

The Nature Conservancy
Mashomack Preserve
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nature.org



October 31, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

MASHOMACK
PRESERVE
BOARD
OF TRUSTEES

As the Director of The Nature Conservancy's Mashomack Preserve I am writing to notify you that TNC does not oppose the bulkhead repair application for portions of the Taylor's Island project by the Town of Shelter Island.

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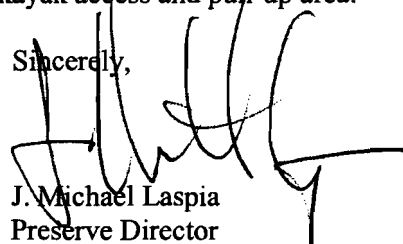
In general, TNC favors an approach to consideration of bulkhead permit applications that balances the necessity of bulkheads for protecting homes in some limited circumstances and the need to prevent the construction of bulkheads altogether in certain ecologically sensitive areas. Accordingly, we advocate denial of bulkhead permits when an area is particularly ecologically sensitive. We also advocate the consideration of alternative shoreline stabilization techniques, instead of bulkheads, in circumstances in which they are appropriate. However, TNC does not oppose the use of bulkheads where: (a) there is a real erosion risk that threatens structures on the property; (b) there are no particularly ecologically significant values to be protected; and (c) alternative stabilization structures have been considered and rejected as either inadequate to protect the property or prohibitively expensive.

Many years ago there were many hundreds, if not thousands, of cubic yards of soil that were transported to the island site to give it more elevation. It was then contained by concrete bulk heading.

There is a structure on Taylor's Island which is a candidate for the National Register of Historical Places and the gravesite of Mr. Taylor who willed the island to the Town of Shelter Island. Over the years the bulk heading has seriously deteriorated and erosion of soil is occurring – threatening the integrity of the structure and the gravesite. In addition if a serious breach occurred a huge amount of fill would enter Coecles Harbor and possibly destroy surrounding salt marsh vegetation and ecological integrity of underwater land and shoreline of Mashomack Preserve.

I do however believe that on the northwest corner of Taylor's Island where the bulkhead is most deteriorated, elevation the lowest and furthest from the structure and grave, there is an opportunity to do some alternative shoreline stabilization that is more ecologically sensitive and would allow a canoe/kayak access and pull-up area.

Sincerely,



J. Michael Laspia
Preserve Director

/JML



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