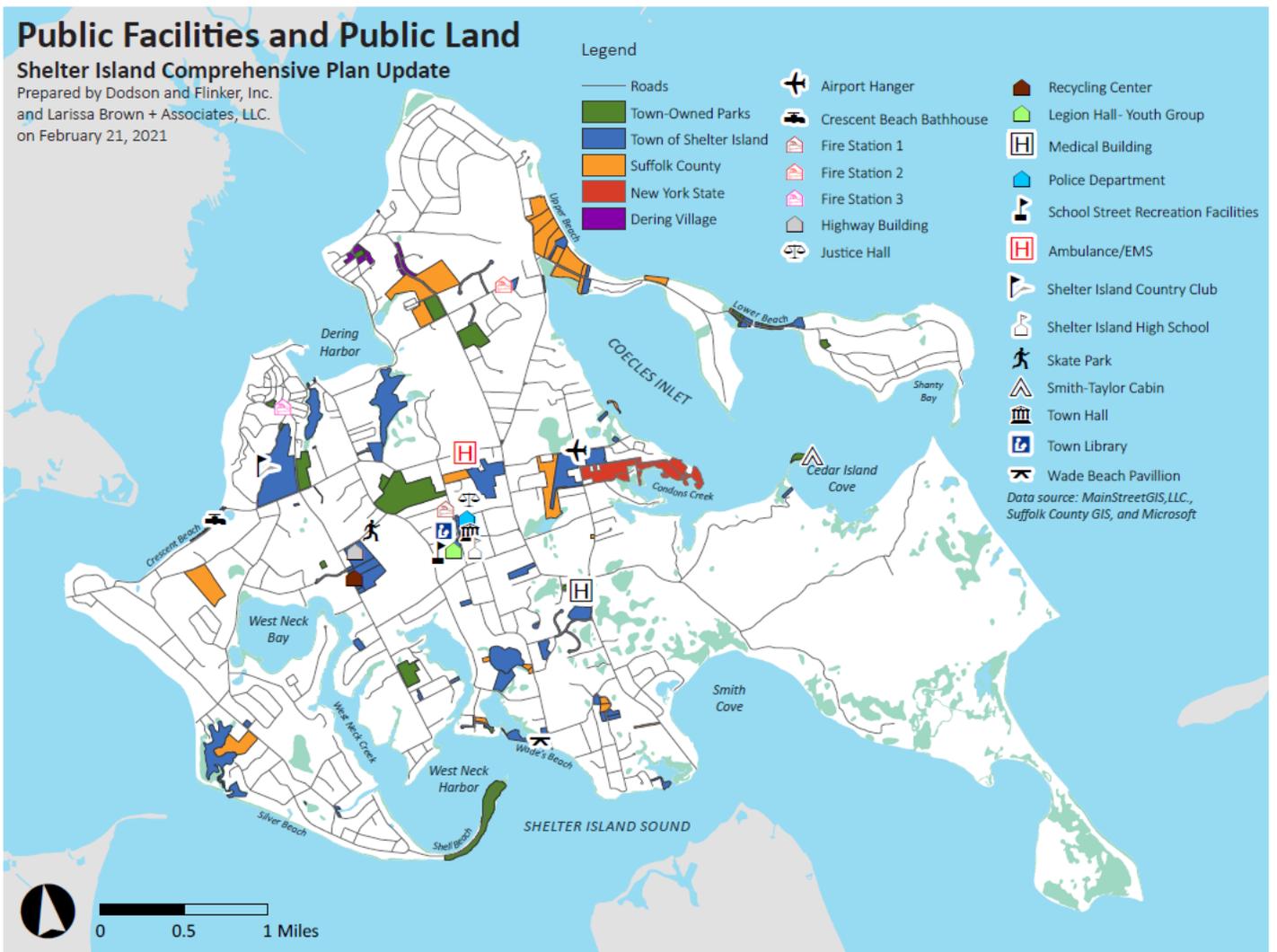


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Chapter 3

QUALITY OF LIFE: COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES (Penultimate Draft)



Education and Lifelong Learning

Community life is often centered around schools and libraries. On Shelter Island, the Shelter Island School and the Library serve as important community hubs. Other learning opportunities are offered by the Youth Center, the Shelter Island Historical Society, and the Senior Center (see the Public Health and Safety section). The school and the library benefit from associated nonprofit organizations: the Shelter Island Educational Foundation, and the Friends of the Shelter Island Public Library.

Shelter Island Union Free School District

The Shelter Island School District (SIUFSD) provides education for grades pre-K through 12th, as well as supporting community life through a broad range of services. Regular events bring families and friends together for concerts, sports, and other activities. The Shelter Island School Drama Club's annual spring musicals are award-winning productions that bring the community together and attract off-season residents back for the show, which is usually held in April.

The SIUFSD exists in a single building at 33 North Ferry Road where it serves grades pre-K through 12. The district is led by a seven-member elected Board of Education and is not a department of Town government. It is funded primarily by a property tax levy of \$2.89 per \$1000 of taxable assessed value for the 2022-23 budget of \$12,445,523. Approximately 46% of the total Town tax levy goes to the School District.

Historically, cost per pupil has been higher than similar districts and significantly above the New York State average. According to data.nysed.gov, the cost per pupil in 2020-2021 was \$47,871 compared to a countywide average of \$25,638. According to the same source, the cost per pupil was \$33,944 in 2010-2011. Over this decade, 2010-2020, the change in cost per pupil represents a 41% increase compared to a cumulative price change in the US of 32%. When a special education student's needs cannot be met in-house, the cost to send that student off-island can be as much as \$100,000 per pupil. These costs are then, of course, reflected in the per pupil calculation.

The school had an official Pre-K-12 enrollment of 186 students in 2022-23. In recent years, there have been approximately 30 students who attend private schools off island. The average class size is 16 with a student-teacher ratio of 8:1. It is anticipated that the student population numbers will stabilize because the graduating classes are being replaced with like numbers in the lower grades.

Certified by the New York State Board of Regents, Shelter Island School employs 34 professional staff in addition to five teaching assistants and aides, a guidance counselor, a school nurse, a school psychologist, and a school social worker. Eighty-four percent of all professional staff have graduate degrees. The number of teachers has been stable in a range of 31-36 since 1998.

The school is rated at the highest level (4) for College, Career and Civic Readiness. The graduation rate for the 2021-2022 school year was 98% according to US News & World Report.

Enrollment has declined during the last two decades, from a high of 285 students in 2003-2004 to a low of 186 in 2022-2023. The temporary increase in student population due to the pandemic illustrated that the school can absorb more students without an overall increase in costs. The superintendent has initiated a program designed to attract tuition-paying students from surrounding towns.

The school population has become more ethnically and economically diverse. From 7.5% English Language Learners in the 2002-2003 school year to 20% identifying as Hispanic in the 2018- 2019 school year. In the 2022-2023 school year, 35% of students were eligible for free or reduced lunch.

The high school athletic department runs sports programs under the umbrella of the NY State Public High School Athletic Association. School athletic events bring residents together and are valued not only as a source of entertainment but also for the sense of community that is created - especially in the winter. The cross country, volleyball and men's basketball team's extended seasons into playoffs and state championships have encouraged celebratory parades from the ferry late at night—building team spirit and connections across the island community and school community. While these and other sports continue, including golf, winter track, baseball and softball, there is a downward trend in the number of sports offered at the school. Many sports, historically combined with neighboring schools, such as football, lacrosse, tennis, wrestling, etc. are no longer offered for various reasons.

Shelter Island Public Library

The Shelter Island Library was established in 1885 and has a mission “to provide state-of-the-art resources, services, programs and technologies that meet current and evolving needs of the community, and to foster lifelong learning on Shelter Island.” Located in a 1965 single-story 6000 square foot, ADA compliant brick building at 37 North Ferry Road on 1.27 acres of land, the library provides traditional library services along with a wide variety of electronic, educational, cultural and entertainment programs.

The library facility has a community meeting space on the lower level that can be expanded to accommodate up to 125 people. It also contains a Children’s Library, a staff lunchroom/kitchen and a patio off the lower level with table seating and a retractable awning. The main level holds adult materials and computer stations.

As stated in its recent strategic plan, the library also strives to be a model for sustainability. In 2020 it was awarded certification by the Green Business Partnership in recognition of its efforts to reduce waste, conserve water and energy, implement green purchasing, and make an organizational commitment to sustainability.

The Shelter Island Library is an “Association Library,” that is, a public library created by a membership association. It is not a department of Town government but the library does depend on tax revenue (the rate for 2023 was 0.1987 per \$1,000 in assessed value) to cover the lion’s share of its budget. The library’s portion of tax bill is usually around 3%. This amount is voted on annually by registered voters via an election run by the School’s District Clerk. Per the September 29, 2022 Public Notice of a Vote, the 2022-23 budget called for \$755,796 in taxes, an amount that covers 81% of operating costs. Total expenditures were budgeted at \$926,715. The balance of expenses not covered by property taxes comes from gifts, grants, fundraising, fees, fines and investments.

Governed by a Board of Trustees, the library’s focus is on developing educational, cultural, and entertainment programs for all sectors of the community including adults, children, students and seniors as well as those with special needs. It accomplishes this with a staff of 13 (4 full-time)

The library provides the following use statistics for the July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022 period:

- 76,420 Visits
- 62,718 Checkouts
- 19,502 Live-Brary Downloads
- 9,354 Program Attendance
- 828 Programs
- 29,115 Books and Materials
- 93,750 Log-Ins on Wifi
- 3,090 Library Card Holders

A key service provided by the library is technology support and access via the 6 desktop and 6 laptop computers which are available in-house and Wi-Fi for

patrons' personal devices. It also offers remote, electronic access to books, movies, videos, periodicals, programming, educational resources and databases. The use of these services has grown exponentially, in all segments of the population, in the years of the pandemic. It also provides passport processing and Notary Public Services and periodic clinics for shingles, Covid and flu vaccines.

A variety of recurring and one-time programs are aimed at fostering support for students and providing life-long learning opportunities for the entire population. One such program, an outreach service that provides book selection and home delivery, aims to serve homebound islanders. And, in 2022, the library began providing ENL and computer classes.

Open 6 days a week, the library provides critical resources including excellent staff, up-to-date technology and year-round, open access to programs, services, materials, and a variety of media. A major constraint at this time is lack of space. Online databases (e.g., Heritage Quest, Law Depot, Medline, and Flipster) are available at the library as well as offsite via downloads. Circulation of materials in hard copy is declining, while electronic access continues to rise.

The library provides access to materials (print as well as digital) from the entire Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS) that represents the 56 public libraries in Suffolk County. This cooperative also negotiates system-wide fees for the library's broadband access and the licenses for all forms of e-media, as well as traditional movies. These costs are then passed on to the individual libraries through a proportional formula based on population and total budget.

The goals outlined in the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan include more support for non-traditional education and coordination with the school district; more specialty spaces, such as a Maker Space; and improvements to the library's property to become greener and more resilient through green energy, state-of-the-art waste disposal, and electric vehicle charging stations.

The Friends of the Shelter Island Public Library, a non-profit organization, supports the library through fund-raising events for cultural and educational programs and for resources and materials not within the annual operating budget.

Town Buildings and Other Assets

The Town owns 25 buildings and nine other facilities. The audited financial statements provide this snapshot of the Town’s assets:

	Balance December 31, 2020	Additions	Reductions	Balance December 31, 2021
Governmental activities				
Capital assets not being depreciated:				
Land	\$ 24,662,541	\$	\$	\$ 24,662,541
Conservation easements	2,064,217			2,064,217
Construction work in progress	175,950		(175,950)	-
Total capital assets not being depreciated	<u>26,902,708</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(175,950)</u>	<u>26,726,758</u>
Capital assets being depreciated:				
Buildings and improvements	8,580,827	28,790		8,609,617
Machinery and equipment	7,359,881	464,548	(47,306)	7,777,123
Infrastructure	5,469,188	592,965		6,062,153
Total capital assets being depreciated	<u>21,409,896</u>	<u>1,086,303</u>	<u>(47,306)</u>	<u>22,448,893</u>
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Buildings and improvements	4,104,141	212,392		4,316,533
Machinery and equipment	4,986,660	393,776	(47,306)	5,333,130
Infrastructure	2,175,931	247,794		2,423,725
Total accumulated depreciation	<u>11,266,732</u>	<u>853,962</u>	<u>(47,306)</u>	<u>12,073,388</u>
Total capital assets, being depreciated, net	<u>10,143,164</u>	<u>232,341</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,375,505</u>
Capital assets, net	<u>\$ 37,045,872</u>	<u>\$ 232,341</u>	<u>\$ (175,950)</u>	<u>\$ 37,102,263</u>

Source: 2021 Audited Financial Statements

Town owned buildings and facilities include the following:

- Police Department
- Shelter Island Country Club
- West Neck Water District
- Town Hall, Assessors’ & Tax Receiver’s Building, Building Department, Multi-family Building
- Recycling Center/Transfer Station
- Highway Building and Salt Sand Building
- Smith-Taylor Cabin & Taylor’s Island
- Justice Hall
- Medical Building

- Wades Beach Bathhouse and Pavilion
- Legion Hall/Youth Center
- Crescent Beach Bathhouse and Pavilion
- Shelter Island Ambulance Barn
- Klenawicus Airport & Hanger
- Playground Equipment
- Bridge Street Gazebo and Bathroom
- Properties Acquired for Open Space through Community Preservation Funds, Suffolk County (alone and in partnership), and Donations

The Town's assets are maintained by the Department of Public Works.

Town Facility Projects or Initiatives

Funding for Town facility improvements and initiatives comes from the general fund or grants from the state, county, and/or federal governments. The Town applies for \$50,000 per year in Community Development Block Grant federal funds which need to be spent to benefit seniors, disabled persons, or people in low- and moderate-income areas. Town officials and staff have identified a number of projects that need attention. Several themes emerge from project planning and implementation lists:

- Sea level rise: various projects to address sea level rise on coastal town property
- Water issues: Ground and Surface Water Management Plan, sewage plant discharge/fertigation at the Shelter Island Heights Treatment Plant, Municipal Buildings waste water treatment plant
- ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance: scheduled for upgrade in 2023-2024 are the Community Center, Police Building and Justice Hall
- Repairs and improvements to facilities: Legion Hall, Senior Center kitchen and bathroom project, Medical Center roof, Town Hall and Medical Center emergency generators, solar array on the Recycling Center roof, and at the Town Hall Campus. Some of these projects have been completed while others are in process or listed for future implementation.
- Municipal facilities master plan: Town Building and Infrastructure Asset Evaluations need updating
- Town Center planning and improvements: Facility Needs Assessment

- Building a capital reserve fund

Capital Planning and Grants

The Capital Planning and Grants Committee (CPGC) advises the Town Board on priorities, costs, and funding resources for capital projects. The Committee is developing a “Multi-Year Capital Plan” to guide maintenance, repair and replacement of infrastructure and assets so that these expenditures can be scheduled.

The timeline for this project targets completion mid-year 2023. The CPGC will be requesting each Town department to examine and report anticipated expenditures on capital projects that would fall outside of normal operating budgets.

Once the CPGC has the requests of each department, they will work to prioritize the projects, seek grant funding, and/or budget for the project in future fiscal years.

Highway & Public Works Department

The Shelter Island Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for buildings operations and maintenance; grounds maintenance; solid waste management including recycling, composting, and household solid waste management; and maintenance of Town-owned parks, beaches, docks and other recreational assets within the Town.

The Highway Department is responsible for fleet services; road and right-of-way maintenance, including repairs, repaving, snow removal, and mowing. The Village of Dering Harbor and the Shelter Island Heights Property Owners Corporation (SIHPOC) manage their own roadways and other assets, sometimes contracting for services with the town.

Solid Waste Management

The Town of Shelter Island, which does not provide curbside collection of trash and recyclables, is responsible for solid waste management on the island. Solid waste is handled at the transfer station and Recycling Center on Menantic Road which is open 7 days a week. Town residents can contract with private haulers for refuse management. **The Town is required to update its Municipal Solid Waste Plan every 10 years and the most current plan (2019-2028) is in the appendix to this Plan.**

Since 1992, in order to incentivize recycling, the Town has used a pay-per-bag system for waste and does not charge for recycling. This system is also intended to fund both the cost of waste disposal and the cost to process the recyclables; fees have been periodically adjusted to reflect these expenses. The Town website has information and recycling rules such as which recyclables are accepted and how to prepare them as well as hazardous waste and rules for use of the “Goody Pile” area where items that are “too good to throw away” are exchanged.

Since 1991, the Town has competitively bid hauling services to transfer waste. The Town markets materials from the separated recyclables to offset operational costs, and is increasing its in-house capacity to bale and haul these materials. All waste and recyclables, except yard waste, are transported off-island via ferry and taken to the Brookhaven Town Landfill—which is scheduled to close in 2024. Recyclables are processed by the Town for transport off-Island.

In 2018, China effectively stopped accepting recyclables such as plastics and paper by requiring very low rates of contamination thereby disrupting the global recycling economy. As a result, reduced prices and markets for recyclables have made municipal recycling programs more costly. Recyclables must be separated and those accepted by the Town in late 2022 include newspaper and mixed paper; cardboard; glass bottles and jars; tin and aluminum cans; #1 and #2 plastics.

The Brookhaven landfill, the last one on Long Island, will be closed and capped in 2024. Like other Long Island communities, Shelter Island will have to find another waste facility for its non-recycled waste stream. Household hazardous waste is accepted one Saturday morning a month in the Stop Throwing Out Pollutants (STOP) program. Commercial hazardous waste is not accepted.

The Town’s Highway Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Town’s recycling center and transfer station. Six employees maintain and operate the facilities. The Town has an extensive yard waste management program including a yard waste composting operation and a chipping operation for woody materials. Although the Solid Waste Management Plan claims that yard waste inflow matches outflow, there is some concern that as the Island approaches build out, the Recycling Center will run out of room.

Other materials, which are also source separated for management, include construction and demolition (C&D) debris, metal, and bulky wastes. Bulky wastes and residual C&D are managed by having them hauled after removal of asphalt and concrete, which is recycled by the Town. C&D glass is ground and used in road repair.

The Town also accepts e-waste (electronics). In addition, subject to compliance with “picker” procedures, residents can pick through the C & D, metal, and furniture recycling piles as well as aluminum cans and glass bottles for redeemables.

Shelter Island’s solid waste management program has been very effective over the last 20 years, with the daily average of municipal solid waste reduced from 3.3 tons per day in 2002 to 1.80 tons per day in 2019. Of course, because of the seasonality of the Shelter Island population, the amount of waste produced varies according to the season. The recycling rate for the Shelter Island recycling center is 87.92% compared to the 2013 US EPA national average of 34.3%. The large volume of yard waste contributes to the high recycling rate as does the effective recycling program. Shelter Island’s average daily tonnage is slightly more than half of the US EPA national average daily tonnage. Shelter Island characteristics that influence waste generation are: a high proportion of people over 50 (who typically generate less waste); accepting yard waste throughout the year; and an emphasis on waste reduction practices.

Community Parks and Recreation

Facilities

The American Legion Mitchell Post 281 serves 2 very important functions in the Shelter Island Community: it is a haven for military personnel and veterans as well as a Community Center. Founded after World War I in 1922, the Post took over a building constructed as “the Community Club.” Its nonpartisan mission is to provide service to active-duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces and veterans, their families, and the community. The post, along with its active Ladies Auxiliary, maintains the Island’s war memorials, supports active-duty service members and veterans, provides local military funeral details, organizes events for Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day, and provides support to a multitude of organizations in and around our community. Two bowling lanes are in the basement of the Community Center and are operated by the Legion for the use of Islanders through league play. Also on the lower level, is a bar and commercial kitchen that the Legion operates and makes available for community events.

The second function of the Legion building, as a Community Center, was established in 2008 when the town and the Legion signed a 99-year lease for the

main floor of the building for \$1. The Recreation Program operates its programs from this space.

In addition to the Community Center, the Town owns and operates the following parks and recreational facilities:

- Skateboard Park (at the Highway Department on Bowditch Road)
- Shelter Island Country Club, a nine-hole golf course with a restaurant and bar, is also known as Goat Hill because of its location. The club and course are supported by membership fees which are among the lowest on the East End.
- Volunteer Park (Bridge Street)
- The Tot Lot Playground (at School Street)
- Airport Hangar (at Klenawicus Airfield) - operated by the Shelter Island Pilots Association via a lease agreement with the Town
- Town Beaches, Landings and Docks (throughout the island)
- Walking Trails (throughout the island) - Primarily on Community Preservation Lands
- Taylor's Island

The Shelter Island School District also has facilities, some of which are operated and/or maintained by the Town, that are available for use by the community including:

- FIT Tennis & Pickle Ball Courts - resurfaced in 2020
- Basketball Courts - refurbished in 2020
- Fiske Field – Baseball & Soccer
- The FIT Center, an indoor exercise facility, located at the Shelter Island School, has an annual membership fee. Discounted fees are available for EMS volunteers, active military, college students, and youth. The school district owns the building but the Town rents the space and manages the FIT Center. A visiting physical therapist operates out of a small room in the FIT Center.

Semi-public and private community recreational facilities are owned and operated by:

- Sylvester Manor (Manor House, Trails and Farm)
- The Nature Conservancy (Mashomack Preserve Manor House, Visitors'

- Center, and Trails)
- The Shelter Island History Center
 - The Shelter Island Heights Property Owners Corporation (tennis courts, beach and cabanas for members)
 - Recreational facilities owned by various home owner associations.
 - Gardiner's Bay Country Club
 - Shelter Island Yacht Club
 - Camp Quinipet
 - Shelter Island Yoga & Fitness at the Dering Harbor Inn – features a tennis program, a gym, and fitness classes

Programs:

The Recreation Department organizes programs for adults, youth and children. These programs have modest fees which are then used to pay instructors. Space is limited and more programs and classes could be offered if more space was available. After school programs, started a few years ago for K-5 students, typically accommodate 10-15 students. In 2022, up to 14 or 15 students would participate in any one session. Examples of recent programs include:

- Adult trips to New York City
- Movie Days including drive-in movies during the pandemic for families and children
- Yoga, Zumba, and other fitness programs for youth and adults
- Swimming lessons at Wades Beach
- Pre-schooler and after school programs
- Arts and crafts
- Basketball clinic
- Volleyball
- Soccer
- Adult co-ed drop in basketball
- Ballroom and Latin Social Dance
- Tennis Lessons
- Pickle Ball
- Summer camps and programs are available at Shelter Island School and the Library, as well as through the Recreation Department.

- Senior Luncheons at Community Center/Out to Lunch Bunch (lunch trips for seniors)
- Open Gym (for middle school/high school students)
- Cooking Programs for kids (pre-COVID)

Private recreational programs for adults, children, and youth in the summer are also available, including at Gardiner’s Bay Country Club, the Shelter Island Yacht Club, Sylvester Manor Educational Farm, the Shelter Island History Center and Mashomack Preserve. Quinipet Camp & Retreat Center offers overnight camp and day camp, and sailing programs for children and youth.

Non-Governmental Organizations & Events that Support Community Life

Churches

Religious communities on the Island provide religious services as well as a broad range of community services and events consistent with their individual missions and capabilities. As in any small town, they are among the few regular gathering places for community members other than school events and town meetings and provide critical support to senior citizens and families.

- St. Mary’s Episcopal Church – provides year-round religious services, and offers space for AA and Al-Anon meetings, yoga and dance classes; hosts meetings of the Shelter Island Association and Hay Beach Association, the All-Faith Youth Group Pancake Supper, and the Election Eve Ham Dinner, as well as offering an annual “Friday Night Grub” meal series during the month of March. The church delivers Christmas dinners for close to 100 people on Christmas day.
- Shelter Island Presbyterian Church offers year-round services and hosts the Island’s food pantry, community choir, Shelter Island Friends of Music Concerts, and scout meetings. The church provides space for the Town’s congregate meals for seniors, the local pre-school, and hosts an Election Day Luncheon and a Community Thanksgiving Dinner.
- Our Lady of the Isle Roman Catholic Church also offers year-round services and hosts a book club, provides religious instruction and participates in the All-faith Youth Group.

- Society of Friends – hold a weekly Friends Meeting, from May to October at the Quaker Memorial at Sylvester Manor and during the winter months at the Shelter Island Historical Society’s Havens House.
- Union Chapel in the Grove – hosts interfaith summer services featuring guest speakers/clergy. Several Sundays each summer are dedicated to various Island institutions such as the Yacht Club, Garden Club, etc.

Secular Organizations

Shelter Island Historical Society

Founded in 1922, the Shelter Island Historical Society was reinvigorated in 1966 and recognized as a non-profit in 1969. Chartered as an educational institution by the NY State Board of Regents, the Society’s mission is:

“...to collect, research, preserve and share local history. The Society interprets Shelter Island’s past through historical material and through its people; from the first Native American inhabitants, settlers, and town fathers, to those who have made it a caring and unique community through the years. The Society strives to preserve the island’s heritage for future generations.”

The Society’s headquarters is the Havens House, a State and National Historic Registry property that was acquired in 1971. The house was renovated and expanded in 2018 to create the Shelter Island History Center, which now boasts state-of-the-art exhibition spaces, offices, and rooms for meetings and educational programs.

The Society, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2022, hosts many cultural and community events throughout the year, as well as on-going efforts such as the Living History Project which documents the lives of Shelter Islanders. The Historical Society provides programming for schoolchildren through The Shelter Island History Project; runs the popular weekly Farmers’ market from July through early September; sponsors community musicals based on historical events; has sponsored research such as Nancy Jaicks’ study, “Race, Ethnicity & Class on Shelter Island 1652-2013”; and mounted a major exhibition of the work of local artists. The Havens Store offers books on Island history and history-themed products and has become a popular source of hand-crafted items by Island artisans.

Sylvester Manor Educational Farm

The Sylvester Manor Educational Farm was established by descendants of the original Sylvesters who founded the manor in 1651, and is dedicated to bringing sustainable agricultural practices back to Shelter Island. Their mission is “to preserve, cultivate and share historic Sylvester Manor to ensure that food and art remain connected to community and the land.” They offer diverse programs aligned with this mission, including:

- Field trips for K-12 students from across the East End.
- Archaeological digs run by a team from UMass, Boston
- Community Supported Agriculture Farm and farm stand.
- The Plain Sight Project, which works to explore and interpret the history of slavery on Long Island.
- Summer Youth and Family Programs, bringing school children and families to experience the farm.
- Many miles on public hiking trails across the Manor’s 235 acres.

Sylvester Manor has made music an important part of its programs, including a “music in the fields” program, “Music at the Manor”, which runs a Summer Creekside Concert series, and a bluegrass concert held at the high school, as well as other events.

Mashomack Preserve

In addition to maintaining 2,039 acres of open space, the Nature Conservancy supports the community with recreational opportunities, education and outreach. This includes:

- 11 miles of hiking trails, supported by parking, restrooms and benches.
- Designated areas for kayaking and cross-country skiing
- The Harman Hawkins Visitor Center
- Volunteer opportunities at the Visitor Center, the Nest Box Project and the stewardship team.
- Nature programs and guided hikes, including Summer Environmental Education Programs; Young Naturalists activities; Family Fun programs; after school programs for Shelter Island students; guided hikes, kayak and canoe trips for adults; and field trips for K-12 students from Montauk to Manhattan.

Shelter Island Friends of Trees

Shelter Island Friends of Trees (FoT) is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1996 with a mission of planting trees on Shelter Island's public spaces as well as educating residents about Island trees. Since its inception, FoT has planted 106 trees. Species include oak, maple, tuliptree, kousa dogwood, linden, sourwood, and shadbush. FoT collaborates with the Shelter Island Town Highway Department to decide where to plant trees.

FoT funds the purchase of trees with donations from its members. When possible, the cost is shared with the Highway Department as is the installation of the trees. In addition to its collaboration with the Highway Department, FoT has partnerships with the Shelter Island School, Sylvester Manor Farm, and the Shelter Island Historical Society.

FoT has a website, sifriendsoftrees.org. The website includes the "Tree of The Month" columns that ran in the Shelter Island Reporter, tree care articles, and a map showing the locations and species of all the trees planted by FoT.

Community Events, and Arts and Cultural Institutions

Annual Community Events

A series of annual events - many of them organized by the institutions described above - bring the community together and add to the quality of life on the island. These include:

- Fireworks Celebration at Crescent Beach in July
- Shelter Island 10-K in June, which attracts globally-elite runners
- Shelter Island 5-K Run/Walk in October for breast cancer charities
- Havens House Farmers Market: local food, music and crafts (May-September)
- Shelter Island Historical Society Antique Car Show (Summer)
- Shelter Island Fire Department Annual Chicken Barbecue (August)
- Shelter Island Chamber of Commerce Arts & Crafts Fair and Green Expo (August)
- ARTSI Open Studio Tour (August)
- Cricket Match to benefit Ambulance Corp. (August)
- Lions Club Scallop Dinner (October) & Corn Hole Tournament (August)
- BBQ Contest at the Legion to benefit the Legion (August)

- Lions Club Snapper Derby (August) and Chamber of Commerce Rubber Duck Race (August)

Shelter Island Friends of Music

The Shelter Island Friends of Music (SIFM) was founded in 1977 and incorporated as a non-profit in 1979. Their mission has been to present both world-renowned artists and rising stars of concert music to music lovers on the East End of Long Island. Their repertoire ranges from the Baroque, Classic and Romantic to Contemporary periods. SIFM presents five concerts annually, generally three in spring and two in autumn. All are held at the Shelter Island Presbyterian Church, followed by a reception. All concerts are open to the public for no admission, supported by annual contributions and donations at the door.

Perlman Music Program

Founded by Toby and Itzhak Perlman in 1994, the Perlman Music Program (PMP) runs a summer program for young string players at its campus on Shore Road.

Each summer 40 12–18-year-old musicians come from around the world for a seven-week residency. The PMP’s world-class faculty, led by acclaimed violinist Itzhak Perlman, oversees a curriculum of solo, chamber music, and orchestral repertoire at the highest level. Admission to the program is based solely on talent and no student is turned away due to an inability to pay. “Littles” are invited back to camp every summer through age 18. In 2012 the Program opened the new Kristy and James H. Clark Arts Center, which includes a recital hall, soundproof practice rooms, music library and girls’ dormitory.

The PMP offers a year-round alumni recital series at the Clark Arts Center that is open to the public, as well as an annual family concert and special concerts put on in collaboration with the Shelter Island Public Library.

Studios and Galleries

Shelter Island boasts numerous resident artists and artisans, some of whom open their studios to the public, and as well as a few galleries, some seasonal, others year-round. An annual open studio is organized every August by Artists of Shelter Island (ARTSI).

How to Describe and Protect Community Character and Sense of Place?

Most Shelter Island residents have a strong attraction to the visual beauty of the Island's natural and built environment, and a deep appreciation of the community and its history and authenticity as a working, small town community with traditional values and events. It is not just a resort community. The fact that it is physically an island connected only by ferries also adds a unique character that most Islanders feel adds to that special sense of place.

Describing and mapping out community character and sense of place will be found in every chapter of this Plan Update. Some aspects that have already been identified include:

- **Natural Environment:** Mashomack, Sylvester Manor and Community Preservation lands offer access to a rich natural landscape, beaches and sea.
- **History:** embodied in buildings, landscapes and families that retain the story of the island.
- **Community:** supported by a close year-round population and multiple generations—whether full- or part-time—that call the island home.
- **Island Lifestyle:** ranging from the ability to still live off of the earth through farming, hunting and fishing, to being able to visit a peaceful place with less traffic, no chain stores, and a very quiet off-season.
- **Security:** Police, Fire and Ambulance Services that serve and protect Island residents with professional dedication

Community Services Findings

- Volunteer organizations and non-profit institutions create a strong sense of community.
- The island setting and natural landscape provides rich opportunities for recreation within a unique landscape.
- Whether full or part-time residents, many people have multi-generational connection to the Island – its home.
- Conservation lands and limited access keeps the island feeling uncrowded.

Community Services Challenges

- Social and demographic change makes it harder to maintain volunteer organizations and a workforce serving the needs of residents and visitors.
- The constraints of living on an island without 24-hour ferry service.
- Limited availability of goods and services is a significant challenge to the quality of life for residents, especially for the elderly population.
- The negative aspects of growth – traffic, noise, light pollution, and potential impacts on the water supply - erode the quality of life for many residents.
- Growth in the number of summer visitors has led to overcrowding of beaches and roads, increased littering, and a reduced level of safety for all.
- Small-town traditions of neighborliness and shared purpose are changing as the island becomes more developed and the seasonal population wealthier and more transient.
- Maintaining a diverse population across the demographic and economic spectrum is increasingly challenging as property values rise.

Facilities Findings

- The School and the Library are well-funded and perform well. They both receive additional support from nonprofit groups.
- Neither the school district nor the library is a town department, but each receives funding through the tax levy.
- The Town’s solid waste management and recycling programs are well-organized and successful.
- The Town lacks formal facilities master plan and an asset management system to plan, prioritize, and implement improvements.
- Many town assets need improvements according to town staff lists for various facilities.
- Future plans include “green” investments, such as solar panels at the Recycling Center and best practice improvements at the library building and site.

Facilities Challenges

- Developing a multi-year capital plan and asset management system by a volunteer committee
- Developing and implementing an effective Town Center revitalization plan (See the section on economic development)
- Contending with the increased cost of municipal solid waste disposal beginning in 2023 due to the scheduled closure of the Brookhaven Landfill
- Creating and maintaining a capital reserve fund
- Maintaining quality education

Goals & Objectives

The primary community facilities goal is assurance of adequate service to the population and businesses over time, and to do that with fiscal efficiency, and with positive contribution to the pattern and character of the Island.

Action Items: 2022

1. Continue improving the recycling center and transfer station and the Town’s handling Island generated waste by:
 - a. Develop a long-term plan for how we will accommodate waste once the town hits buildout – which will be sooner rather than later as we are currently almost at capacity. Research alternative uses for the wood/organic debris dumped at the recycling center. The community generates more than the town can process or use and there are clean way to manage the incoming wood and leaf debris while generating power for the recycling center. An example: The use of new technologies such as those using compactors and controlled high temperature burning of vegetative (stumps, brush, wood chips) and animal waste
 - b. Installation of solar panels on the roof over the Recycling Center, currently being investigated, must be part of plans to lower costs in the face of the Brookhaven Landfill closure
 - c. Anticipate the added expense of wet garbage disposal when Brookhaven (the last landfill on Long Island) closes in 2024. Explore ways to further reduce our wet garbage such as composting or collaborating with neighboring municipalities.
 - d. Encourage town participation in regional workshops covering material disposal.

- e. Closely monitor the risk of methane gas build up from excessive plant and chips piles
2. A public restroom has been built on Bridge Street but there is still a need in the center of town. A facility that is available at all hours should be included in the Town Facilities Plan for the center campus.
3. Relocate the FIT Center from the school grounds where the public presence is a safety issue for the school administration. Explore the acquisition of a centrally located property as a location for FIT Center and community park/recreation area. The Comprehensive Plan Update recognizes that and agrees with community members who would welcome a Town swimming pool and encourages the Town to investigate this addition. However, the Update also recognizes that the costs of building and operating a community pool may prove to be prohibitive.
4. Develop a Facilities Master Plan for the center of town including a new venue for senior programs, office space for town government, 24/7 public restrooms, and replacement renovation of the 3-apartment building.
5. ADA Compliance for all town buildings shall be a priority.
6. Upgrade the Tot Lot on School Street to make it more attractive to parents and children.
7. Clearly define oversight for all town Recreation facilities.
8. Develop a Homeowner manual for new homeowners and current to provide education on: proper waste removal, septic maintenance, water/well maintenance, irrigation/water etc.
9. The Town should consider utilizing a communication tool such as Notify Me, used successfully by Southampton, which would allow government to communicate directly with Island residents. Residents sign up and receive notification for emergencies, road closures, meeting agendas, events, youth and senior events, and town committee initiatives.

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