



Central Pine Barrens Commission Meeting Summary (APPROVED)
Wednesday, June 17, 2026
Riverhead Town Hall
4 West Second Street, Riverhead, NY 11901

2:00 pm

Commission members present: Mr. McGarry (New York State Governor's Representative), Mr. Panico (Brookhaven), Ms. Juengst (for Suffolk County), Ms. Moore and Ms. Scherer (for Southampton) and Mr. Halpin and Mr. Charters (for Riverhead)

Others present: Commission and other agency staff members included Ms. Hargrave, Mr. Milazzo, Mr. Tverdy, Mr. Callagy, Mr. Ward, Mr. Jaquez, Mr. Verby and Ms. Brown-Walton

The meeting started with the pledge to the flag led by Mr. Halpin and Mr. McGarry noted that with five Commission members present, there is a quorum.

Ryan P. McGarry
Chairman

Jerome Halpin
Member

Maria Z. Moore
Member

Daniel J. Panico
Member

Edward P. Romaine
Member

1. Administrative and Public Comment

a. Public Comment

Summary: Mr. Metcalf discussed his dissatisfaction with how the sandpit company 4 Old Country Road, LLC is being handled because it seems like nothing is happening. The Notice of Violation has not stopped them. They're operating like they have pre-existing non-conforming use, which they don't. There is a three-section modular office that was constructed on the site, septic and everything else without inspections. Mr. Metcalf continued that he believes the company is doing and asked the Commission to explain how 4 Old Country Road, LLC is able to get away with it and who's monitoring it. Southampton Member Moore responded that the Commission and Town are going through the process to stop any illegal actions at that location, there was a Cease and Desist Order, and Notice of Violation was issued.

b. Minutes for Commission Meeting of 05/20/26 review

*Summary: **The motion was made by Ms. Moore and seconded by Mr. Halpin to adopt May 20, 2026 meeting minutes. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.***

c. Draft enforcement review process and procedure

Summary: Mr. Milazzo discussed the public hearing next month will be to receive comments on the draft process. If there are no significant concerns provided at the hearing, the Commission could adopt them. Then schedule the first public hearing, which will allow an applicant or a person that has been issued a notice of violation an opportunity to be heard on that notice. The Commission would enter a fact finding where they would determine whether a violation did occur and a proposed settlement. If that was not accepted by the respondent or the person with the violation, it would then be referred to the Attorney General. This is housekeeping to make sure there's a fair process for everyone to have an opportunity to be heard. The draft enforcement process and procedure is posted on the Commission website.

624 Old Riverhead Road
Westhampton Beach, NY
11978

Phone (631) 288-1079
www.pb.state.ny.us

The motion was made by Ms. Juengst and seconded by Ms. Moore to schedule a Public Hearing for July 15, 2026 at 2:30pm. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.

2. Reports

- a. *Central Pine Barrens Nature Center: Report from Ms. Jakobsen, Analysis of existing nature centers, construction, funding and operation report on facilities*
Summary: Mr. Jakobsen discussed how existing nature centers are structured and their related costs to fund, operate and maintain. The information provided may assist with evaluating potential costs and fund and operate the proposed Central Pine Barrens Nature Center. Seven of the existing nature/visitor Centers identified in the Central Pine Barrens Nature Center Feasibility Study were further evaluated to obtain additional information on ownership of the facility and land, who is responsible for operation, the role of friends groups, how the center was created, initial construction costs, operations costs and grant sources that either helped to establish or fund various aspects of these centers.
- b. *Division reports:*
 - i. *Compliance and Enforcement Division: update*
Summary: Mr. Callagy discussed highlights and updates on the Compliance and Enforcement division's activities covered in the previously distributed Compliance and Enforcement division report.
 - ii. *Education, Outreach and Communications Division: update*
Summary: Mr. Jaquez discussed highlights and updates on the Education and Outreach division's activities covered in the previously distributed Education and Outreach division report.
 - iii. *Land Use Division: update*
Summary: Ms. Hargrave discussed highlights and updates on the Land Use division's activities covered in the previously distributed Land Use division report.
 - iv. *Pine Barrens Credit Program: update*
Summary: Mr. Tverdyy discussed highlights and updates on the Credit Program's activities covered in the previously distributed Credit Program division report.
 - v. *Science and Stewardship Division: update*
Summary: The Science and Stewardship Manager was not present but the division's activities were previously distributed.

3. Invoices for Payment

- a. *Invoices for Judy Jakobsen, Consultant: Invoice #s 2026-17 to 21 for the period of May 4 to June 5, 2026 the amount of \$2,100.00*
*Summary: **The motion was made by Ms. Juengst and seconded by Mr. Halpin to authorize payment of Invoices 2026-17 to 21 to Consultant Judy Jakobsen. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.***

- b. *Invoice for SWCA Consultant #246610 for the US Forest Service Grant to prepare the Southampton Community Wildfire Protection Plan in the total amount of \$19,053.84 for the period of April 19, 2026 to May 23, 2026*
Summary: The motion was made by Ms. Moore and seconded by Mr. Panico to authorize payment to SWCA Consultant for the period of April 19, 2026 to May 23, 2026. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.
- c. *Invoice for USGS #90180381 dated May 13, 2026 in the amount of \$24,343.00 for the period of January 1 to March 31, 2026*
Summary: The motion was made by Ms. Juengst and seconded by Mr. Halpin to authorize payment to USGS for the period of January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.

4. Planning and Land Use

Core Preservation Area and Compatible Growth Area

- a. *Southampton Town Referral: CVE US NY Westhampton 243, LLC, Site Plan / 80 Sunrise Highway, Remsenberg/Speonk / 900-276-3-1 and 2 / construction of solar facility on a 115 acre property with a sand mine in the CR 200 zoning district that was the subject of a Commission waiver granted on June 26, 2024*
Summary: The motion was made by Mr. Halpin and seconded by Ms. Juengst to approve the draft response regarding Southampton Town Referral: CVE US NY Westhampton 243. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.
- b. *Request for Determination of Jurisdiction: Elite Towers at Peconic River Sportsman's Club / 200-298-1-1 / River Road, Manorville / request to construct a 150-foot tall cell tower and 1,525 sf equipment basin for four private carriers and the Manorville Fire District on a 60 acre property with a conservation easement in the Credit Program where 7.99 Pine Barrens Credits were issued*

Summary: Ms. Hargrave discussed that the property is in the core area and is currently utilized as a shooting range. The property is subject to restrictions associated with participation in the credit program, including limitations that may affect construction activities. Ms. Hargrave discussed that the proposed Elite Tower project constitutes development and similar cell tower applications have previously been reviewed by the Commission and determined to be development. And a similar cell tower application was recently denied. Discussion included whether alternative locations had been sufficiently explored on property outside of the core preservation area or at another suitable location that could address the identified service needs while reducing potential impacts.

Mr. Armentano a representative for the applicant, discussed that the materials submitted for review were substantially the same as those previously provided to the Commission, except for an additional conservation easement submitted as supplemental documentation. He clarified that the request before the Commission was limited to seeking authorization to amend the conservation easement to allow the applicant to submit a hardship application. Mr. Armentano emphasized that the request was not for the Commission to consider the merits of the hardship application or decide regarding approval of the proposed Elite Tower project. Typically, when Pine Barrens Credits are allocated, a conservation easement is placed on the property to preserve the land in exchange for those credits. The

Peconic River Sportsman's Club (PRSC) conservation easement contains a specific restriction that prevents the property owner from seeking a hardship application. He stated that the requested amendment would provide the applicant the opportunity to submit a hardship application for Commission review. Mr. Armentano expressed that looking at the hardship application the applicant may not be able to match the requirements to grant a waiver but the applicant is asking to allow the waiver request to be submitted and that the easement has the ability to be amended.

Mr. Milazzo discussed the PRSC easement and the rights that were preserved and that PRSC was represented by counsel when the easement was reviewed and approved and in exchange the PRSC was issued credits and PRSC agreed to not apply for a hardship. Mr. Armentano expressed the support letters received for this project from area fire departments. Mr. Armentano said PRSC would offer free installation for fire departments. A discussion ensued.

The motion was made by Mr. Panico and seconded by Ms. Moore to defer the draft response regarding Elite Towers at Peconic River Sportsman's Club until the July 15, 2026 meeting. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.

Compatible Growth Area

- c. *Oakcrest CGA Hardship Waiver Application / 49 and 63 Oakcrest Avenue, Middle Island / 200-343-6-20.1 / construction of a 3,350 sf building and 43 parking spaces for an existing 32,000 square foot nursing facility in two buildings, parking spaces and a sewage treatment plant on 4.14 acres in the NH-H zoning district*

Summary: The motion was made by Mr. Panico and seconded by Ms. Juengst to schedule a Public Hearing for July 15, 2026. The motion was approved by 5:0 vote.

- d. *Suffolk County Gabreski Airport / request to amend the Airport Master Plan to accommodate a land swap of equal area to develop a secure Air National Guard Mission Support Facility on the east side of the Airport property in an area of unprotected open space and protect an area slated for development on the south side of the Airport property*

Summary: The staff will send a letter and resolution to respond to the request as discussed.

5. Public Hearing at 2:30 pm

- a. *Suffolk County Correction Officers Association, Inc. Core Hardship Waiver Application / 1001 Middle Country Road, Ridge / 200-295-1-5.1, 5.2, 5.3 / construction of 2,200 square foot second story on a 2,100 sf existing building and 1,225 sf garage on a 2.77 acre site in the J4 zoning district / decision deadline 9/10/26*

Summary: A stenographic transcript was prepared for the hearing

6. Public Comment

Summary: Mr. Gazza discussed that he believes there is development occurring at the sandpit at 4 Old Country Road, LLC and business includes contracting, segmenting and adding and operating a big industrial business. He believes a Stop Work Order

should be presented to the company. Mr. Milazzo discussed that next month there is a hearing for the Commission's Enforcement Procedures and Process to be reviewed.

The motion was made by Ms. Juengst and seconded by Mr. Halpin to close the public portion of the meeting and move into the Hearing. The motion was approved by a 5:0 vote.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:51 pm

Attachments (in order of discussion)

1. Draft Commission meeting summary for May 20, 2026
2. Final Commission meeting summary for May 20, 2026
3. Draft Violation Determinations and Remedies
4. Draft Memo regarding Information on existing nature centers, construction funding and operation dated June 17, 2026; Imagine a Central Pine Barrens Nature Center pamphlet
5. Compliance and Enforcement Division update dated April-June 2026
6. Education Outreach and Communication Division update dated June 2026
7. Land Use Division update dated June 17, 2026
8. Credit Program update dated June 17, 2026
9. Science and Stewardship Division update dated June 17, 2026
10. Invoices for Judy Jakobsen, Consultant dated May 20, 2026 to June 8, 2026
11. Invoice for SWCA Consultant for US Forest Service Grant dated May 20, 2026
12. Invoice for USGS dated May 13, 2026
13. Draft response and site plan and application regarding Referral: CVE US NY Westhampton 243, LLC dated June 17, 2026
14. Final response regarding Referral: CVE US NY Westhampton 243, LLD dated June 17, 2026
15. Draft response and attachments regarding Elite Towers at Peconic River Sportsman's Club dated June 17, 2026; Letters and Exhibits from Farrell Fritz dated June 10 and June 11, 2026
16. Oakcrest Compatible Growth Area Hardship Application regarding 49 & 63 Oakcrest Avenue dated June 2026
17. Letter and materials from Suffolk County regarding Suffolk County Gabreski Airport Proposed Developable Land Swap for ANG Mission Support Facility dated June 4, 2026
18. Draft Staff Report for Public Hearing regarding Suffolk County Correction Officers Association Core Preservation Area Hardship Application dated June 17, 2026