is up for re-election every year.
    - Elected by the Town, must be a resident of the Island.
  - The Board sets the policy for the Ferry District, develops the financial aspects.
  - The Board prepares the annual budget, third week in August every year for the following year.
    - Budget for next year not yet adopted, but looks like it will be \$3.2 million. Of this, approximately \$650,000 comes from taxes.
- 9) How do you view the local economy to be? Fishers Island's business climate?
- The economy this year is better than last year.
  - It's a service-oriented economy.
  - There are always complaints about "there not being enough for wives to do," and that there are no jobs for the women on Island.
    - Tom thinks that if you look hard enough, this is not the case.
- 10) What do you feel are the greatest opportunities for doing business on Fishers Island? The greatest challenges?
- It's a service-oriented economy – landscaping, house cleaning, contracting.
  - The Internet allows anyone to run a business out of their home, which is a big opportunity.
  - Island residents want the Island to stay under the radar, it's a balancing act.
  - Challenges: housing. Fishers Island prices do not allow the average worker to afford to rent or own a home here.
  - Tom wonders what will happen to the year-round person.



- It all comes back to affordable housing projects.
- Requirement of a percentage of new homes in a development works sometimes, sometimes it does not.
- Walsh Park handles all of the Island's affordable housing. Started with the creation of 12 units. They're always looking for more units to acquire.
- Affordable housing is a topic that has always been discussed, but it's very difficult to do.
- Ferry District and School does provide housing for their employees.

11) How do you envision Fishers Island's economic future?

- There is a need for affordable housing for people who want to stay here – this has to become available.
- Fishers Island wants to maintain their year-round population, which is a balancing act.
- Workforce needs places to stay.
- The summer population is here to stay, the same families have been here for generations; nobody is flipping houses and leaving.