

**CAUMSETT STATE HISTORIC PARK
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**

**Draft Master Plan and
Draft Environmental Impact Statement**



**September 24, 2008
Cold Spring Harbor, NY**



David A. Paterson
Governor

Carol Ash
Commissioner

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions and Welcoming Remarks
2. Overview and Timeline of the Planning Process
3. Overview of the Park
4. Public Input
5. Next Steps

Agency Initiative

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has identified new initiatives to help guide the agency's activities. They are as follows:

- Revitalizing our Parks and Historic Sites
- Natural resource stewardship and interpretation
- Creating connections
- Sustainability

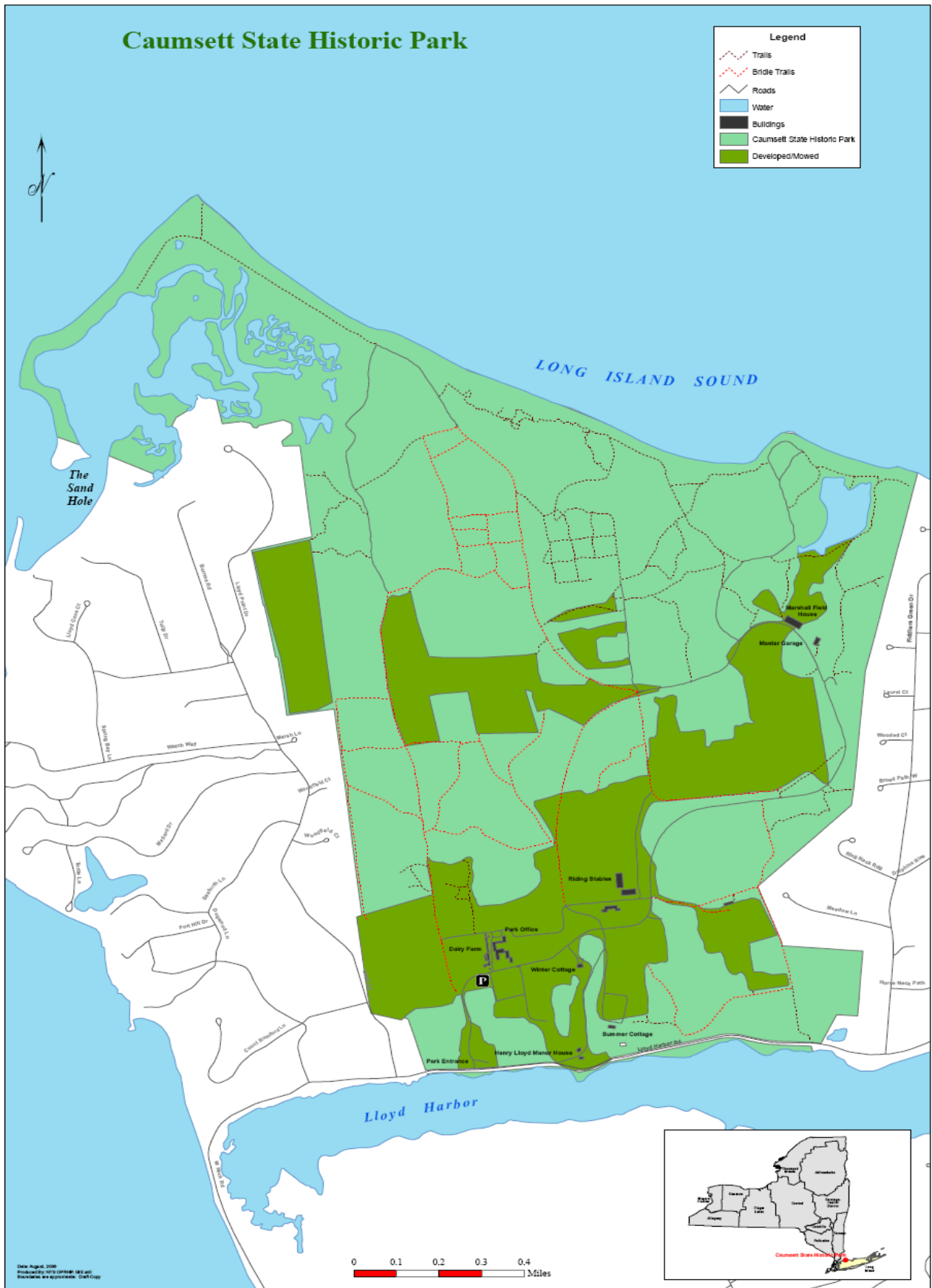
The master plan for Caumsett State Historic Park is part of an accelerated planning initiative that will advance these themes and determine the best course of action to preserve and utilize park resources for this and future generations.

Introduction

Caumsett State Historic Park is distinguished by its historic significance, natural character and recreational resources. The park offers a variety of traditional recreational opportunities such as hiking, bicycling, walking, horse back riding, fishing, bird watching, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The park also offers educational and interpretive programs for groups and park patrons throughout the year.

The purpose of this public information meeting is to actively invite public participation and involvement in the planning process. Public participation will help OPRHP to identify issues, concerns and alternatives, as well as to determine the depth to which each of the topics will be explored within the Draft Master Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

This handout and the public information meeting are intended to provide the public with a concise overview of Caumsett State Historic Park; the setting, the resources and the issues identified to this point. More pointedly, this meeting will serve as a forum for the public to provide input at an early stage of the master planning process.



Caumsett State Historic Park – Public Information Meeting

Overview

The acquisition of Caumsett State Historic Park reflects the dedication of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to establish and maintain unique recreation and cultural opportunities for the residents of New York State. The park stands as a prime example of OPRHP's mission to be a responsible steward of natural and cultural resources and cultivates the relationship between people, nature and open space.

Encompassing 1,600 acres in the Village of Lloyd Harbor, Town of Huntington, Suffolk County, Caumsett is known for its historic landscape and unique geological features. The coastal bluffs, freshwater pond and the salt water marsh all contribute to the distinctive character of the park. In addition to its scenic qualities, Caumsett's proximity to the metropolitan New York area draws a wide-range of users to visit the park making it both a local and regional destination.

Timeline

1961 – Property acquired by New York State Parks and Recreation

1976 – Park opens for use

1976 – New York State Historic Resources Survey / National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Application

1979 – Caumsett is listed on the National Register of Historic Places

1995 – Field Analysis of Physical and Operational Conditions at Caumsett State Park

1997 – Caumsett is designated as a “State Historic Park”

Environmental Setting

Caumsett State Historic Park overlooks the Long Island Sound from a pristine location of Lloyd's Neck. The park is an area of unique historic, natural and cultural features that when added together provide numerous recreational and interpretive opportunities. These same resources point to the need for responsible stewardship to assure their protection and care. Its location in western Suffolk County makes the park an ideal destination for a wide-range of users in both Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Caumsett was intended to reflect an English countryside estate and at one time was completely self-sufficient. Caumsett provided its own food grown on site, had its own stock of Guernsey cows for dairy goods, created its own power, water, and housing for all of the staff that lived on its 1,600 acres. Caumsett's history as a self-sufficient estate dictates many of the uses of the park today and the layout and design of the estate can still be detected within the park.

Natural Resources

ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES

Caumsett State Historic Park is primarily forest communities and open fields, including a large oak-tulip tree forest, coastal oak-hickory forest and successional old fields. It has a 12-acre freshwater pond and an 89-acre low salt marsh.

The New York Natural Heritage Program (NHP) study identified 13 distinct ecological community types within the park's 1,600 acres. A total of 251 acres of land within the park are identified as “developed”.

These areas include both developed and/or artificially maintained areas, such as building sites, mowed lawn and field areas, and paved roads.

Four communities found within the park are considered to be significant by the Natural Heritage Program. The coastal oak-hickory forest is considered rare statewide and exhibits good to excellent structure and is moderately diverse for its type. The low salt marsh community is significant because it is rare statewide. It is mostly found and well established along the southern shores of Long Island and in protected bay areas along the north shore. This particular occurrence within Caumsett is still of good quality despite past ditching practices.

The maritime beach community is considered significant because it extends uninterrupted for approximately 3.6 miles and is an important nesting ground for birds such as the piping plover, least tern, common tern and roseate tern. It is the fourth largest of six documented maritime beaches tracked by NHP.

The oak-tulip tree forest is considered rare in New York State and this occurrence within Caumsett is of high quality. It has excellent structure with a variety of age classes and evidence of old growth characteristics in the highest quality areas. It occupies more than 490 acres of the park which is located among a highly residentially developed area.

FLORA AND FAUNA

There are “living fences” of sassafras, poison ivy and other vine type plants that were used to separate areas of the estate such as the main drive from pasture lands. These “living fences” also provide habitat for small animals and birds. Daffodils, which are descendants of original plantings in 1926, grow around the estate and a large American beech tree was allowed to grow in an open field. Plantings of Rhododendron and Laurels in the woods serve as visual barriers shielding the drive and “pleasure areas” of the grounds from the service areas on the east side of the house.

Invasive vegetation can be found along road and trail edges and the edges of some successional forest areas. Species such as wild grape and Oriental bittersweet vines grow into surrounding trees and shrubs. Other invasive species include garlic mustard, Japanese honeysuckle, Tatarian honeysuckle, multiflora rose and black locust. These species have the ability to displace native plants. Some fields and meadows are maintained as mowed lawn areas, such as the polo fields, while others are only mowed once or twice a year to promote wildflowers and wildlife habitat.

TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS

Caumsett State Historic Park is located in the Village of Lloyd Harbor and the topography of the park is characterized as hilly, with a steep escarpment or bluff in the center of its cobbly, north shore beach. The elevation ranges from 20 to 100 feet above sea level. In addition to the beaches and escarpments other land forms within the park include dunes and a tidal marsh. The soils within the park are derived from gravely and sandy materials.

WATER RESOURCES

Freshwater bodies

The park supports two freshwater bodies—Fresh Pond and a vernal pond. Fresh pond is approximately 12 acres and its existence can be dated back to the earliest settlers of Long Island. Fresh Pond is a “kettle

hole” pond which is virtually unpolluted. The Fields altered the pond by adding drains and aerators so the pond could support trout species. The pond currently supports a bass population.

Long Island Sound

The Long Island Sound Shoreline Area includes the shorelines and saltwater wetland areas bordering Lloyd Harbor and Long Island Sound. The embayment at Lloyd Point is a primary destination for boaters to anchor and access the shore. The remainder of the Long Island Shoreline attracts fisherpersons and beach walkers. The area has a nearly 80 acres of saltwater wetland, protected bay, Lloyd Point and the shoreline along Long Island Sound. A fisherperson’s parking lot exists near the neck of Lloyd Point.

Lloyd Harbor

Lloyd Harbor is a western arm of Huntington Bay and forms the southern border to Lloyd Neck. It is approximately 630 acres with an average depth of five feet and the East Beach sand spit provides some protection at the harbor’s mouth. It is also a popular anchorage and mooring area in the summer months.

In addition, the bays and coastal waters adjacent to Caumsett have been designated by the New York State Department of State as Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife areas. The Village of Lloyd Harbor also has a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) which includes Caumsett State Historic Park.

Cultural Resources

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The area of Lloyd Neck was originally inhabited by the Mattinnecock Indians of the Algonquins who called the place Caumsett meaning “place by a sharp rock”. In 1654, the Mattinnecock Chief Ratiocan sold the area to British settlers from Oyster Bay. The British settlers changed the name to “Horse Neck”. In the 1670’s James Lloyd purchased the property and rented it to tenant farmers. The area then became known as Lloyd Neck. In 1709, James’ son Henry took possession of the land and constructed a wood frame house, a barn, a granary, a blacksmith shop and a schoolhouse. With the exception of the duration of the American Revolution, the land stayed in the Lloyd family until the late 1800’s.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND LANDSCAPE

In 1921, Marshall Field III purchased the land that would become Caumsett and created his Gold Coast manor. To turn his vision of a rolling English estate into a reality Field called upon the talents of several designers. Most notably, Field hired famed architect John Russell Pope to design several structures on the property, including the mansion and the polo stables. Pope was meticulous in his site plan for the estate and made sure that the view-shed and scenic integrity of the landscape was held in the highest regard. Field also employed the landscape architecture firm of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. who planned the grounds at Caumsett.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

According to OPHRP Historic Preservation records, some areas of the park are considered archeologically sensitive.

Scenic Resources

Caumsett is an inherently scenic park. With its rolling hills, vast meadows and meandering roads, the scenery has a way of surprising and delighting the park user around every turn. In addition to its designed

landscape, the northern portion of the park overlooks the Long Island Sound. From the mansion veranda one can see both the freshwater pond and the Long Island Sound making this not only a unique ecological resource, but one of great beauty as well. Many structures within the park also add to the scenic and historic character within the park.

Recreational Resources

Recreation is a critical facet of Caumsett. An assessment of recreational needs and opportunities will be addressed within the master plan. The following recreational opportunities exist within the park:

- Interpretive / Education programs
- Equestrian / Polo
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Biking
- Running / Walking
- Diving
- Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing
- Passive Activities (sightseeing; birding)
- Special Events

Infrastructure

An assessment of the existing structures, roads, parking and utilities requirements will be conducted in the master planning process and will include the following:

- Existing Buildings
- Roads and Parking Areas
- Water and Sewer
- Heating
- Electricity
- Phone/Internet
- Solid Waste

Operations

An assessment of operational needs will be completed during the master planning process. Some of the items to be addressed are as follows:

- Park Staff
- Park Headquarters
- Maintenance
- Emergency Operations
- Sustainability Considerations (recycling, alternative energy)

Public Input

Your information and suggestions are important in the master planning process. The information gathered at tonight's meeting provides us with a valuable component and will be reviewed and considered before determining master plan alternatives that meet the needs and mission of the park.

Preliminary list of items to be addressed in master plan

- ADA Compliance
- Archaeological Resources
- Boundary Encroachments
- Connectivity
- Education / Interpretive Programs
- Equestrian Use
- Infrastructure Needs
- Invasive Species Management
- Maintenance of facilities (trails, structures)
- New Recreational Trends
- Partnerships (Caumsett Foundation)
- Parking
- Permits
- Preservation—Natural and Cultural
- Property Acquisitions
- Public Safety and Security
- Sustainability Considerations
- Traffic and Circulation (internal and external to the park)
- Trails
- Special Events
- Visitor's Center

Next Steps

The issues, concerns and alternatives identified at the public information meeting and through written comments will be summarized and made available. The Draft Master Plan/Draft EIS will address these issues. Public review of this document will include a public hearing and public comment/review period. Comments made during this time will be considered in the preparation of the Final EIS/Final Master Plan. After the issuance of the final plan and a public consideration period, a findings statement will be issued along with the Commissioner's decision regarding adoption of the plan. Comment and suggestion forms are available at the sign in area and will be accepted until **Friday, October 17, 2008**.

Master Plan Timeline

Public Information Meeting	September 24, 2008
Draft Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)	April 2009
Hearing	June 2009
Final Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)	September 2009
Findings and Adoption	September 2009

For additional information please contact:

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Written comments may be sent to Ms. Pezzolla using the address above or may be sent via email to: elisabeth.pezzolla@oprhp.state.ny.us