

CUTCHOGUE CIVIC ASSOCIATION
2024 ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS
DECEMBER 12, 2024

As we celebrate our second anniversary, we take great pride in knowing that we have more than lived up to our mission to inform and educate our residents about issues of community interest or concern: We have fostered community, sparked meaningful conversation and helped build an informed group of citizens. Significantly, this past year we also saw our civic association coalesce into a solid group of roll-up-your-sleeves board members and volunteers, and we experienced healthy attendance at our informational meetings.

With the invaluable aid of our growing roster of members and an engaged community, we accomplished much in 2024. We:

- **Offered** a full schedule of 8 informational meetings — neutral forums on timely, substantive topics: the health of our waterways, the community housing plan, short-term rentals, zoning 101, battery energy storage systems, land preservation in Southold Town, and the Cutchogue - New Suffolk Park District. Additionally, we co-sponsored a zoning session for the Town with the New Suffolk Civic Association. Each program required approximately 20 hours of human power, with no less than 6 individuals directly involved at different stages. That's a pretty impressive effort.
- **Hosted** two lively and well-attended social get-togethers (mid-summer and end-of-year), since we believe that adding in a bit of social time to our calendar helps keep the conversation going and our members and friends connected.
- **Spread the word** month after month about our programs, and activities, through email blasts and PR efforts, and kept our members informed about topics of timely importance.
- **Initiated** coffee meet-ups the morning after our meetings — unstructured, informal gatherings that provide opportunities to keep the conversation going. This innovation, suggested by a member, has turned out to be an invaluable addition to our work. The meet-ups have even yielded several new volunteers. Keep the suggestions coming!
- **Kept apprised** of Town Hall activities by attending hours and hours of Southold Town meetings — in person and on Zoom. These meetings help inform the topics we select for our programs and remind us what things to keep an eye on.
- **Actively participated** in the North Fork Coalition of Civics, which offers feedback to Southold Town government on issues related to the future growth of the North Fork, maintaining our rural character, and coastal resiliency planning.

- **Oversaw** growth in our membership, now totaling 132, and **launched** a 2025 membership campaign, with a goal of not only inspiring every single member to renew, but converting those on our mailing list to members. To date, we have 20 new members and 32 renewals.
- **Marched** with pride — and a really large banner — in the Cutchogue St. Patrick's Day and New Suffolk 4th of July parades.
- **Conducted** a morning-long planning session for our board and volunteers, time so well-spent that we have incorporated planning and goal-setting into our annual calendar.
- **Navigated successfully** through inevitable board changes. As we enter the new year, four of our eight directors are original founders. This seasoned board is augmented with new names and ideas, resulting in a healthy composition. We said goodbye to two directors, Perri Parlino and Kim Zablocky, who both remain involved and essential, and greeted new members Mike Tiner and Marjorie Adams. We also re-welcomed back to the board Barbara Butterworth, a founding member. This is a board of hard-working, dedicated people.
- **Attracted** an enviable team of volunteers. In addition to our working board, we rely on this small and indispensable core of volunteers to keep all the nuts and bolts in place. This past year, they've helped streamline our procedures, boosted our communication efforts and kept things churning smoothly along.
- **Ended the year** solidly in the black, with a balance of roughly \$2,500 in the bank. These vital membership dollars cover the small but necessary administrative costs of running an organization.
- And last, but certainly not least, we were **honored** by our newest Cutchogue neighbor, Peconic Community School, as its 2024 honoree. We are filled with pride — and this recognition attracted several new members as a result. We plan to continue the conversation with PCS and the Cutchogue school district to identify ways to engage the next generation of citizens in our civic effort.

It is immensely gratifying to receive so many unsolicited comments about how good our programs are, and the good that our civic association is doing. It's no accident that our meetings are often attended by familiar faces from Town Hall. They know that good information — and energetic conversation — also attends our meetings. And that our work, as well as that of all the other North Fork civic associations, helps build community.

And so we find ourselves on solid footing as we enter 2025, ready to meet the opportunities that await:

- First and foremost, we will continue to do what we do best: provide a neutral forum of informative programming, which in turn promotes engaging discussion. We are planning a rigorous schedule of 9-10 informational meetings, beginning on January 16 with a program titled, "Bumps in the Road?: How our Highway Department Navigates 400 Miles of Roadway & Much More." We also are planning programs to hear about the impact of climate change from local businesses and take a new look at our tax bill. Furthermore, the Town will rely on us, and other civic associations, to provide opportunities for community input on the Town Zoning Update Project.

- Additionally, we hope to:
 - expand and broaden our outreach, especially to young families in our area
 - build our Program Committee with more volunteers who can help create the substantive programs that are at the core of our mission
 - add new volunteers to our Communications Committee, enabling us to expand our social media presence and community engagement
 - continue to look for new opportunities to create meaningful community conversation.

On a personal note, having been involved from the inception of this organization, I'm so proud of how far we have come in the last two years, of the impact we are making, the conversations we are sparking, and the community we are building. We are poised for another information-filled, engaged and busy year.

Thank you, all, for helping to make this so.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn McCall, President